

Guidelines for new certification tracks

Table of Contents:

SECTION

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Creating a new certification track	1
1.2	Submitting a proposal for a new certification track	2
2	INTRODUCTORY COURSE	2
2.1	Introductory course content	2
2.2	Textbook	3
2.3	Curriculum	3
3	SCAN REQUIREMENTS	4
3.1	Proctored scan requirements	4
4	WRITTEN, VISUAL, AND PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS	4
4.1	Written examination	4
4.2	Visual examination	4
4.3	Practical examination	5
5	CONCLUSION	5
5.1	Finalizing a new certification track	5

1 Introduction

1.1 Creating a new certification track

The Canadian Point of Care Ultrasound Society (CPoCUS) welcomes the creation of new certification tracks that serve our members and point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) users across Canada.

CPoCUS provides the following guidelines for creating a new certification track. The goal of these guidelines is to maintain a high standard of education across a variety of certification tracks.

The guidelines also help members to formulate a proposal for a new certification track.

In brief, a proposal:

- A. Must specify the certification modules that form the building blocks of the certification track. The modules must be appropriate to the medical specialty recommending the certification track. The modules can be newly created or can be chosen from currently available CPoCUS modules that are relevant to the new certification track (e.g. sub-xiphoid cardiac, abdominal free fluid, gallbladder).
- B. Must contain documentation addressing the three steps of certification:
 - Step 1. Introductory course
 - Step 2. Scan requirements
 - Step 3. Written, Visual, and Practical examinations.

1.2 Submitting a proposal for a new certification track

Proposals for a new certification track are submitted in the first instance to the Chief Administrative Officer to confirm adherence to guidelines. Proposals are reviewed by the CPoCUS President and Executive Board.

2 Introductory course

2.1 Introductory course content

The proposal must specify the introductory course that will be used as a prerequisite to the certification examinations. The introductory course is tailored and relevant to its certification track. There is no standard introductory course.

The introductory course content must include:

- A. Written materials covering all relevant ultrasound physics, anatomy, and theory, for each module taught during the course.
- B. A minimum of 30 minutes of live or on-line lectures, for each module taught during the course.
- C. A minimum of 5 introductory proctored scans, for each module covered during the course

The introductory course may be newly created or can be modified from currently available CPoCUS-accredited courses that are relevant to the new certification track.

All introductory courses must include a POCUS basics module. As this module is similar for all certification tracks, new courses can use the POCUS basics module found online within the CPoCUS CORE curriculum.

The instructors teaching at introductory courses must hold Independent Practitioner (IP) certification to ensure they understand the CPoCUS certification process. To achieve IP certification, instructors can apply for an Exception to Certification (see website for

application form). This application could waive the need to complete an introductory course and acquire logged scans, and allow the candidate to proceed directly to the examinations.

2.2 Textbook

The proposal must also specify relevant didactic material to accompany the introductory course.

2.3 Curriculum

It is strongly encouraged that the proposal includes a curriculum in the same format and subheadings as per the CORE curriculum (see also CPoCUS website):

- A. Pre-scan preparation
 - a. Probe
 - b. Knobology
 - c. Patient positioning/draping
 - d. Probe orientation
 - e. Probe grip
- B. Landmarks
 - a. External landmark(s)
 - b. Internal landmark(s)
 - c. Relevant anatomy
 - d. Area of interest(s)
- C. Technique
 - a. Image Interpretation
 - b. Image generation
- D. Troubleshooting
- E. Pitfalls
- F. Tips and tricks
- G. Determinate scan requirements
- H. Documentation
- I. Certification
 - a. Prerequisites
 - b. Logged scans
 - c. Proctored scans
 - d. Examinations

The curriculum could serve as:

- A. As a knowledge base for certification (does not replace Introductory course)
- B. As a knowledge base for Maintenance of Competency
- C. As a means for earning CME credits online

The curriculum need not contain instructional videos as per the CORE curriculum. However, videos are greatly appreciated for learning and/or earning CME credits online!

3 Scan requirements

3.1 Proctored scan requirements

The proposal must specify the scan requirements for each module. The scans must be proctored by a CPoCUS Independent Practitioner (IP) whose certification is relevant to the new certification track.

The scan requirements should provide detail on the number of scans and the location where the proctored scans will be performed (i.e. hospital, IP certification course, advanced ultrasound course). Hospital proctored scans should be predominately performed off-shift, as on-shift scanning may suffer from a lack of adequate supervision and training due to time constraints. While on-shift scanning allows real-world assessment and instruction in PoCUS scan interpretation and integration, it is not the ideal setting to learn image generation.

The scan requirements may be newly determined and require CPoCUS approval if the modules are newly created. Alternatively, the scan requirements may be the same as currently listed if the modules are chosen from currently available CPoCUS modules that are relevant to the new certification track.

It is strongly encouraged that the proctored scan requirements are listed in the same format and subheadings as per the CORE logbook and scan tick sheet (see CPoCUS website).

4 Written, Visual, and Practical examinations

The proposal must include Written, Visual, and Practical examinations. The proposal must also indicate where and how the examinations will be administered (i.e. in a one-time format such as an IP certification workshop or in a longitudinal format such as a 2 to 3-month hospital traineeship).

4.1 Written examination

The Written examination must include a minimum of 80 written multiple-choice questions with approximately 10-20 questions in each module (in WORD format).

The questions can be chosen from current CPoCUS questions and modified for customization to new certification tracks.

4.2 Visual examination

The Visual examinations must include images and videos (in Powerpoint or Keynote format) with corresponding answer keys (in WORD format) for each module.

The examinations can be chosen from current CPoCUS presentations and modified for customization to new certification tracks.

The answer keys can also be chosen from current CPoCUS answer keys and modified for customization to new certification tracks.

New answer keys can also be created. New answer keys must contain similar headings and formatting as the current answer keys.

4.3 Practical examination

The Practical examinations must include a detailed breakdown of all required PoCUS skills, determinate scan requirements and specific documentation guidelines for each module (in WORD format).

The practical examinations can be chosen from current CPoCUS practical examinations and modified for customization to new certification tracks.

New practical examinations can also be created. New practical examinations must contain similar headings and formatting as the current practical examinations.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Finalizing a new certification track

The final step is to distribute the new track to CPoCUS members via creation of new webpages on the CPoCUS website. The webpages will provide information regarding the curriculum, required scans, logbooks, and examinations to certify Independent Practitioners (IPs). Translation of the curriculum and examinations into English or French may be required. The new certification track will be announced to CPoCUS members in the monthly newsletter and on the CPoCUS Home webpage.