

# The value of credentials

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Sonography Canada is the official credentialing body for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers in Canada. We provide entry-to-practice certification exams, develop professional practice guidelines, and are responsible for *National Competency Profiles*.

Sonography Canada credentials confirm an individual has the professional knowledge, competencies, clinical skills, and judgement to practice sonography. The successful completion of Sonography Canada entry-to-practice examinations as well as the Canadian Clinical Skills Assessment (CCSA™) give an individual the right to append the appropriate professional specialty credential – CRGS<sup>®</sup>, CRVS<sup>®</sup> or CRCS<sup>®</sup> – to their name. These credentials are recognized across Canada and worldwide.

## Sonography Canada Credentials

Our mission is to foster best practices and promote the pursuit of excellence in sonography in Canada. To this end, Sonography Canada currently grants individuals the following three professional designations:

### **CRGS<sup>®</sup>** Canadian Registered Generalist Sonographer

This credential signifies that a Canadian sonographer has successfully completed the Sonography Canada **Core** and **Generalist Examinations** as well as the **Canadian Clinical Skills Assessment**. This credential denotes a sonographer who performs imaging of the abdomen, male and female pelvis, obstetrics, peripheral veins for DVT and superficial structures including (but not limited to) thyroid and scrotum.

### **CRCS<sup>®</sup>** Canadian Registered Cardiac Sonographer

This credential signifies that a Canadian sonographer has successfully completed the Sonography Canada **Core** and **Cardiac Examinations** as well as the **Canadian Clinical Skills Assessment**. This credential denotes a sonographer who performs imaging of adult cardiac anatomy, function, physiology, pathology and adult congenital assessment.

### **CRVS<sup>®</sup>** Canadian Registered Vascular Sonographer

This credential signifies that a Canadian sonographer has successfully completed the Sonography Canada **Core** and **Vascular Examinations** as well as the **Canadian Clinical Skills Assessment**. This credential denotes a sonographer who performs vascular ultrasound imaging; which includes (but is not limited to) the abdominal vessels, peripheral arteries/veins, extra/intra cranial arteries/veins, and physiologic vascular assessments.

Refer to the *National Competency Profiles* for the competency requirements associated with each of the above-mentioned credentials.

Please note that Sonography Canada is working to expand its certification program to include certificates in other specialty areas in diagnostic medical sonography (e.g. breast, musculoskeletal, etc.).

Verify credentials with Sonography Canada via the searchable directory available in the “Resources” section of the Sonography Canada website at [www.sonographycanada.ca](http://www.sonographycanada.ca).

## Why Credentials Matter



**They validate knowledge, competencies, judgment, and clinical skills:** Finding, hiring, training, and retaining qualified, high-quality employees can be a time-consuming task. Individuals with credentials can hit the ground running and generally require much less on-the-job training. **Employers save valuable time by requiring a credential as an essential condition of employment.**



**They set a clear path for career advancement:** Sonography is increasingly acknowledged as a profession and is gradually being regulated across Canada. **Sonographers can increase their credibility and eligibility for promotions or new job opportunities by obtaining or enhancing their credentials.**



**They support patient safety:** Credentials are a crucial component of the professionalization of Diagnostic Medical Sonography. As a result, the stipulation that sonographers practice only in the areas in which they are educated and experienced already exists or is expected to come. **When Canadians enter a healthcare facility, they expect that employees are qualified to complete the examination their doctor has requested.**



**They support risk management:** Credentials help ensure consistent high-quality care to patients and reduce the incidence of professional incompetency, misconduct or incapacity. **Hiring qualified staff to provide quality patient care prevents potential lost revenues and legal issues.**

## Other Key Considerations

- If a sonographer lets their credentials lapse for more than five (5) years, they must repeat the entry-to-practice exams to once again obtain their credentials.
- Sonography Canada advocates that credentials be an essential requirement to practice in all regions of Canada.
- The laws, regulations and standards related to healthcare practices in Canada can be quite different from those in other countries. Sonography Canada offers the only credentials that specifically conform to the Canadian context and confirm both the theoretical (knowledge) and practical competencies (clinical skills) required for entry to practice in Canada.

As a result:

- Graduates of an accredited sonography education program are encouraged to obtain and maintain their credentials as further confirmation that they meet the requirements to practice.
- Members who have already earned credentials and are currently practicing, or plan to return to practice after a leave of absence, are encouraged to maintain their existing credentials.
- For those who currently hold credentials with an organization other than Sonography Canada, you are invited to write Sonography Canada examinations and complete the Canadian Clinical Skills Assessment (CCSA) to confirm your clinical skills.
- For those who currently hold credentials with Sonography Canada or another approved certification organization, you are invited to expand your professional knowledge and skills by obtaining additional credentials through the completion of other entry-to-practice examinations (e.g. cardiac, vascular, etc.) or by obtaining additional certificates in different specialty areas (e.g. breast, musculoskeletal).