

Capability Review for Accreditation

POLICY

The Council will assist and review an eligible applicant program in its preparation for accreditation status. Prospective programs seeking COA accreditation may not admit students to the nurse anesthesia program or enroll students in courses with anesthesia in the title or with anesthesia-related content before COA accreditation.

PROCEDURE

1. Program requirements

- a. Submit a letter of intent to establish a nurse anesthesia program signed by the chief executive officer of the conducting institution. The letter of intent should be sent by the chief executive officer (CEO) of the conducting institution to the Council on Accreditation, Attention: Chief Executive Officer. The letter of intent should include the name of the conducting institution(s), name of the CEO(s), program director (if known), doctoral degree to be awarded, statement of philosophical and financial commitment, number of students proposed, and projected **enrollment** date.
 - If applicable, description of any agreement/arrangement between an accredited ¹Title IV eligible conducting institution and non-accredited and non-Title IV eligible organization regarding the joint operation of the nurse anesthesia program, and the specific roles of each organization.
- b. Demonstrate that the conducting institution is eligible for accreditation according to Council policy (see “Eligibility for Accreditation”).
- c. Complete and submit the electronic Self Study form that assesses the degree of compliance with all accreditation criteria for traditional education offerings and distance education offerings, if any. Retrieve the electronic Self Study form on the program's portal on the COAccess system.
- d. Through the signature of the chief executive officer of the conducting institution(s), attest to the accuracy of the information provided in the Self Study and invite the Council to conduct an onsite review.
- e. The program’s conducting institution(s) must submit a signed Representation Form.
- f. The conducting institution(s) of each nurse anesthesia program must determine whether it is a covered entity as defined in federal regulations at 45 CFR §160.103. If applicable (i.e., if the program’s conducting institution(s) is a covered entity), the program must also submit an executed COA Business Associate Agreement. If not

¹ Accredited by an institutional accreditor recognized by the US Secretary of Education.
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applicable, the program must provide a letter from the conducting institution stating that it is not a covered entity.

- g. Submit additional documentation as requested.
- h. Complete an onsite review. In order to be considered for initial accreditation, programs undergoing capability review by the Council must submit documentation of the employment (e.g., a properly executed contract or evidence of current employment) of a qualified Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) **program administrator**. A CRNA program administrator with leadership responsibilities and authority for administration of the program must be currently employed at the time of the onsite visit.
- i. Respond to the written summary report of onsite accreditation review and submit other documents requested by designated deadlines.
- j. Pay required fees by the due date.
- k. Complete the Outline for Requesting Approval of Distance Education Courses and/or Programs and the Application for Approval of Doctoral Degrees for CRNAs (Completion Degree Programs) if applicable.

2. Council actions

- a. Provide telephone consultation as indicated.
- b. Review the submitted Self Study for completeness.
- c. Request additional information and/or documentation as indicated.
- d. Conduct an onsite review and evaluation by onsite reviewers. Onsite reviewers are expected to refer to the *Accreditation Reviewers' Manual* for guidance in assessing programs' compliance with the Standards.
- e. If the COA determines that an onsite visit must be rescheduled, a program will be billed for the actual costs of the cancelled visit, costs of conducting the rescheduled visit, plus an additional fee equal to half the original administrative fee. No refund will be given for the original administrative fee.
- f. Provide the applicant program with a written summary report of the onsite review.
- g. Complete a staff analysis of the applicant program's response to the summary report.
- h. Review documentation at a regularly scheduled accreditation meeting of the Council and make an accreditation decision (see "Decisions for Accreditation").