CNS Supervised Practice Experience Requirements

About the CNS Supervised Experience Program
1. Satisfactory completion of the CNS Supervised Practice Experience is essential to being awarded the CNS credential. The program is structured to ensure each candidate obtains the in-depth knowledge and skills expected of an advanced-level nutrition professional while maintaining the flexibility required to achieve individual career goals. As such, candidates are responsible for tailoring their own supervised experience based on all program requirements outlined herein as well as locating supervisors that meet the qualifications outlined below.

2. Although the Supervised Experience Program may be completed after passing the BCNS Certifying Examination, the CNS credential will not be awarded until the experience has been approved by the BCNS credentials council. It is worth noting some evidence shows those with experience perform better on the examination than those without.

3. The CNS Supervised Practice Experience consists of 1,000 hours of supervised practice experience in clinical nutrition care in the following nutrition categories in accordance with CNS Supervised Practice Experience Competencies:
   a. Category A: Nutrition assessment (minimum 200 hours)
   b. Category B: Nutrition intervention, education, counseling, or management (minimum 200 hours)
   c. Category C: Nutrition monitoring or evaluation (minimum 200 hours).
   d. Remaining hours may be in any of the above categories

4. The supervised experience may be obtained entirely or partly from:
   a. Practicum as part of a master’s or doctoral degree program (up to 250 hours)
   b. Internship, residency or clinical rotation
   c. Clinical practice
   d. Community setting
   e. Institutional setting
   f. Home health care setting

5. The 1,000 hours may come from multiple venues and supervisors. Supervisors may supervise a candidate in multiple settings. Each supervisor must meet the eligibility requirements and be approved by the BCNS.

6. To be eligible, all supervised experience must be gained after the candidate matriculates from the qualifying degree program.

7. The supervised experience of candidates who have had significant practice experience prior to applying for the CNS credential, will be evaluated on an individual basis

Supervisor Qualifications
Supervisors must meet both of the following criteria:
1. Must have a minimum of three full-time years of clinical experience in nutrition care;
2. Must have at least one of the following:
   a. CNS credential in good standing; or
   b. Master’s of science or doctoral degree in a field of nutrition; or
   c. MD or other doctoral-level licensed professional whose scope of practice includes nutrition.

Additional Considerations for Supervisors
- The above eligibility requirements apply to all supervisors, including faculty of a degree program offering practicum or internship.
- The supervisor’s qualifying degree must have been awarded by a regionally accredited institution.
- Licensed or certified nutritionists or dietitians are not eligible as supervisors unless they also hold a master’s or doctoral degree in the field of nutrition.
- Approved supervisors may supervise multiple candidates on an ongoing basis.

Supervisor Responsibilities
1. Supervisors are responsible for completing the CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor Approval Form and submitting to the BCNS along with their current CV.
2. Supervisors are responsible for assisting each candidate in tailoring an experience that meets with the CNS supervised practice experience requirements, CNS supervised practice experience competencies and the candidate’s career goals.
3. Each supervisor is responsible for holding regularly scheduled sessions with the candidate. Meetings may be held in-person or remotely.
4. Each supervisor is responsible for verifying the completion of the hours reported on the CNS Supervised Practice Experience Candidate’s Report, rating the candidate’s performance in each of the designated competency categories, and submitting the CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor’s Report for approval by the BCNS Credentials Council.

It is expected that holding regularly scheduled sessions with the candidate will allow supervisors to identify competency areas that require improvement on an ongoing basis, so that any deficiencies may be adequately addressed during the supervised practice experience.

Candidate Responsibilities
1. Each candidate is responsible for locating the setting(s) for the experience and qualified supervisor(s), and for working with the supervisor(s) to tailor the experience in accordance with CNS Supervised Practice Experience Requirements and CNS Supervised Practice Experience Competencies.
2. Each candidate is responsible for ensuring the completion and submission of the CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor Approval Request form for each supervisor.

3. Each CNS candidate must document and attest to the completion of 1,000 hours, by submitting the following documentation:
   a. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Candidate’s Report
   b. Part B of the candidate application.

4. State licensure requirements for supervised experience vary from state-to-state. BCNS strongly recommends that each candidate review the current licensing laws in the state in which they intend to practice before beginning the supervised experience to determine if the supervised experience meets state licensing and record-keeping requirements. BCNS approval of a supervised experience does not currently guarantee approval in all states. (Refer to NutritionAdvocacy.org for information about state requirements.)

Relevant Supervision Documents
1. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Competencies
2. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor Approval Request Form
3. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor’s Report
4. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Candidate’s Report
5. CNS Supervised Practice Experience Supervisor FAQs