



RNFA Program Checklist

This document was created to complement the *AORN Standards for RN First Assistant Education Programs* for use by prospective RNFA students. This checklist is designed to enable the nurse to compare a program's content with the *AORN Standards for RN First Assistant Education Programs*. This is important to ensure selection of a quality program, as well as certification exam eligibility.

RNFA certification is issued by CCI, the Competency and Credentialing Institute. Under CCI requirements, CRNFA candidates must have completed an acceptable RNFA program to be eligible to take the certification exam. CCI maintains a list of RNFA programs which have met the specific criteria and are acceptable programs for CRNFA eligibility.

Of note: the *AORN Standards for RN First Assistant Education Programs* is the primary resource for this document and should be referred to for additional information.

Requirements for education programs shall include the following:

- _____ Be at a minimum equivalent to six (6) semester credit hours of formal, post-basic RN education- three of a didactic component and three of a clinical component
- _____ Award college credits and degrees or certificates of completion upon satisfactory completion of all requirements
- _____ Association with a college or university that is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education
- _____ Association with a nursing program (e.g., school, college, department of nursing) that is accredited by a national nursing accrediting agency that is recognized by the US Department of Education, if eligible
- _____ Association with a nursing program that is approved/recognized/accredited by a state board of nursing
- _____ Adherence to the current version of the *AORN Position Statement on RN First Assistants* and the *AORN Position Statement on the Perioperative Advanced Practice Nurse*
- _____ Incorporation of all of the content in the current edition of the *Core Curriculum for the RN First Assistant*³

Note: Programs may be a portion of an undergraduate or graduate degree program.

Admission requirements shall include the following:

- _____ Proof of licensure to practice as an RN in the state in which the clinical internship will be undertaken
- _____ Verification of CNOR or APRN-with OR experience (current or to be obtained before course completion)
- _____ Certification of CPR: BCLS or ACLS (preferred)
- _____ Letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's experience as an RN and the applicant's knowledge, judgment, and skills specific to perioperative patient care



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The program shall include a didactic component:

The didactic component (equivalent to at least three (3) semester credit hours of study) shall include content that emphasizes the expanded functions unique to the RNFA during preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative phases of care for patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures, including:

_____ Preoperative management of patients in collaboration with other health care providers, such as:

- performing focused preoperative assessments
- communicating with other health care providers about the patient's plan of care

_____ Intraoperative performance of surgical first-assisting techniques, such as:

- using instruments and medical devices
- providing surgical site exposure
- handling tissue, cutting tissue
- providing hemostasis
- suturing
- wound management

_____ Postoperative management of patients in collaboration with other health care providers in the immediate postoperative period and beyond, such as:

- Participating in or performing postoperative rounds and assisting with or arranging discharge planning and identifying appropriate community resources as needed.

_____ A multidisciplinary faculty for the didactic portion of the course shall include at minimum a perioperative nurse with a graduate degree in nursing; an RNFA, preferably a certified RNFA (CRNFA®); and a board-certified surgeon.

_____ Instructional resources shall include:

- the current edition of the *Core Curriculum for the RN First Assistant*
- texts or other instructional media that include content on anatomy and physiology, operative and other invasive procedures, and preoperative and postoperative patient assessment and management.

_____ Successful completion of all requirements of the didactic component shall be required for matriculation into the clinical component.

The program shall include a clinical component:

The clinical component of the course shall be equivalent to at least three (3) semester credit hours of study; the intraoperative first-assisting hours shall be a minimum of 120 of the total hours. It shall emphasize the expanded functions unique to the RNFA student intern during operative and other invasive procedures, including:



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- _____ Preoperative management of patients in collaboration with other health care providers, such as:
- performing focused preoperative assessments
 - communicating with other health care providers about the patient's plan of care
- _____ Intraoperative performance of surgical first-assisting techniques, such as:
- using instruments and medical devices
 - providing surgical site exposure
 - handling tissue, cutting tissue
 - providing hemostasis
 - suturing
 - wound management
- _____ Postoperative management of patients in collaboration with other health care providers in the immediate postoperative period and beyond, such as:
- participating in or performing postoperative rounds and assisting with or arranging discharge planning and identifying appropriate community resources as needed.
- _____ Faculty members shall design and evaluate the clinical component of the curriculum, including objectives, evaluation methods, and criteria for clinical sites and preceptor
- _____ Clinical on-site preceptors shall include a board-certified surgeon(s) in the RNFA intern's primary area of practice and a RNFA or CRNFA mentor if available and desired by the student
- _____ Instructional methods may include:
- physician supervised clinical activities
 - independent learning activities
 - self-evaluating learning diary
 - a clinical case study project
 - surgical intervention participation log
- _____ Evaluation methods may include completion of assigned independent learning activities, a self-evaluative learning diary, a clinical case study project, preceptor evaluations, a surgical intervention participation log, and mentor evaluations when applicable.
- students must demonstrate competence in the expanded functions of the RNFA
 - the preceptor(s) shall provide a summative evaluation of achievement of competence and a letter of recommendation based on all required learning activities, as shall the RNFA/CRNFA mentor when applicable.
- _____ The faculty members shall be responsible for the final determination of successful course completion



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_____ Instructional resources shall include:

- the current edition of the *Core Curriculum for the RN First Assistant*
- texts or other instructional media that include content on anatomy and physiology, operative and other invasive procedures, and preoperative and postoperative patient assessment and management
- consultation and collaboration with other health care providers

References:

1. AORN Standards for RN first assistant education programs. <http://www.aorn.org/-/media/aorn/guidelines/rnfa/rnfa-education-standards.pdf?la=en>. Accessed August 9, 2016.
2. AORN Position statement on RN first assistants. AORN, Inc. <http://www.aorn.org/-/media/aorn/guidelines/position-statements/posstat-rnfa.pdf?la=en>. Accessed March 16, 2016.
3. AORN Position statement on the perioperative advanced practice nurse. AORN, Inc. <http://www.aorn.org/-/media/aorn/guidelines/position-statements/posstat-rnfa-advanced-practice-rn.pdf?la=en>. Accessed March 16, 2016.
4. Seifert, P. *Core Curriculum for the RN First Assistant (E-Book)*. 5th ed. Denver, CO: AORN, Inc.; 2014. Accessed March 16, 2016.