

**Last Revised Feb 23, 2024**

## **Introduction**

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) degree is an important determinant of eligibility for registration with the College of Nurses of Ontario. Given the professional trajectory of the BScN degree, a professional standard of behaviour is expected from nursing students. At issue in this policy is the protection of the public and the University's role in graduating competent professionals. The policy recognizes the general responsibility of the faculty members of the School of Nursing to foster acceptable standards of professional behaviour and of the student to be mindful of, and abide by, such standards. In instances where a student's conduct or suitability is called into question, such as being uninvited from a practicum placement due to student actions, a formal review must be completed to determine whether a student may continue.

Refer to the Appendix A: Student Professional Conduct Policy Decision Tree to navigate the application of this policy.

## **Related Standards and Policies**

Progression through the BScN program at the School of Nursing at Nipissing University is contingent on students' behaviour meeting the ethical and behavioural standards set forth in the [Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses](#), the [College of Nurses of Ontario Professional Standards](#), including the [Ethics Practice Standard](#), Nipissing University's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), and other relevant Nipissing University policies including, but not limited to, the [Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#) and the [Respectful Workplace and Learning Environments Policy](#).

## **Clinical Practicum**

There are academic experiences which involve student interaction with third parties and are subject to laws and regulations such as the [Regulated Health Professions Act](#) or regulations of the [College of Nurses of Ontario](#). Without excluding other possible circumstances, there are requirements in Nursing where the interests of third parties would justify immediate pause and/or removal of a student from practicum. Refer to Appendix A: Student Professional Conduct Policy Decision Tree for definitions of misconduct. Such concerns regarding professional misconduct or safety can be initiated by anyone, including but not limited to, a clinical agency partner and/or representative, a clinical instructor, preceptor, faculty member, or another student. Concerns must be sent in writing, or by [incident report](#), to the School of Nursing, and then shared with the respective Program Manager, Director and/or Associate Dean of the School of Nursing (SoN) to review. If a formal review is necessary, the Program Manager, Director, or Associate Dean SoN, would inform the student and relevant instructors or faculty, that a formal review is taking place, and the student may not return to practicum until this review is completed.

### **Student Professional Conduct Committee Review**

A review is conducted by a Student Professional Conduct Review Committee (SPCRC) which is assembled at the SoN Director or Associate Dean's request and is comprised of five voting members. Three faculty: two from nursing and one non-nursing faculty from a Faculty of Education and Professional Studies (EPS), the BScN Director or Associate Dean SoN, and the relevant Program Manager. The student would be invited to submit a written response and/or attend this review in-person or may attend virtually. The student may also invite a Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU) representative to attend, or a support person of their choosing. The representatives are there for support and are not invited to speak at the review.

Pending the review, the SPCRC will make recommendations to the Dean of EPS, outlining the evidence, rationale, and circumstances that led to the decision and recommended outcomes and actions. The student will not be permitted to return to the clinical setting until the review is complete. A review must be completed within ten (10) business days of a student professional conduct concern being submitted. The student will receive a written decision from the Dean of EPS following the conclusion of the review, outlining the evidence, rationale, and circumstances that led to the decision and actions or next steps to be taken.

### **Procedures for Formal Review**

With respect to all allegations of misconduct or professional unsuitability, students are presumed innocent until the contrary has been established. Decisions regarding the commission of professional unsuitability shall be determined using the balance of probabilities as the standard of proof.

1. The SoN Director, Associate Dean, or Dean of the EPS must inform the student in writing of the concerns or allegations, the possible outcomes, and a copy of this policy and any relevant policies. The student will be invited to the review.
2. The SPCRC will review the written concerns or allegations, any student statements, and make its recommendation to the Dean or Dean's designate within ten (10) further working days. The Dean or Dean's designate will notify the parties and the Office of the Registrar of the decision in writing.

### **Outcomes of the Review**

One or more of the following consequences may be recommended by the SPCRC to the Dean from the formal review:

1. If the review found there was a lack of evidence to support a student professional conduct claim, the student may return to clinical with the option to be placed in another setting, and there may be recommendations to the student's Learning Plan/Contract for course faculty to consider going forward.

2. If there was evidence of student misconduct, but of a borderline or minor nature, continuation in the program with close supervision can be recommended. A written reprimand, warning the student that the behaviour was unacceptable, and that further misconduct will lead to additional consequences. A copy of the reprimand will be placed in the student's file, but no notation will appear on the transcript.
3. A grade of UNSAT in the course, and the student cannot continue in the course.
4. Removal from the BScN program.

If the outcome results in a failure in the course, or a requirement to withdraw from the School of Nursing, the student cannot withdraw from the course, irrespective of the course withdraw deadline.

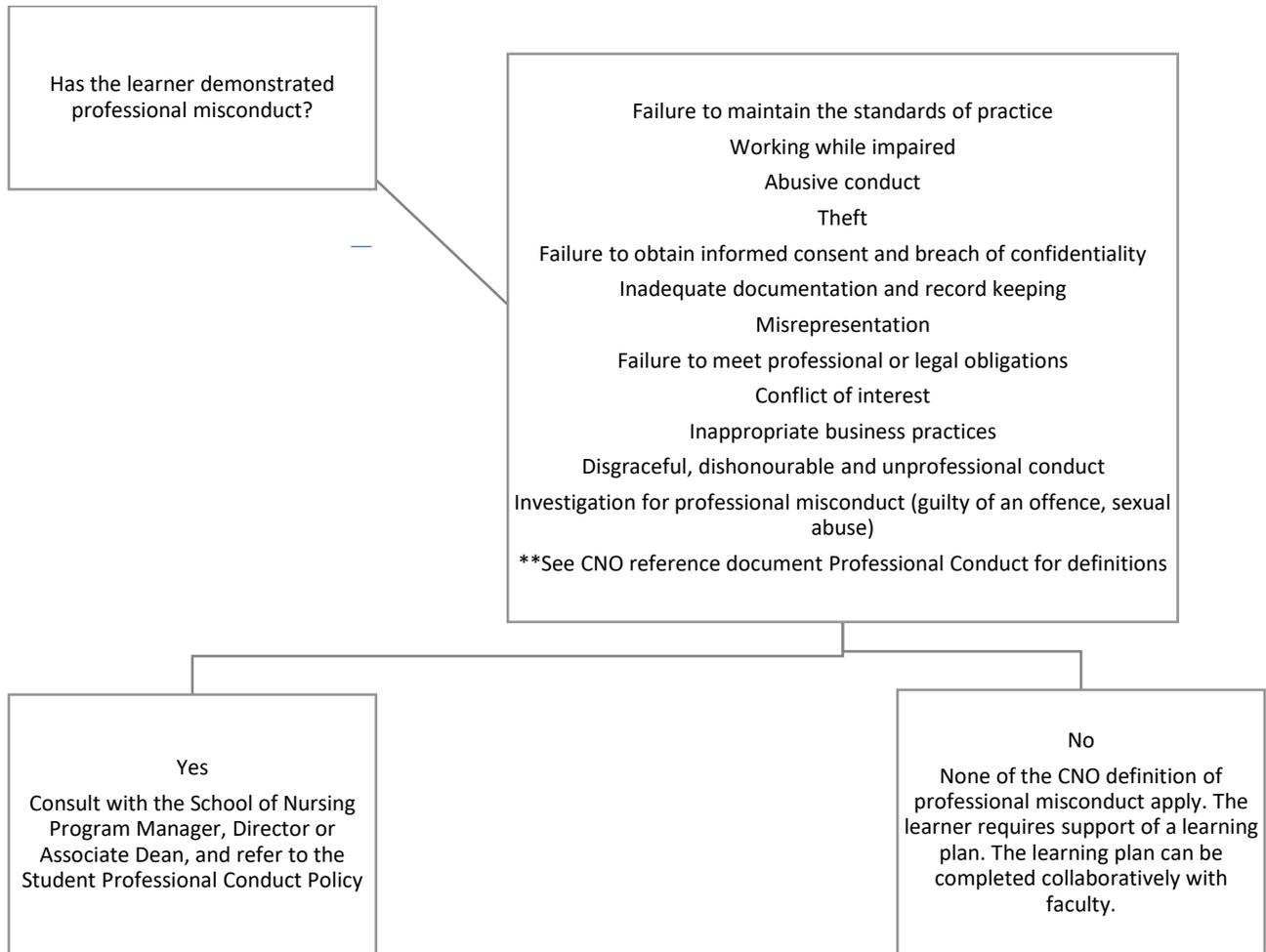
Any student who has an UNSAT grade imposed as the consequence for being removed for safety must meet with the SoN Director or Associate Dean PRIOR to enrolling in any further courses.

A record of all allegations of professional unsuitability, along with details of the resolution, will be entered into the central transcript kept by the Office of the Registrar. Student transcript records will follow Nipissing University Registrar policies.

A student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Faculty of Applied and Professional Studies and/or the Student Appeals Committee. Refer to Nipissing University's [Appeals and Petitions](#).

Appendix A: Student Professional Conduct

In Ontario, under the authority of the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, (RHPA) and the Nursing Act, 1991, the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) regulates the practice of nursing to protect the public interest.



For further information please the following:

[Regulated Health Professions Act](#),  
[Canadian Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses](#),  
[College of Nurses of Ontario Professional Standards](#), and the [Ethics Practice Standard](#),  
 Nipissing University’s [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), [Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#) and the [Respectful Workplace and Learning Environments Policy](#). BScN [Incident Report](#) and [Appeals and Petitions](#).