

Policy and Procedures for Programmatic Accreditation

Proposed changes to clarify requirements, timelines, and procedures for programmatic accreditation.

Programmatic accreditation is a process by which an institution evaluates selected educational programs and seeks an independent judgment to confirm that these programs support achievement of the institution's mission and goals and are generally equal in quality to comparable programs. The programmatic accreditation relationship is a voluntary association.

Procedures for ~~Institutions with Prior ABHE Institutional Accreditation~~ Programmatic Accreditation

1. The institution's CEO submits a letter of request to the Commission on Accreditation (COA) communicating the institution's intention to pursue programmatic accreditation status with ABHE. If the institution currently holds ABHE institutional accreditation, the letter must also state the institution's intention to voluntarily withdraw from institutional accreditation status with ABHE if programmatic accreditation is achieved.
2. The institution submits the Application for Programmatic Accreditation and provides evidence that it meets the Conditions of Eligibility for programmatic accreditation. The evidence provided is reviewed by the Commission. The Commission determines whether the Conditions have been sufficiently satisfied to grant applicant status for programmatic accreditation and authorizes the preparation of self-study materials for a subsequent evaluation visit.
3. The institution submits three potential dates for the proposed team visit for programmatic accreditation. Typically, a team visit is one and one-half days, but the actual schedule will be determined by the team chair in cooperation with the institution and the COA staff.
4. The COA staff selects evaluation team member(s), the number to be determined based on the range of programs to be reviewed. At least one team member will be a practitioner related to the fields of study covered by the programs to be examined, but who does not have a formal position with any ABHE institution. Institutions are permitted to object to proposed evaluators who they believe may have a conflict of interest. A member of the COA staff is assigned to accompany the team to provide specific training for the practitioner(s) relative to the ABHE programmatic standards and coaching for the team during the course of the team visit.
5. The institution engages in self-study for the programs to be reviewed, evaluating each program's compliance with ABHE's programmatic standards and documenting its findings in a Self-Study Report. The Self-Study Report is submitted eight weeks prior to

the scheduled team visit. Program assessment and improvement plans are provided as key exhibits.

6. The institution hosts the evaluation team visit.
 7. Within 30 days following the visit, the institution receives the team report. The institution submits a written response, indicating any errors of fact, disagreements with the findings, and/or responses to the team's findings. The request for a response will include the deadline by which the response must be received (typically September 15 for spring visits and six weeks after receipt of the team report for fall visits).
 8. The Commission reviews the institution's self-study materials, the evaluation team report, and the institution's response to the team report for consideration of programmatic accreditation. Representatives of the institution may be asked to meet with the COA to respond to questions at the time the program(s) are considered for programmatic accreditation.
- ~~1. The Commission takes action to grant, defer, or deny programmatic accreditation.~~
 - ~~2. The institution's CEO should submit a letter of request to the Commission on Accreditation (COA) expressing the desire to pursue programmatic accreditation status.~~
 - ~~3. The institution provides evidence that it meets the Conditions of Eligibility for programmatic accreditation. The evidence provided will be reviewed by the Commission. The Commission will determine whether the Conditions have been sufficiently satisfied to authorize the preparation of self-study materials in view of a subsequent evaluative visit.~~
 - ~~4. The institution should develop self-study materials in the form of a compliance document that, for the programs to be reviewed, demonstrates each program's compliance with ABHE's programmatic standards. The compliance document is due eight weeks prior to the date agreed upon for a team visit.~~
 - ~~5. The institution should ensure that its assessment plan and planning documents are up-to-date and that they include consideration of the programs to be considered.~~
 - ~~6. The institution will submit to the COA office staff three potential dates for the proposed team visit.~~
 - ~~7. Upon identifying a team chair, the COA staff will confirm the actual date of the visit.~~
 - ~~8. In addition to a chair, the COA staff will select other team member(s), the number to be determined in cooperation with the institution based on the range of programs to be reviewed. At least one team member will be a practitioner related to the fields of study covered by the programs to be examined, but who does not have a formal position with any ABHE institution.~~
 - ~~9. A member of the COA staff will be designated to accompany the team for the purpose of providing specific training for the practitioner(s) on the team relative to the ABHE programmatic standards. The staff member will also provide coaching services to the practitioner(s) during the course of the team visit.~~

- ~~10. Normally a team visit will last no less than one and one-half days, but the actual schedule will be determined by the team chair in cooperation with the institution and the COA staff.~~
- ~~11. Within two weeks of the visit, the team chair will distribute a report of the team's findings to the COA staff.~~
- ~~12. Upon receipt of the team report, the COA staff will review the report for completeness and forward it onto the institution whose programs have been reviewed. The institution will be asked to respond to the report, indicating any errors of fact, disagreements with the findings, and/or responses to the team's findings. The request for a response will include the deadline by which the response must be received.~~
- ~~13. Upon completion of its response, the institution will forward it to the COA staff for distribution to the COA at large.~~
- ~~14. The COA staff will supply the COA with the institution's self-study materials, the report of the team, and the institution's response to the team report.~~
- ~~15. Representatives of the institution will be asked to meet with the COA to respond to questions at the time the program(s) are considered for initial programmatic accreditation.~~
- ~~16. Based upon the results of the hearing, the COA will make a decision to grant, defer, or deny programmatic accreditation.~~

9.

Institutions having with ABHE programmatic accreditation ~~programs that are accredited by ABHE will~~ are required to submit provide ~~An annual~~ Institution Update (AIU) information to the Commission for review ~~report to the COA~~ each year following guidelines supplied by the COA.

~~Normally~~ Typically, the COA ~~will reviews~~ the accreditation of the covered ~~accredited~~ program(s) ~~each ten years~~ for reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years. However, the COA reserves the right to review a program at any time based upon information coming to its attention.

~~Procedures for Institutions with no Recent or Prior ABHE History~~

- ~~1. The institution must develop and submit a petition to the Commission demonstrating satisfaction of the Conditions of Eligibility for programmatic accreditation. The document must clearly identify all of the programs being submitted for consideration.~~
- ~~2. The Commission will review the institution's submission and make a judgment regarding the petition's satisfaction of the Conditions. Upon determining satisfactory compliance with the Conditions, the Commission will instruct the COA staff to communicate its decision to the institution.~~
- ~~3. The ABHE staff will provide the institution instructions for the preparation of the self-study materials for the accreditation of the program(s) being considered for accreditation.~~
- ~~4. Steps 2 through 17 from above are followed.~~

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