



Continuing Competency Program

Toolkit

Nova Scotia Dietetic Association
www.nsdassoc.ca

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Introduction

Continuing competence is the ongoing ability to integrate the appropriate knowledge, skill, judgement, and attitude required to practice safely, ethically, and effectively.

The Continuing Competency Program (CCP) was developed to reflect NSDA's vision, mission, and values. It is a regulatory tool to support nutritionists and dietitians to maintain their competence to practice dietetics. The primary responsibility for maintaining competence rests with the dietitian, as outlined in the *Code of Ethics for Professional Dietitians*, however employers and the regulatory body are also accountable. Dietitians' initial training is thorough and rigorous; lifelong learning is essential for maintaining competence and keeping abreast of changes applicable to an individual's practice. The CCP does not determine whether a dietitian is competent; the Program is a proactive approach to continuing competence to promote safe, ethical and competent practice through lifelong learning.

Mission

In the public interest, NSDA regulates dietitians and nutritionists to practice in a safe, ethical, and competent manner.

Vision

Trust and excellence in regulation and practice

Values

Innovation
Trustworthy
Effectiveness
Ethical
Accountability

Overview of the Continuing Competency Program

- **Professional Portfolio** (required)
 - Maintain an up-to-date professional portfolio.
 - Declare on the Online Renewal Form that the portfolio is up-to-date.
 - Do not submit to NSDA unless called upon.

- **Online Learning Log** (required)
 - Set two new learning goals every year.
 - Document learning activities and learning outcomes on an ongoing basis.
 - Include goal-related and other learning activities.
 - At least one learning activity should be related to maintaining an ability to act as a reliable source of current food and nutrition information.
 - The Online Learning Log is due to be complete by March 31 every year.

- **Jurisprudence e-Learning Module** (required every five years)
 - Successful completion of the Jurisprudence e-Learning Module is to score 100%
 - Link to the Module: <https://elearning.nsdassoc.ca/course/index.php>

- **Tools for Critical Reflection** (optional)

Choose to use critical reflection tools to enhance learning. A critical reflection on an aspect of practice may be stored in the portfolio and documented as a learning activity on the Online Learning Log.

- **Decision Tree Framework** (optional)

Choose to use the Framework when deciding if an action is within scope of practice.

Continuing Competency Program Timeline

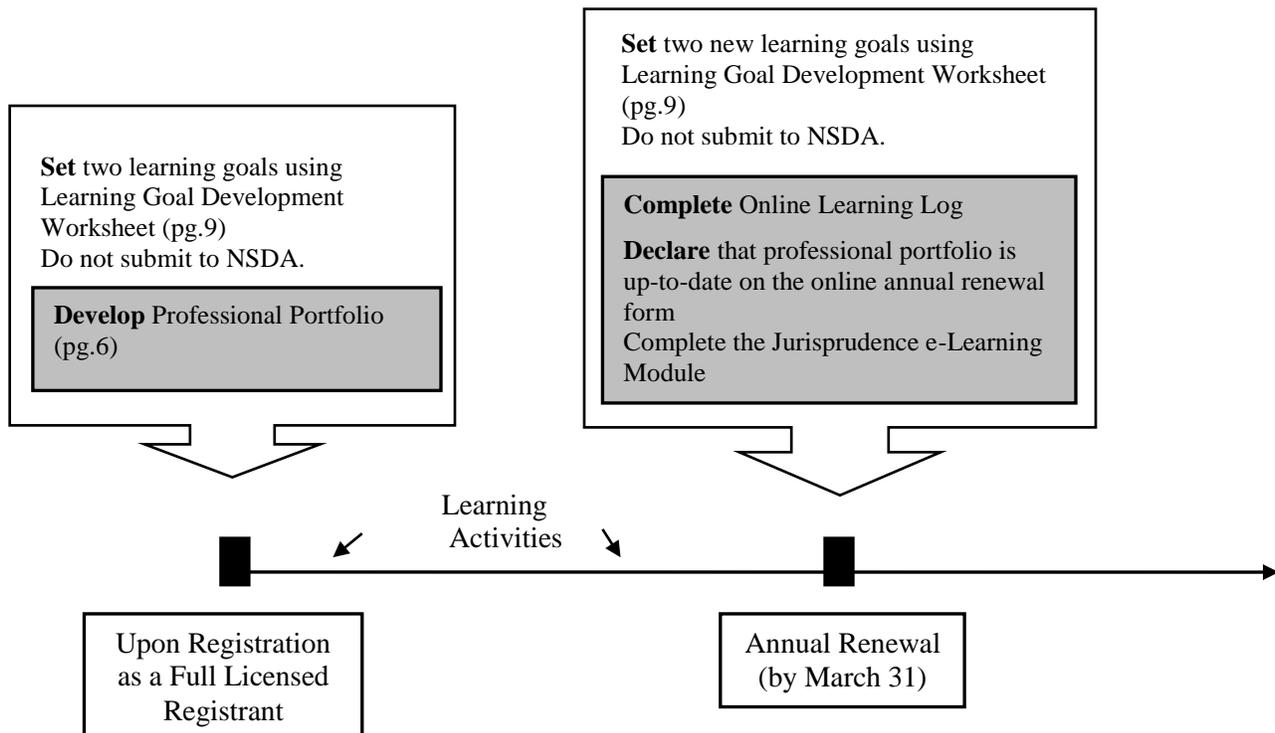
Upon registration:

- Set two learning goals using Learning Goal Development Worksheet (pg. 9). Do not submit to NSDA.
- Begin developing your professional portfolio (see pg. 6 &7).

By March 31 (renewal deadline)

- Complete Online Learning Log (annually)
- Set two new learning goals using Learning Goal Development Worksheet (pg. 9). Do not submit to NSDA.
- On renewal form, complete declaration that your professional portfolio is up-to-date.
- Complete the Jurisprudence e-Learning Module (every five years)

From April 1 to March 31, participate in learning activities to support completion of learning goals.



Maintain a professional portfolio and enter learning activities on the Online Learning Log on a **continuous basis** (page 10).

Annually, NSDA will audit 15% of registrants' CCP submissions.

Professional Portfolio

There are many reasons for keeping a professional portfolio. A quick internet search reveals that there are many purposes and benefits of doing so. A professional portfolio is a collection of records that illustrate your knowledge, skills, achievements, and professional experience. More and more professions are using professional portfolios as a tool to verify continuing competence for licensure.

Why maintain a professional portfolio?

- Maintain evidence that you are keeping up to date in practice.
- The collection of records defines your individual scope of practice¹.
- Reflect on your portfolio to identify areas for further professional development.
 - It is a way to organize goals and evidence-based learning, and assists in structuring future learning goals.
 - Reflection on past accomplishments and challenges may result in identifying learning needs and direction.
 - Dietitians who change (or plan to change) their scope of practice may use their portfolio for self-assessment and identify areas where further learning is required.
- Dietitians who change their scope of practice should use their portfolio to document evidence of competence to practice in the new practice area.
- Those who choose not to work in dietetics for a period of time, and who may wish to have their license reinstated, should use their portfolio to document evidence of competence to practice.
- Choose to use excerpts of your portfolio to show to others (e.g. for a promotion or award, or marketing yourself).

¹ Individual scope of practice: the roles, functions and accountabilities that an individual is educated and authorized to perform (Dietitians Act, 2009).

The table of contents can guide the development of your professional portfolio. Certain records are mandatory, and NSDA will audit a percentage of portfolios on an annual basis. Do not submit your portfolio to NSDA unless you are called upon to do so. You will be asked to declare that your portfolio is up to date on the annual online renewal form.

Table of Contents

CURRENT RESUME¹	Mandatory
POSITION DESCRIPTION² (if applicable)	Mandatory
LEARNING GOALS (two per year)	Mandatory
COPY OF DIETETIC REGISTRATION/LICENSE	Mandatory
COURSE CERTIFICATES (PROOF OF COMPLETION) (if applicable)	Mandatory
DOCUMENTATION OF WORKSHOPS ATTENDED and/or PRESENTED (if applicable)	Mandatory
Copy of Liability Insurance Certificate	Optional
Evidence of NSDA board or committee participation	Optional
Evidence of professional association involvement (e.g. Dietitians of Canada)	Optional
Employment performance evaluation	Optional
Evidence of peer review ³	Optional
Evidence of relevant volunteer activities	Optional
Evidence of critical reflection	Optional
Letters of reference	Optional
Achievements or awards	Optional

¹ see Appendix A for sample template

² see Appendix B for sample template

³ see Appendix C for sample template

Appendix D is a sample form that can be completed and stored in your professional portfolio. It can be used to document learning from journal club, medical rounds or learning that took place from an informal discussion.

Goal Setting

S.M.A.R.T goals are specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, and time-oriented.

Learning goals reflect the knowledge and skills you wish to acquire and apply.

Links to resources to assist in the development of S.M.A.R.T learning goals:

[Standards and guidelines upon which to self-assess to identify learning needs](#)

[Q&A: Setting SMART Learning Goals](#)

[Setting Smart Learning Goals](#) (Power Point) to accompany **[video](#)**

[Examples of SMART Learning Goals in a Variety of Practice Settings](#)

[Completing the CCP While on a Leave of Absence](#)

[Completing the CCP When Employed in a Non-traditional Role](#)

Other resources:

[Q&A: The Learning Log](#)

[Critical Reflection as a Learning Activity](#)

[Tools for Critical Reflection](#)

Learning Goal Development Worksheet

(complete yearly / do not submit / maintain for your records)

Goal #: ____ Between April 1st 20__ and March 31st 20__, I will increase my knowledge and skills in the following area:

Note: Goals for the current year are distinct and differ from last year's goals

Check the box(es) that apply:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am maintaining my current practice | <input type="checkbox"/> I am planning to change my practice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am developing an area of interest | <input type="checkbox"/> I am not currently in the dietetic practice |

Competence Activities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I will achieve my goal by undertaking the following activities (check all that apply): | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journal club/Study group | <input type="checkbox"/> Courses/internship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Case studies/rounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Work with NSDA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consultation with other professionals/peers | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations/teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-directed research/journal reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Networking/discussion groups |

Other: _____

Evaluation of Outcome

My practice will be affected or enhanced in the following ways:

Online Learning Log Example

(complete ONLINE throughout the year; mandatory completion every year)

One learning activity each year should relate to maintaining an ability to act as a reliable source of current food and nutrition information.

Goal #1: Between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, I will increase my understanding of the principles of practice-based research.

Goal #2: Between April 1, 2018 and March 31, 2019, I will improve my mentorship skills.

Date	Learning Activity	Related to	Learning Outcome [#]
4/20/16	Read article: Johnson, F., Black, A. T. & Chin Koh, J. (2015). Practice-based research program promotes dietitians' participation in research. <i>Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research</i>	✓ Goal #1	I now have a better understanding of the complexities of conducting practice-based research. I have identified how to refine my learning plan for this goal.
5/2/16	Participated in Dietitians of Canada Learning on Demand: Mentorship - Beyond Internship	✓ Goal #2	I have identified how I wish to improve my mentorship skills - to facilitate mentees to engage in more critical reflection.
1/6/17	Viewed NSDA's video conference on setting SMART learning goals.	✓ Other*	I have a better understanding of how to use critical reflection in practice. I will use critical reflection as a learning activity to identify how I can improve my mentorship skills.

[#] When recording a learning outcome, explain how the learning activity impacted (or will impact) your practice. How has practice changed because of new learning?

* *Other* refers to a relevant learning activity that does not directly relate to one of your goals.

Critical Reflection

Choose to use critical reflection tools to enhance learning. A critical reflection on an aspect of practice may be stored in the portfolio and documented as a learning activity on the Online Learning Log.

An Introduction to Critical Reflection

"By three methods we may learn wisdom: first by reflection, which is most noblest; second by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the most bitter." ~Confucius

There are various definitions for critical reflection, but most simply, reflection is the process of looking back on experiences to identify learning needs; it is both active and purposeful. Critical reflection is the bridge between experience and learning, involving both cognition and feelings. To engage in critical reflection requires "moving beyond the acquisition of new knowledge and understanding, into questioning of existing assumptions, values, and perspectives."

The Importance of Critical Reflection

To learn effectively from one's experience is critical in developing and maintaining competence across a practice lifetime.

Critical reflection promotes a deeper understanding of our beliefs and their relation to our experiences; it improves higher level thinking and problem solving and our ability to learn from experience. Critical reflection promotes personal development by enhancing self-awareness, our sense of community, and our sense of our own capacities.

References:

1. Boud, D., Keogh, R. and Walker, D. (1985). 'What is Reflection in Learning?' in D. Boud, R. Keogh and D. Walker (eds). *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning*, pp 7-17. London: Kogan Page.
2. Mann, K., Gordon, J. and MacLeod, A. (2009). Reflection and reflective practice in health professions education: a systematic review. *Adv in Health Sci Edu*: 14, 595-631.

Three Tools to Support Critical Reflection

There are a variety of methods you can use to critically reflect on a decision or past experience. It is important that you use a method that works best for you to help identify your assumptions and possible learning needs. There is a separate worksheet for each of the three methods briefly explained below. Appendix E provides examples of how to use the tools for critical reflection.

1. *Reflective Journaling*: Journaling allows you to write down specific incidents or challenging experiences that make you question existing assumptions that have an impact on your thought processes. Your journal can take any form which suits you best. You may prefer your journal to be one that hasn't structure, whereby you can simply write whatever is on your mind. Alternatively, you may prefer some structure to your journaling so that it is easier to organize your thoughts. There is no right or wrong way to construct your journal (refer to ORID model on next page).
2. *Brookefield's Four Activities*: Brookfield believed that working through four activities enabled one to critically reflect on their experience(s). The four activities are:
 - Assumption Analysis - identifying your assumptions/beliefs/values that influenced the experience you are reflecting on.
 - Contextual Awareness - hypothesizing reasons why you hold these assumptions.
 - Imaginative Speculation - considering alternate ways you could have handled or responded to the situation.
 - Reflective Scepticism - identifying your learning from the situation.
3. *Question Process*: This process takes you through a series of questions to identify learning needs as a result of the experience you are reflecting on. It allows you to evaluate and analyze the incident by identifying what was positive/negative about the experience and questioning why it played out as it did.

Worksheet: The ORID Model for Reflective Journaling (optional)

Objective Data: Describe the situation.

Reflective Data: Describe your reaction - often an emotion or feeling.

Interpretive Data: Try to explain what you observed and felt. Why do you think you reacted in this way?

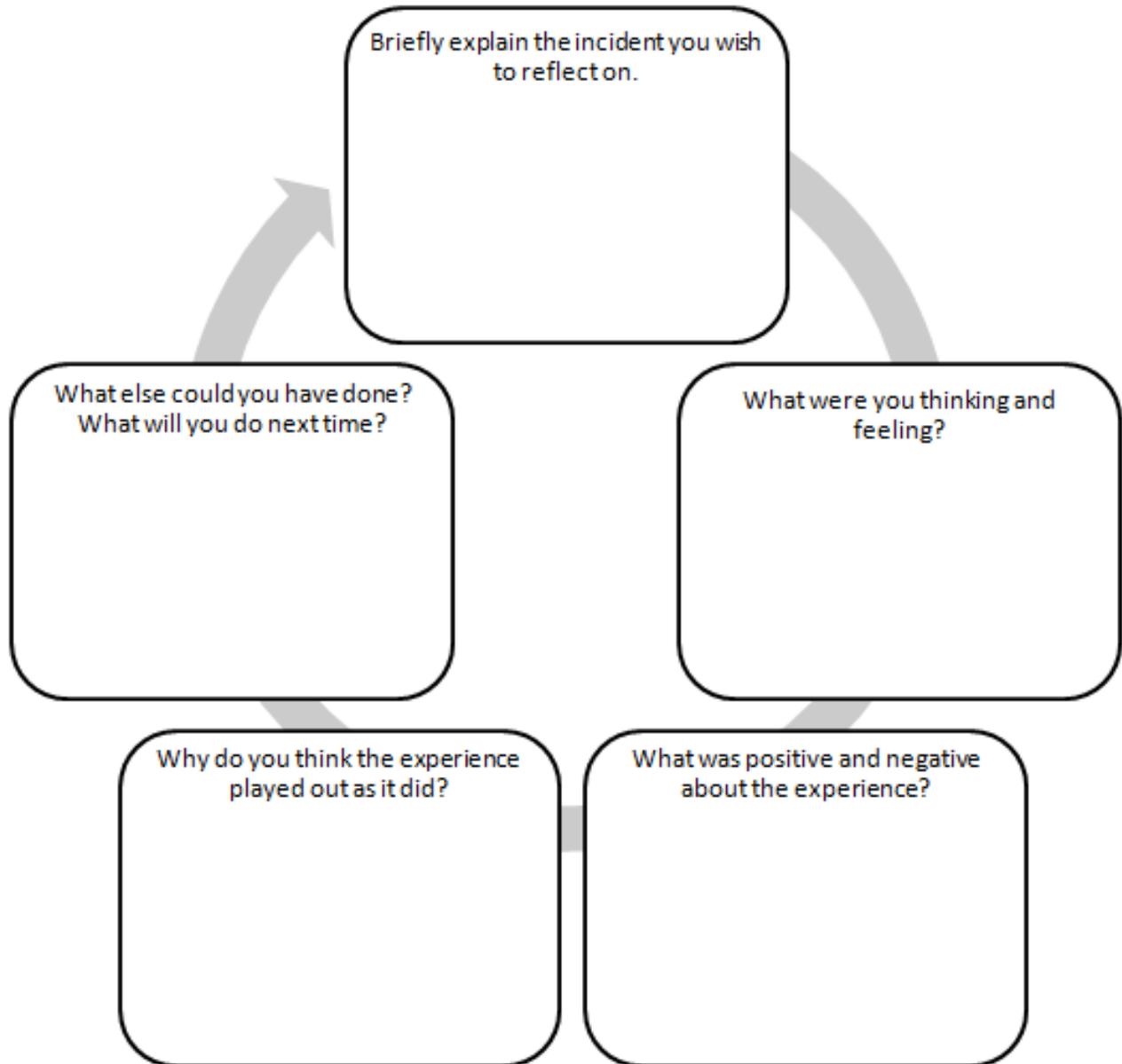
Decisional Data: Make a plan for what you will do differently next time you are in a similar situation. This plan could result in a SMART goal for you to obtain.

Worksheet: Brookfield's Four Activities (optional)

Identify the situation, experience or decision you are reflecting on.

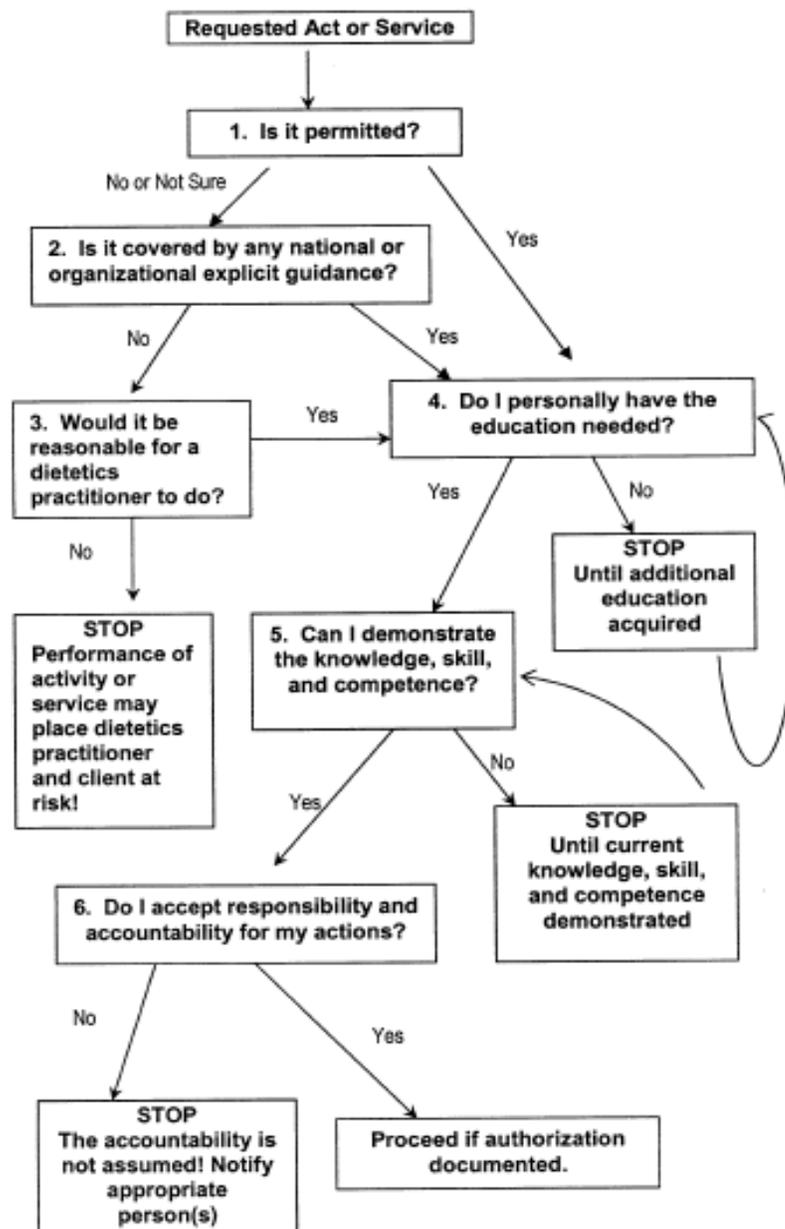
Brookfield's Four Activities	Assumption Analysis - Identify your assumptions/beliefs/values that influenced the experience you are reflecting on.	
	Contextual Awareness - Hypothesize reasons why you hold these assumptions.	
	Imaginative Speculation - Consider alternate ways you could have handled the situation.	
	Reflective Scepticism - Identify your learning.	

Worksheet: Question Process (optional)



American Dietetic Association Decision Tree Framework (optional)

The American Dietetic Association (ADA) Decision Tree Framework is a tool developed to help dietitians determine whether a specific service or activity falls within their personal and professional scope of practice. The Decision Tree can also be used as verification that you are competent to perform the requested action.



Jurisprudence e-Learning Module

NSDA's Jurisprudence e-Learning Module was launched in December 2017. Registrants received an email that assigned a username and password to access the online module.

Link to Module: <https://elearning.nsdassoc.ca/course/index.php>

The Jurisprudence e-Learning Module is a mandatory component of the CCP. The e-learning module consists of a series of open-book quizzes. Completion of the Module is due March 31, 2018 and is required for license renewal. Successful completion is to score 100% on all quizzes.

Temporary members who completed the Canadian Dietetic Registration Exam in November 2017 are due to complete the Module by March 31, 2019.

Answers to quiz questions are found within the Module or sources referenced within the Module. Resources can be accessed while completing the quizzes. The entire module does not have to be completed in one sitting. Completion of the entire module will take approximately two hours.

If you have questions about the e-learning Module, email [**elarningmodule@nsdassoc.ca**](mailto:elarningmodule@nsdassoc.ca)

Appendix A: Resumé Template

Name
Address
Telephone

Education

insert Masters degree (if applicable) dates

insert Dietetic Internship ... dates

insert Dietetics Degree.... dates

insert Certificate(s) and course(s) ... dates

Professional Activities

-
-
-

Awards

-
-
-

Professional Experience

Position Title, Organization dates
Location

-
-
-
-

Position Title, Organization
Location

dates

-
-
-
-

Publications

-
-

Scientific Communications

-
-

Volunteer Activities

-
-

References

-
-
-

Appendix B: Position Description Template

Position Title:

Organization Name:

Position Objective:

Duties and Responsibilities:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Qualifications:

-
-
-
-

Appendix C: Peer Review Template

adapted from HR.com

Name Of Employee Being Reviewed: _____ Your Name (Optional): _____
 Date: _____ Review Period: _____ to _____

Complete this peer review, using the following scale: **NA** = *Not Applicable*
1 = *Unsatisfactory*
2 = *Marginal*
3 = *Meets Requirements*
4 = *Exceeds Requirements*
5 = *Exceptional*

	(5) = Exceptional	(4) = Exceeds Requirements	(3) = Meets Requirements	(2) = Marginal	(1) = Unsatisfactory
Demonstrates Required Job Skills And Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has The Ability To Learn And Use New Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses Resources Available In An Effective Manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responds Effectively To Assigned Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meets Attendance Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listens To Direction From Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Takes Responsibility For Actions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honors Commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates Problem Solving Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offers Constructive Suggestions For Improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Generates Creative Ideas And Solutions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meets Challenges Head On	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates Innovative Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Comments:

¹This form is optional for use. It may be used to document a learning activity and can be stored in the Professional Portfolio.

