

Eligibility for Accreditation

POLICY

A nurse anesthesia program will be considered eligible for accreditation if the purpose(s) of the **program(s)** offered is within the **scope of the Council's activity**, and pursued in an institutional setting appropriate for higher education and training of nurse anesthetists. Applicant programs' degree-granting institutions must be accredited by a regional accrediting agency officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit institutions prior to seeking Council accreditation.

PROCEDURE

1. Requirements for *applicant* programs

Submit the following information before ~~writing-submitting~~ a Self Study and ~~requesting-conducting~~ an onsite review, and within six months of receipt of the Council's acknowledgment of the program's letter of intent.

- a. Demonstrate by appropriate documentation that the program is legally authorized to be conducted by at least one of the following:
 - 1) Senior college or university.
 - 2) Medical facility.
 - 3) Professional corporation in conjunction with a medical facility, senior college, or university.
 - 4) **Single-purpose institution.**
- b. Demonstrate that the institution awarding the degree or degrees has:
 - 1) A charter and/or other formal authority from an appropriate government agency authorizing it to award the degree(s) conferred.
 - 2) The degree-granting institution is accredited by a regional accrediting agency. The accrediting agency must be officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit institutions.
 - 3) The necessary operating authority for each jurisdiction in which the institution conducts activities.
- c. Demonstrate by appropriate documentation that the following requirements will be met:
 - 1) Potential for professional and educational growth of students and faculty.
 - 2) A curriculum to enable graduates to attain certification as nurse anesthetists, including sequencing of courses for the entire program and a description for each course.

- 3) Agreements with sufficient accredited clinical sites to provide required cases and experiences for the total number of students to be enrolled when the program is fully implemented (e.g., first-, second-, and third-year classes). If any other nurse anesthesia educational program utilizes any of the proposed clinical sites, provide documentation that affirms that the administrators for other nurse anesthesia educational programs affiliated with the site have been notified of this program's intentions to send students to the site (ref. "Clinical Sites – Acquisition" policy, item 1a3).
 - 4) Appropriately qualified administrative personnel, faculty, and resources to comply with the Council's *Standards for Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Programs - Practice Doctorate*. Onsite visits will be aborted if the applicant program cannot provide documentation of the employment (e.g., a properly executed contract or evidence of current employment) of a qualified CRNA program administrator at the time of the onsite visit.
 - 5) A financial plan providing evidence of sufficient financial resources to implement and sustain an accredited program.
- d. For a distance education program seeking institutional approval, provide documentation evidencing the following:
- 1) Evidence of the institution's legal authority to operate at its home base and where any other physical presence has been established.
 - 2) Evidence of the institution's legal authority to operate in every jurisdiction where the program will be delivered.
- e. For a program jointly controlled, by an accredited¹ Title IV eligible and non-accredited non-Title IV eligible organization, provide evidence that the arrangement complies with U.S. Department of Education Dear Colleague letter Written Arrangements (GEN-22-07, June 16, 2022), including the following:
- 1) A copy of the joint operation or shared governance agreement between the organizations.
 - 2) Documentation from the degree-granting institution's regional accreditor and the appropriate state agencies (e.g., state higher education commission or state Board of Nursing) approving the agreement or arrangement, or stating that no such approval is required, to conduct the jointly controlled nurse anesthesia program.
 - 3) Description of which portion of the program is offered by each entity.
 - 4) Documentation (e.g., a program budget or shared governance agreement) identifying which organization is responsible for instructor compensation.
 - 5) Description of each organization's authority and oversight over the nurse anesthesia program's faculty (including clinical educators).

¹ Accredited by an institutional accreditor recognized by the US Secretary of Education.
2011 Accreditation Policies and Procedures

6) Description of the extent to which each organization has control and oversight over the program curriculum (including design, administration, and instruction of a course).

3)7) Description of the extent to which each organization has control and oversight over the clinical portion of the curriculum.

2. Requirements for *established* programs

Submit the following information in preparation for an onsite review.

- a. When the program is operated by the degree-granting institution: A letter from the chief executive officer of the conducting institution that reaffirms the institution's legal authorization to operate the program and award the degrees and/or certificates. The letter should identify the degree awarded to graduates of the nurse anesthesia program.
- b. The degree-granting institution is accredited by a regional accrediting agency. The accrediting agency must be officially recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit institutions.
- c. When the program is operated by a non-degree-granting entity:
 - 1) A letter from the chief executive officer of the conducting entity that reaffirms the entity's legal authorization to operate the program.
 - 2) A letter from the chief executive officer of the degree-granting institution that reaffirms the institution's legal authorization to award the degrees and/or certificates. The letter should identify the degree awarded to graduates of the nurse anesthesia program.
- d. When the program is jointly ~~operated~~controlled by a degree-granting institution and a non-degree-granting entity:
 - 1) A letter from the chief executive officer of the degree-granting institution that reaffirms the institution's legal authorization to operate the program and award the degrees and/or certificates. The letter should identify the degree awarded to graduates of the nurse anesthesia program.
 - 2) A letter from the chief executive officer of the non-degree-granting entity that reaffirms the entity's legal authorization to operate the program.
- e. If applicable, description of any agreement/arrangement between an accredited Title 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. This description must address items 1e1 through 1e7 above.

2) This information must be submitted for COA review at least six months prior to the program's scheduled onsite review. However, an established program may elect to submit eligibility documentation related to the Title IV requirements outside of its scheduled accreditation review period. A program submitting this information outside of its scheduled accreditation review period is not required to re-submit information pertaining to items 1e1 through 1e7 as part of the eligibility process, provided that the program can demonstrate prior COA review and approval of the information and attests that no changes to the Title IV arrangements have been made since the prior COA approval.

3. Council actions

a. For *applicant* programs:

- 1) Review program documentation to determine whether the applicant program meets eligibility requirements.
- 2) Notify the applicant program of its eligibility status.
- 3) Provide an eligible applicant with materials to begin a Self Study in preparation for an onsite accreditation review.
- 4) Provide telephone consultation as indicated.

b. For *established* programs:

- 1) Review program documentation to reaffirm that the established program meets eligibility requirements.
- 2) Notify the program if its eligibility status is questionable and ask for clarification or additional documentation.
- 3) Revoke the program's accreditation and remove the program from the accredited list of nurse anesthesia programs if it no longer meets eligibility requirements for accreditation.
- 4) Notify the program that it has the right to ask for reconsideration of the Council's decision to revoke accreditation before filing an appeal.

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