



# **Identified Competency Focus Areas and Core Courses for National Exit Examination**

**(Revised)**

**Program: Bachelor of Sciences Degree in Neonatal Nursing**

**BSc in Post basic Neonatal Nursing**

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## **1. Introduction**

Neonatal nursing is a subspecialty of nursing that works with the care of newborn infants born with a variety of problems. Guaranteeing neonatal and child survival priority agenda for global health Sustainable Development Goal 3, which targets all nations, newborn mortality should be reduced to at least 12 per 1,000 live births. However, approximately 2.6 million neonates die in their first month of life worldwide. It is well recognized that the care of small, ill babies necessitates the competence of qualified nurses with essential knowledge, skill, and attitude to improve neonatal survival and capacity for growth and development. It is important to minimize mortality and improve the health of newborns in the country requires interventional strategies. Producing competent graduates who can first understand the complex nature of neonatal health-related issues and provide care is important to improve neonatal chances of survival and growth and development.

Thus, implementing exit exams for neonatal nursing program graduates will have a great implication in producing competent professionals in knowledge, skill, and attitude, which makes a better understanding of how neonatal nursing works in general and more importantly how to affect the health of newborns through different health conditions. Moreover, a comprehensive assessment of learning should be used to determine whether graduates have gained the necessary competencies with the desired knowledge, skill, and attitude. One of the greatest ways to determine whether students obtained the intended level of competency and learning outcome with pertinent knowledge, skill, and attitude is to implement an exit exam as an intervention approach.

Furthermore, there should be an intervention strategy to evaluate whether graduates have attained the required competencies with the desired knowledge, skill, and attitude through a comprehensive assessment of learning. Implementing an exit exam as an intervention strategy is one of the best ways to check whether students achieved the desired level of competency and learning outcome with relevant knowledge, skill, and attitude. The national exit examinations are expected to measure the learning outcomes of a program to assess students' overall understanding of their educational experience. Hence, competence-based comprehensive examination/s are conducted upon the completion of the graduate program.

In this regard, the Ministries of Health and Education work with Universities to address the current health issue and give the best care for newborns possible and work on a strategy to implement exit exams for undergraduate programs beginning from the 2015 E.C (2022/23).

**The main objectives of the exit examination are as follows:**

- To ensure students' achievement and improve the quality of education;
- To improve the relevance of academic programs and institutional performance;
- To assess whether higher education graduates attain the graduate profile or not
- To produce skilled and competent manpower for local, national, and international markets;
- To ensure that graduates achieve the required learning outcomes and hence meet the graduate profile of the curriculum;
- To provide a platform as a quality monitoring tool in the form of certification of competence for employment

## **2. Significant of the document**

It is important to set competency areas of the subject matter (program) to measure how much graduates are acquired skills, knowledge, and attitudes. The following shows us the significance of setting competencies and identifying the core courses of the program;

- To set competencies that help to assess the basic skills, knowledge, and attitude of graduating students;
- To systematically identify the core courses which will be included in the exit exam;

### 3. Expected Profiles of Graduates

Upon graduation bachelor of sciences in neonatal nursing graduate will be able to provide the following activities

- Formulate nursing care plans for individuals, families, and the community, and apply them for the prevention and treatment of neonatal illnesses
- Provide comprehensive care for neonatal health problems based on the nursing framework
- Provide life-saving emergency neonatal nursing care
- Take comprehensive neonatal history and perform a physical examination to reach a relevant nursing diagnosis
- Interprets appropriate laboratory investigations and diagnose neonatal illnesses
- Lead the design, implementation, and monitoring of neonatal health issues
- Develop leadership and organizational management skill
- Develop effective communication and teamwork skills
- Provide compassionate family-centered care by applying moral, ethical, and professional principles and legal responsibilities underlying the nursing profession including documentation and confidentiality
- Promote neonatal health by influencing lifestyle, nutrition, socio-economic and culture
- Advocates for neonates and families at various levels of policy development, implementation, and evaluation
- Utilizes quality improvement principles and incorporates findings into practice
- Address cultural aspects of maternal and newborn health
- Plays a role in developing and supporting a strategic direction of an organization
- Identifies issues and priority areas relating to neonatal nursing practice

## 4. Competences and learning outcomes

### 4.1. Competences

The competency of students will be measured by the national exit examination at the end of accomplishment of neonatal courses focused on students' three domains named cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The details of the competency are presented here below by categorizing knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KAP).

Areas of competency	Expected competencies to be achieved
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conceptualize appropriate infection prevention mechanisms and precaution while providing nursing care for the neonate</li> <li>• Understand the nursing process and principles to make decisions related to neonatal health care delivery</li> <li>• Functions following legislation, health standards, and policies pertinent to neonatal health nursing practice</li> <li>• Provide comprehensive outpatient and inpatient care services</li> <li>• Provides guidance and information for the management, informed choice, and consent throughout the course of care delivery</li> <li>• Participates in ethical decision-making within the multidisciplinary team</li> <li>• Protects the neonates from incompetent, unethical, or illegal healthcare practices</li> <li>• Obtains and documents a relevant health history for neonates.</li> <li>• Provides care that is directed to achieving health gains/wellness for the neonate using the nursing process and complementary nursing therapies.</li> <li>• Differentiate principles of newborn adaptation to extra-uterine life</li> <li>• Realize thorough health history to include maternal medical, antepartum, intrapartum, and newborn history</li> <li>• Comprehend feeding options (including those born to HIV-positive mothers)</li> <li>• Familiarize with elements of health promotion and prevention of disease in newborn</li> <li>• Understand the elements of essential newborn care and neonatal resuscitation</li> <li>• Understand the method of assessing the immediate condition of the newborn (e.g., APGAR scoring)</li> <li>• Understand the importance of immunization needs</li> <li>• Understand harmful traditional practices related problem to the newborn</li> <li>• Educate mothers and families about danger signs of a newborn, care seeking, and when it occurs</li> <li>• Identify the criteria for admission, re-admission, and safely discharging of the neonate</li> <li>• Considers community and family resources and strengths, when planning patient care and follow-up needs across the continuum of care</li> <li>• Identify the management of common neonatal emergencies and acute health problems</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a critical inquiry process to support clinical judgment and clinical reasoning in nursing practice</li> <li>• Recognize critical thinking and problem-solving skills to provide health care services</li> <li>• Realize the principles of pain management</li> <li>• Considers community and family resources and strengths, when planning patient care and follow-up needs</li> <li>• Identify therapeutic interventions according to established standards of care</li> <li>• Implements findings from research and quality activities to facilitate improved neonatal health and neonatal health nursing practice.</li> <li>• Provide leadership in clinical care and serves as a role model and preceptor/mentor to colleagues</li> <li>• Involves in the leadership and managerial role in a health care system</li> <li>• Educates other professionals and the public about the role of neonatal health</li> <li>• Monitor babies under incubator, radiant warmer, phototherapy, CPAP, KMC...</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Skills</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates comprehensive clinical skill in neonatal nursing supported by both experience and utilization of updated evidence</li> <li>• Perform screening procedures according to the neonate's age, condition, and reason for contact/visit.</li> <li>• Demonstrate essential newborn care and neonatal resuscitation</li> <li>• Perform a thorough neonatal physical examination to reach a relevant diagnosis</li> <li>• Perform common diagnostic and therapeutic neonatal procedures</li> <li>• Advise mother about health promotion (sunshine exposure, cord care, breastfeeding, immunization, follow-up, avoidance of traditional malpractices)</li> <li>• Demonstrates ethically justifiable neonatal health nursing practice following a professional code of ethics.</li> <li>• Demonstrate awareness of own values and beliefs and respect for the rights and beliefs of others recognizes the ethical issues of medical practice and health policy</li> <li>• Apply the skill of fundamental nursing to provide appropriate nursing care for the neonate</li> <li>• Apply components of standard precautions to prevent healthcare-associated infections based on national guidelines</li> <li>• Apply the nursing process while providing nursing care for the neonate</li> <li>• Demonstrate the correct breastfeeding techniques</li> <li>• Apply principles of pain management by using pain management tools</li> <li>• Document the assessment, diagnosis, plan, intervention, and outcomes of care and follow up</li> <li>• Observe babies born from mothers of obstetric problems (APH, multiple pregnancies, GDM, GHTN)</li> <li>• Observe and provide care for babies with chromosomal and congenital abnormalities</li> <li>• Apply critical thinking, professionalism, and problem-solving skill</li> <li>• Make a clinical decision following professional standards and the scope of practice</li> </ul>

<b>Attitudes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to foster a positive collaborative relationship with others</li> <li>• Demonstrate professional values which include excellence, responsibility, empathy, accountability, honesty and integrity, and a commitment</li> <li>• Show respect for colleagues and other healthcare professionals and the ability to foster a positive collaborative relationship with them</li> <li>• Apply the principles of moral reasoning and decision-making to conflicts within and between ethical, legal, and professional issues</li> <li>• Participates as a member of an interdisciplinary team through the development of collaborative and innovative practices</li> <li>• Support parents during the grieving process, and transport/transfer of newborn</li> <li>• Maintain positive relations with parents while providing care for neonates</li> </ul>
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#### **4.2. Learning outcomes**

After completing a BSc in neonatal nursing program graduating expected to develop the following knowledge, skill, and attitude:

- Perform neonatal history and physical examination and explain findings to the mother
- Assess and develop a nursing diagnosis, for common neonatal problems
- Identify appropriate nursing plans for common neonatal problems
- Provide nursing care for common neonatal problems
- Monitor/evaluate a neonate admitted with common neonatal problems
- Diagnose and manage common neonatal problems
- Provide essential newborn care and neonatal resuscitation
- Identify neonatal danger signs and manage it accordable
- Assess and classify newborns (birth weight and gestational age)
- Counsel the mother on infant feeding, immunization, KMC, hygiene, and follow up
- Apply the knowledge of fundamental nursing to provide appropriate nursing care for the neonate
- Apply appropriate infection prevention principles and precautions while providing nursing care for the neonate
- Apply the nursing process while providing nursing care for the neonate
- Provide culturally sensitive, respectful neonatal care in a professional manner
- Apply moral, ethical principles and legal responsibilities underlying the profession including documentation and confidentiality



- Apply the principles of moral reasoning and decision-making to conflicts within and between ethical, legal, and professional issues
- Maintain professional conduct in interactions with co-workers, patients, and their families
- Analyzing maternal risk factors of the newborn
- Describe a basic neonatal adaptation to extrauterine life
- Advise mother about health promotion (sunshine exposure, cord care, breastfeeding, nutrition, immunization, follow-up, avoidance of traditional malpractices)
- Identify the criteria for admission, re-admission, and safely discharging of the neonate
- Differentiate the admit, readmit and discharge the newborn according to the national protocol
- Identify the appropriate breastfeed techniques
- Provide care and support for HIV-exposed and Hep. B virus newborn
- Recognize fetal development and systemic development of the human embryo
- Analyze various methods of newborn warming, including skin-to-skin contact (Kangaroo mother care), radiant warmer
- Identify characteristics of low-birth-weight and/or preterm infants and their special needs
- Identify characteristics of healthy newborn (appearance and behaviors)
- Administer immunization according to the given standard
- Assess the growth and development of the newborn with the growth monitoring chart (Height, weight, Head and chest circumference, and BMI for age)
- Apply principles of neonatal nutrition and newborn feeding options for babies
- Assess the immediate condition of the newborn (e.g., APGAR scoring or another assessment method)
- Assess all babies for emergency (life-threatening) signs and identify those who require immediate management and provide appropriate management
- Refer the at-risk newborn to an emergency care facility when needed
- Identify parental awareness parents about danger signs in the newborn & infant and when to bring them for care
- Inform parents to access community resources available to the family

- Monitor newborn during transport/transfer of newborn or during times of separation from infant (e.g., NICU admission)
- Apply critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning skills in clinical decision-making
- Initiates therapeutic interventions according to established standards of care
- Apply principles of pain management by using pain management tools
- Considers community and family resources and strengths, when planning patient care and follow-up needs across the continuum of care
- Applies principles of crisis management to assist family members in coping with their infant's illness
- Participates as a member of an interdisciplinary team through the development of collaborative and innovative practices.
- Administration and monitor oxygen for neonate
- Monitor a baby with mechanical ventilation, umbilical catheterization, Endotracheal intubation, chest tube insertion and exchange transfusion
- Perform Airway suctioning
- Apply and monitor CPAP
- Perform NG tube insertion and monitor accordingly
- Perform fluid, and blood transfusion and evaluation for related complications
- Perform peripheral vein blood draws
- Administer medication
- Perform phototherapy
- Perform wound, burn, and fracture care
- Assisting lumbar puncture
- Monitor vital signs of the neonate
- Develop research proposal and Collect research data
- Analyze and interpret data, and report research findings
- Apply effective teaching methods for nursing education
- Apply assessment principles for evaluation of nursing education
- Assess and diagnose community health problems (surveillance, reproductive health, harmful traditional practices)

- Intervene in community health problems (school, prison, refuge, home-based care, and other health care services)
- Monitor community responses after community-based intervention
- Apply principles of nursing ethics, standards of practice, and professionalism
- Produce and maintain accurate documentation of activities, procedures, and results
- Establish and maintain a positive, respectful, and collaborative working relationship with clients, client families, the nursing team, and other working colleagues
- Advocate for patients and the nursing profession
- Manage health care system (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling)
- Create a safe and comfortable environment for clients and staff
- Conducting nursing service quality audits

## **5. Categorizing modules /courses based on themes**

National Exit Examination in neonatal nursing program for undergraduate post-basic students' competency has five themes. These are clinical neonatal care, professionalism, health promotion and disease prevention, nursing leadership and management, and scholar. Accordingly, under clinical neonatal care, there are five courses/modules as the foundation of neonatal nursing, neonatal Nursing I, II, III, and newborn care. In the professionalism theme, professional nursing ethics have been considered. Moreover, under the health promotion and disease prevention theme, health education and nutrition in health and illness are included in the exam. Furthermore, in leadership and management themes, courses such as nursing leadership and administration, health service management would be considered. The final theme takes into account three courses such as research methodology, and measurement of health & disease (Biostatistics and Epidemiology). Thus, these indicated that the students are relatively expected to give more emphasis to clinical neonatal care themes compared to other themes. Accordingly, for exit examination consideration, the themes in the Neonatal Nursing program can be categorized and summarized in the table attached here below.

S.No.	List of Themes in the Economics Program	Cr.hr	Shares in %
1.	Clinical neonatal care	40	76
2.	Professionalism	2	4
3.	Health promotion and disease prevention	3	6
4.	Leadership and management	3	6
5.	Scholar	4	8
	Total Cr.Hrs	52	100%

## 6. Courses to be included in the exit examination

This document has been compiled with five themes and thirteen courses and/or modules for exit examination for achieving the competencies level of graduates that are expected to acquire in Neonatal Nursing. According to the direction suggested by the head of the quality and competency improvement desk (at MoE), during the preparation of this document, there was a consensus that a specific program should consider a total of 10-15 lists of courses. In the Neonatal Nursing BSc program, there are several modules and/or courses that were presented in the course catalog; however, we focused on the core courses and some of the supportive courses that are essential for the graduate of Neonatal Nursing. Accordingly, this exit examination document has identified 13 courses and/or modules delivered at different semesters and academic calendars.

S.No	List of Themes	List of courses/ modules	Course/module code	ECTS	Cr.hr
1.	Clinical neonatal care	Foundation of Neonatal Nursing	NeNuM-3013	11	6
		Neonatal Nursing I	NeNuM-3053	13	8
		Newborn care (including Maternity Nursing)	NeNuM-3043	11	7
		Neonatal Nursing II	NeNuM-4073	18	11
		Neonatal Nursing III	NeNuM-4123	14	8
2.	Professionalism	Foundation of Neonatal Nursing (Professional Ethics)	NeNuM-3013	3	2
3.	Health promotion and disease prevention	Health education	SPHM-2052	5	3
		Nutrition in health and illness			

4.	Leadership and management	Nursing leadership and administration	NursM-4102	3	2
		Health service management			
5.	Scholar	Research methodology	SPHM-4112	3	2
		Measurement of health & disease(Biostatistics and Epidemiology)	SPHM-3032	4	2

## 7. Conclusion

Initiation of a competency base exit examination is a guide for the neonatal nursing program that enables the graduates to have a basic understanding of the professional requirement and will benefit the country's strategy to decrease neonatal mortality. The basic aim of the national exit examination is to produce high-level and qualified professionals in neonatal nursing that will benefit the achievement of the country's plan for sustainable development goal. The national exit examination offers a comprehensive basis for graduates' careers and further education in neonatal nursing on the identified course lists and themes. It also offers a comprehensive basis for graduates' careers, further education in neonatal nursing, and the provision of quality neonatal health care in a professional manner. Graduates in neonatal nursing will be equipped with a solid knowledge of neonatal nursing theory and practice and apply it to manage the neonatal problem and launch different research findings to the state and provide consultancy services to the community which benefits the country's development endeavors.

## Appendix 1

List of participants on identified competency focus areas and core courses for national exit examination

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