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## Memorandum

TO: ABHES-Accredited Institutions and Programs  
Recognized Accrediting Agencies  
State Departments of Education  
U.S. Department of Education Interested Parties

FROM: Florence Tate, Executive Director

DATE: August 7, 2015

SUBJECT: Final Revisions to Accreditation Manual - Effective January 1, 2016

At its July 2015 meeting, the Commission of the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) considered carefully the comments received to its June 1, 2015, Call for Comment. The Commission acted to approve the attached final revisions to the 17th Edition of the Accreditation Manual, **effective January 1, 2016**. New language is underlined and deleted language ~~struck~~.

These revisions include changes to Chapters I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII-ST, IX, Appendix C, Appendix D, Appendix E & Glossary of Definition

## **CHAPTER I – GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **SECTION B – Policies Affecting Institutions and Programs**

#### **Subsection 6 – Third-party contracts, transfer credits and articulation agreements**

##### **Third-Party Contracts**

Third-party contracts refers to situations in which an institution or program arranges to have some portion of its services delivered by another party. This is distinct from transfer of credit by which the institution or program recognizes coursework completed at another accredited institution. In the case of a third-party contract the services provide, including any coursework, is treated as if the services had been provided directly by the institution or program.

An institution or program may contract with a third party to provide a portion of an educational program or to provide other management or services required by ABHES. All such instances must be approved by ABHES prior to implementation. The institution or program seeking approval must submit a proposal that identifies the third party and the services to be provided under contract, a copy of the proposed contract, and a statement indicating that the institution or program retains responsibility for compliance with all ABHES requirements.

For degree programs, no more than 49 percent of program credits or the recognized clock-hour equivalent may be provided by any third party. Minimally, 25 percent of the coursework provided by the institution or program accredited by ABHES must consist of core courses.

##### ***Transfer Credits***

Every institution must have transfer of credit policies that are publicly disclosed in accordance with 34 CFR§668.43(a) (11) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education. An institution or program may accept credits or clock hours earned at another institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to satisfy specific requirements for completion of a program. An institution or program may accept credits or clock hours earned at another institution that is not located in the United States or its territories if the specific foreign education is evaluated by an agency which attests to the qualitative and quantitative equivalency of the foreign education and the specific course or courses for which transfer credit is to be awarded. The institution must use the credential evaluation services of an agency that has published standards for membership, affiliations to national international higher education associations, and are frequently linked to and used by federal agencies, state agencies, educational institutions and employers (e.g. NACES and AICE). (Note: language from [www.ed.gov/international/unsei/edlite-index.html](http://www.ed.gov/international/unsei/edlite-index.html))

The institution or program must demonstrate that it has evaluated the coursework accepted for transfer in accordance with its published policies, and the basis for a conclusion that it is equivalent to the coursework for which it substitutes and meets all ABHES requirements, including competency achievement.

As is provided elsewhere in this manual, programs and institutions must clearly state their transfer of credit policies, and they are encouraged to accept transfer credits as a means to promote academic mobility and to avoid requiring students to unnecessarily repeat equivalent, prior coursework.

## *Articulation Agreements*

As an alternative case-by-case consideration of requests for transfer of credit, an institution or program may enter an articulation agreement with an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary or CHEA. An articulation agreement formalizes transfer of credits under certain specific conditions stated in the agreement and provides for acceptance of specific credits earned at the other institution to satisfy specific requirements for completion of a program. Credits accepted from another institution pursuant to an articulation agreement are transfer credits and must meet all provisions regarding transfer credits. The institution or program receiving transfer credits must demonstrate the basis for concluding that each transfer credit accepted is equivalent to the credit that it replaces in terms of the knowledge and skill the credit represents in the curriculum design. Articulation agreements are encouraged to provide opportunities for academic mobility. However, all transfer of credit provisions apply to credits received pursuant to articulation agreements.

## **CHAPTER II ELIGIBILITY AND CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **SECTION A - Eligibility for Application**

Prior to consideration for accreditation, the Commission will determine preliminarily whether an institution or program meets the requirements for accreditation.

#### **Subsection 1 – Basic requirements**

##### **a) Institutional Eligibility**

In order for an postsecondary institution to apply for accreditation by the Commission and to remain accredited, it must meet the following minimum criteria:

- (1) It is (a) an institution in the private sector ~~at the postsecondary level~~ whose principal activity is education, (b) a hospital or laboratory-based training school, (c) a vocational training institution, or (d) ~~a Veteran Administration hospital, rehabilitation institution,~~ or a federally-sponsored training program.
- (2) It is an educational institution that offers programs predominantly in the health education field. An institution meets this requirement if (a) 70 percent or greater of its full-time equivalent students are enrolled in health programs, or (b) 70 percent of its active programs are in the health education field, provided that a majority of an institution's full-time equivalent students are enrolled in those programs. A program is active if it has a current student enrollment and is seeking to enroll students.
- (3) All of its programs are career focused ~~vocational in nature~~ and **are** designed to lead to employment.
- (4) It is located in the United States or its territories.
- (5) It is properly licensed, chartered or approved to provide education beyond the secondary level under the laws and regulations of the state(s) or territories in which it ~~is~~ located operates.

- (6) It must have been legally operating and continuously providing instruction as an institution for at least the prior two years.
- (7) It has enrollment in the program(s) to be included in the grant of accreditation to allow evaluation of student outcomes. (Does not apply to current institutionally-accredited members).
- (8) It has at least one graduating class from at least one program(s) currently offered to determine the overall educational effectiveness of the program(s) of study offered.

**b) Programmatic Eligibility**

An organization offering a program in medical assisting, medical laboratory technology, or surgical technology education is eligible to apply for and be considered for programmatic accreditation if it meets the following criteria:

- (1) It has a minimum enrollment of five (5) students in the program. (Does not apply to currently accredited programmatic schools or those institutionally-accredited members seeking initial programmatic accreditation).
- (2) It is (a) a public or private institution at the postsecondary level institutionally accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) whose principal activity is education, (b) a hospital or laboratory-based training school, or (c) a federally-sponsored training program ~~in a Veteran's Administration (VA) hospital, a rehabilitation facility, or a federally-sponsored Armed Forces program.~~
- (3) Its program is ~~vocational in nature~~ career focused and ~~is~~ designed to lead to employment.
- (4) It is located in the United States or its territories.
- (5) At the time of the visit, the program will have (or have had within the past twelve months) student participation in clinical experience activities, as applicable, to permit evaluation of program operations and of student progress, satisfaction, and retention. In addition, the program will have enrolled students who have completed at least 50% of the program, or at least 25% percent of the core coursework. (Note: Does not apply to those institutionally-accredited members seeking initial programmatic accreditation; however, an additional on-site evaluation may be required.)
- (6) The coursework required for graduation, including didactic instruction and externship, provides the following:
  - (a) **Medical Assisting**
    - attainment of entry-level competencies (see Program Requirements and Curriculum for Medical Assistants in Chapter VII), and consists of at least a 24-week full-time program of training.

(b) **Medical Laboratory Technology**

- attainment of entry-level competencies (see Program Requirements and Curriculum for Medical Laboratory Technology in Chapter VII), and at least 60-semester credit hours, 90 quarter credit hours, or its recognized clock-hour equivalent (normally two academic years) of training.

(c) **Surgical Technology**

- consistency with the current Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, produced by the Association of Surgical Technology (www.ast.org). Note: Currently accredited institutional members must adhere to the requirements for programmatic eligibility when adding a surgical technology program, which includes submission of the Application for Programmatic Accreditation.

c) **Eligibility Outside of ABHES Scope of Recognition**

ABHES may accredit institutions and programs outside the scope of recognition by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education (Secretary). The ~~principle~~-principal difference between participation in accreditation activities within ABHES's scope of recognition is that accreditation under this section and outside that scope does not provide successful applicants with accreditation recognized by the Secretary.

An institution or program that participates in accreditation activities outside the ABHES scope of recognition may expect to benefit from objective assessment and feedback according to ABHES standards of accreditation.

- (1) The Commission, acting through its Executive Committee, may from time to time consider eligible applications for accreditation that are outside ABHES's scope of recognition by the Secretary.
- (2) The Executive Committee shall determine and publish the specific policies and procedures for applications for accreditation that are outside ABHES's scope of recognition, including specific limits on eligibility and fees for accreditation.
- (3) An institution or program that is accredited pursuant to this section may truthfully represent that it is accredited by ABHES only when it makes clear that the grant of accreditation under this section is not recognized by the Secretary.
- (4) Any institution or program submitting an application for accreditation pursuant to this section and outside the scope of recognition by the Secretary does so with the understanding that the accreditation to be awarded is not recognized by the Secretary, and further that it may not be eligible to participate in any program such as federal Title IV funding that requires accreditation by an agency recognized by the Secretary.

**Subsection 2 – Application Process**

If an institution or program believes it meets the applicable eligibility criteria, and it desires to be accredited, it may begin the process by completing the required application, including the submission of necessary documents outlined in the application and explained in the application submission instructions.

~~The application process includes, workshop attendance, completion of a Self Evaluation Report, visitation by an evaluation team, and Commission consideration. Only institution's seeking institutional accreditation must undergo a preliminary site visit, submit an audited financial statement, prepared by an independent certified accountant prior to consideration by the Commission as a means of assessing an institution's financial capability (see IV.B.1.).~~ Also, refer to Chapter III. Section A., Application, Evaluation, Approval Process and Recordkeeping, for additional information on the application process.

An applicant must report any current, previous, or final action of which it is the subject, including probationary status, by a recognized accrediting agency or state agency potentially leading to the withdrawal, suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation or licensure. Action on the application ~~will~~ may be stayed until the action by the other accrediting agency or state agency is final. A copy of the action letter from the agency must be included with the application. Further, the institution or program must provide evidence of compliance with ABHES requirements and standards relative to the action.

## **SECTION B – Classifications of Facilities**

The following definitions apply to facilities accredited institutionally by ABHES. Institutions holding programmatic accreditation are considered main campuses, but may operate an approved separate classroom. It is important to note that other regulatory bodies may have different designations. Please note that an ABHES Annual Report is required to be completed by all main, non-main and satellite campuses.

### **Subsection 1 – Main campus**

~~The main campus of an institution holds the accreditation for all of the locations where education is offered. An institution's grant of accreditation may include its main, non-main(s), satellite campus and separate classroom(s) and satellite campus. The main campus of an institution holds the accreditation for all of the locations where education is offered. All non-main campuses have their its educational offerings included in the grant of accreditation of the main campus. A satellite campus offers only one complete program of study and is included in the grant of accreditation of the main or non-main campus.~~

Students enrolled at separate classroom(s) are counted as students enrolled at either the main campus, ~~or~~ non-main or satellite campus to which the separate classroom is assigned for purposes of compiling the Annual Report for ABHES and for computing its annual sustaining fee.

### **Subsection 2 – Non-main campus**

A non-main campus meets the following requirements:

- a) It is within the same ownership as the accredited main campus.
- b) It offers at least one complete program leading to an occupational objective. It may offer programs not offered at the main campus.
- c) It has documented legal authorization to operate in the state where the non-main campus is located.
- d) It is described as a non-main campus in a common catalog.
- e) It uses the same name as the main campus.

### Subsection 3 –Satellite campus

A satellite campus meets the following requirements:

- a) It is licensed or otherwise approved by the appropriate state regulatory body.
- b) It offers only one complete program of study.
- ~~e) It falls within main or non-main campus authority.~~
- ~~d)c) It is located at a different address of that of from the main or non-main campus.~~
- ~~e)d) It provides all services that are offered at the main or non-main campus.~~
- ~~f)e) It maintains permanent student records at the satellite campus or at the main or non-main campus that are readily accessible to the satellite campus and students.~~

### Subsection 4 –Separate classroom

A separate classroom meets the following requirements:

- a) ~~Staff Activities are~~is limited ~~primarily~~ to instruction.
- ~~b) Administration is from the main, non-main or satellite campus to which it is assigned.~~
- ~~e)b) A complete program of instruction is not provided.~~
- ~~to ensure students spend an adequate amount of time at the main, non-main or satellite campus to avail themselves to the administrative, student, and educational services offered by the institution.~~
- ~~c) Administrative and support services are offered through the main, non-main or satellite campus.~~
- d) All permanent records are maintained at the main, non-main or satellite campus.
- e) It has a different address from the main, non-main or satellite campus and is within customary and reasonable commuting distance of that campus. (If the classroom is within reasonable walking distance, it is considered a part of the main, ~~or~~ non-main or satellite campus.)

Facilities used to provide distance education methods of delivery are exempt from meeting the requirements for separate classroom space.

**CHAPTER III - GENERAL PROCEDURES  
(APPLIES TO INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS)**

**SECTION A - Application, Evaluation, Approval Process and Recordkeeping**

**Subsection 4 - Additional requirement regarding specific changes**

Whether or not they constitute a Substantial Change and are also subject to the provisions set forth above in Sections III.B.2 or III.B.3, the following modifications in an institution's or program's academic offerings require observing the following procedures for reporting to the Commission:

**A. Revised Program Application**

The following modifications to a program require submission of an application for approval to ABHES. Institutions and programs should be aware that review by ABHES may take several weeks; thus, timely notification is necessary so that changes are approved prior to implementation.

- a. A revision of up to 25 percent of program content (total hours or courses) requires submission of an Application for Minor Program Revision.
- b. A modification to 26 to 50 percent of program content (total hours or courses) requires submission of an Application for Substantive Program Revision.

**B. New Program Application**

The following modifications to a program require prior submission of an Application for New Program Approval:

- a. A modification from a currently approved program to a higher degree
- b. A modification of more than 50 percent of program content (total hours or courses)
- c. The addition of a new program, or reactivation of a discontinued program

An institution or program seeking approval for the first time to add a program resulting in a higher level credential than that approved must undergo a verification visit within six (6) months of program approval.

**C. Notification**

- a. A negative action, including probation, placed upon an institution or program by a recognized accrediting agency, state licensure body, or federal regulatory agency.
- b. The discontinuation of a program(s) (defined as any program that has not been in operation for a continuous twelve-month period). Institutions and programs must submit notification when a program is discontinued. Such notification must be submitted on the ABHES Discontinued Program Form found at [www.abhes.org](http://www.abhes.org). The Annual Report is not sufficient to address discontinued programs. Institutions or programs must also notify the Commission regarding the discontinuation of a previously approved delivery method (e.g., residential, blended, or full distance education).



- c. Hiring of a new On-site Administrator (e.g., Campus President, Director).

#### **D. Addition or Expansion of Distance Education**

ABHES defines distance education as a formal educational process using technologies (as listed in the Glossary) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor. Correspondence education, which is typically self-paced with limited interaction between the students and instructor, is not within ABHES' scope of recognition and is therefore not eligible for accreditation by ABHES.

Prior to the implementation or expansion of distance education, the following applications must be submitted and approved as indicated:

##### 1. Application for Distance Education Delivery

- a. The initial (first-time) addition of distance education to a currently accredited institution or an institution holding a grant of programmatic accreditation; and,
- b. A significant change to or departure from the format, method, or third-party curriculum provider of distance education delivery previously approved by ABHES and utilized by the institution. (Note: A change in the Learning Management System need not be reported unless the change impacts the curriculum.)

##### 2. Application for Expansion of Distance Education Delivery:

- a. Any expansion of the previously approved **type** of distance education courses offered (i.e.g., general education, ~~required didactic or elective~~, core courses, ~~to~~ laboratory-based courses, or remote clinical/externship);
- b. The expansion of an approved blended program to one that is fully delivered via distance education (i.e. partially delivered via distance education to fully delivered via distance education); and,
- c. The expansion of distance education delivery courses to an existing program not currently approved for distance education.

##### 3. Application for ~~Approval of~~ Shared or Common Distance Education Courses

The expansion of distance education delivery to an existing program, utilizing shared courses from a program currently approved for distance education (i.e. shared or common general education courses).

##### 4. Addendum to New and Revised Program Applications

The addendum must be submitted for the expansion of distance education as part of a new or revised program application. If the program is the institution's first full distance education program or includes a remote laboratory/externship an Application for Distance Education Delivery or Application for Expansion of Distance Education Delivery is required.

The addendum is included as part of the Application for New Program Approval, Application for Substantive Program Revision and Application for Minor Program Revision. (ABHES reserves the right

to request additional information or application, as necessary, to determine compliance with accreditation requirements regarding distance education delivery.)

For those institutions or programs applying for the first time to offer program(s) by distance education (not currently approved by ABHES to offer programs by distance delivery), an on-site verification visit will be conducted by a distance education specialist within six (6) months of approval. The verification visit is used to ensure that the institution has the necessary resources in place to deliver distance education offerings effectively. A significant expansion to an institution's distance education offerings may require a remote or on-ground site visit by a distance education and program specialist.

It is the responsibility of an institution to make appropriate notification of program modifications to local, state, and federal entities. If a program must be approved by a state before it can be offered, an institution or program obtains state authorization to offer the method of delivery prior to applying for Commission approval. Programmatic members will provide evidence of their institutional accreditor's approval for the delivery method. In cases where accrediting standards and state regulations differ, the more stringent of these apply. New or expanded distance education courses and programs may not be implemented or advertised until ABHES approval has been granted.

## **SECTION B – Institutional Changes**

### **Subsection 1 - Changes requiring approval**

The following changes must be submitted to ABHES for approval prior to implementation on the appropriate applications (www.abhes.org) for consideration by staff. The Commission may become involved in the consideration if necessary.

(\* denotes a site visit required)

- i. \*Change of location;
- ii. Change of name of controlling institution;
- iii. Addition of new program that does not represent a significant departure from the existing offering of educational programs or method of delivery (note: currently accredited institutional members must adhere to the requirements for initial programmatic eligibility when adding a surgical technology program, which includes the submission of the Application for Programmatic Accreditation);
- iv. Addition of courses or short-term programs not leading to an occupational objective. These courses or short-term program may be excluded from the scope of an institution's grant of accreditation, with the following limitations:
  - a. All advertising and publications (e.g. catalog) referencing ABHES accreditation clearly state that such excluded programs or courses are not included within an institution's grant of accreditation.
  - b. Courses are not being combined with other excluded courses to circumvent accreditation requirements and/or those of other governmental bodies.
  - c. Vocational English-as-a-Second Language program (VESL), must also meet the requirements of Appendix G (Vocational English as a Second Language).
- v. ABHES reserves the right to deny approval of any submissions when the coursework has been determined as occupational or vocational.
- vi. \*Change from non-main to main campus.
- vi. ABHES may require an onsite evaluation for programs which appear to have a significant impact on institutional operations, including mission; equipment; faculty; learning resources; facilities; and budget.

- vii. Business or activity conducted on the institution's campus, which is not included under the grant of accreditation. *Applies only to institutional accreditation.*

## CHAPTER IV EVALUATION STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO INSTITUTIONALLY-ACCREDITED MEMBERS

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) is recognized by the Secretary of Education of the United States Department of Education (Secretary) to accredit private postsecondary institutions that are predominately engaged in health education. The Secretary also recognizes ABHES to accredit individual programs in Medical Assisting, Medical Laboratory Technology, and Surgical Technology that are offered by private or public institutions.

Standards define the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of an effective institution. These characteristics, in turn, assist an institution's staff and faculty in evaluating and adjusting as necessary its major activities so as to ensure achievement of accreditation and the continuous improvement of quantitative and qualitative outcomes. These standards direct a visitation team and the Commission to evaluate an institution as part of the accrediting process.

In order to receive and maintain a grant of institutional accreditation, an institution must:

1. Demonstrate compliance with all ABHES accreditation standards; AND
2. Demonstrate that each educational program offered at the institution complies with the evaluation standards that apply to all programs set forth in Chapter V; AND
3. Demonstrate that each educational program offering a degree complies with the evaluation standards set forth in Chapter VI; AND
4. Demonstrate that each educational program offered in a field for which ABHES has established additional program-specific standards is in compliance with those standards. Program specific standards are identified in the Table of Contents as additional chapters applying to particular programs.

The various degree and program-specific chapters that provide evaluation standards are intended to be complementary and additive and the institution must satisfy all applicable standards.

### SECTION G – Programs

~~*IV.G.1. All programs are approved by the Commission.*~~

~~The grant of institutional accreditation includes all programs that are vocational in nature and are designed to lead to employment. Substantive (as defined by Section III, Subsection B.) changes in these programs or the addition of new programs have been approved by the Commission prior to their implementation.~~

*IV.G.21. Standard academic conversion methodology is applied in calculating and awarding academic credit. (\*\*Please note that clock-hour programs do not fall under these requirements.)*

Institutions adhere to the following definitions and use the formula in calculating credit hours awarded on a course-by-course basis:

Semester - minimum of 15 weeks in length. One semester credit is equal to:

- a. one hour of lecture per week for a semester or the equivalent number of hours.
- b. two hours of lab per week for a semester or the equivalent number of hours.
- c. three hours of externship/clinical per week for a semester or the equivalent number of hours.

Quarter - minimum of 10 weeks in length. One-quarter credit is equal to:

- a. one hour of lecture per week for a quarter or the equivalent number of hours.
- b. two hours of lab per week for a quarter or the equivalent number of hours.
- c. three hours of externship/clinical per week for a quarter or the equivalent number of hours.

Continuous Term - a non-traditional term length, allowing enrollment at various points in the calendar year.

Programs offered on a block basis or continuous term may elect either the semester or quarter formula for determination of credit. The minimum conversion formulas are as follows:

Quarter	Semester
10	15 hours of lecture
20	30 hours of laboratory
30	45 hours of externship/clinical

Partial credits for a course are rounded to the next lowest half or whole number. A course may be comprised of any combination of lecture, laboratory and/or externship. A clock (or contact) hour is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes of supervised or directed instruction in any 60-minute period. Care is taken in scheduling breaks.

An example of the calculation is as follows:

Quarter system		Semester system	
6 hours lecture =	0.60	6 hours lecture =	0.40
25 hours lab =	1.25	25 hours lab =	0.83
70 hours externship =	2.30	70 hours externship =	1.55
Total =	4.15	Total =	2.78

Rounding occurs following the calculation of the lecture, laboratory and externship components resulting in a total of 4.0 quarter or 2.5 semester credits when rounded down to the next lowest half or whole number.

If a program offers both a distance education and a traditional campus-based component, the quality of the education and credit awarded is equivalent in all three aspects of the curriculum: didactic, laboratory, and clinical.

Institutions should be aware that federal requirements regarding the calculation of clock and credit hours, including minimum number of weeks per academic year required for Title IV purposes, may vary from ABHES requirements.

Definitions, conversions and calculations for recognition of outside (student preparation) hours are applied to programs which are terminal and not fully transferable.

Institutions and programs are expected to adhere at a minimum to the following formula for outside preparation hours on a course-by-course basis:

i.) Semester Credit Hours- 7.5 outside preparation hours for each credit hour of lecture/laboratory (outside preparation hours for clinical experiences will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In general, however, clinical experiences may not require outside preparation hours. If outside hours are awarded, the institution or program must provide justification and the rationale for these hours).

ii.) Quarter Credit Hours- 5.0 outside preparation hours for each credit hour of lecture/laboratory (outside preparation hours for clinical experiences will be reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In general, however, clinical experiences may not require outside preparation hours. If outside hours are awarded, the institution or program must provide justification and the rationale for these hours).

The institution or program may elect to include more outside preparation hours than the minimums listed above and these will be reviewed for their academic quality and rigor for the particular course.

***IV.G.32. An institution that participates in Federal Financial Aid programs complies with Federal requirements for clock-to-credit hour conversions.***

ABHES will affirmatively evaluate whether the institution is meeting the Federal Financial Aid requirements. If the Commission finds systemic or significant non-compliance regarding one or more programs at the institution, ABHES will promptly notify the U.S. Secretary of Education.

## **CHAPTER V EVALUATION STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

### **SECTION A – Goals and Oversight**

***V.A.5.a. A program has an active advisory board of in-field specialists, current in the applicable specialty, representing its communities of interest, to assist administration and faculty in fulfilling stated educational objectives.***

At a minimum the institution has an advisory board comprised of at least three community representatives, not employed by the institution, for each discipline or group of related programs (e.g., medical assisting and medical administrative assisting). These individuals collectively provide a reasonable sampling of the community and are knowledgeable about the current state of the field. Programs offering complete or partial content by distance education have a minimum of one representative, not affiliated with the institution, specializing in this method of delivery. The distance education specialist's role is, at a minimum, to review and comment on the method of delivery, process and infrastructure in the context of the courses or programs.

The board convenes a minimum of once per 12-month period and addresses a broad range of topics that may include the program's mission and objectives, curriculum, outcomes, program strength and weaknesses in preparing graduates, current and projected community needs for graduates in the field, annual evaluation of program effectiveness, and student, graduate, clinical externship, and employer feedback.

***V.A.5.b. Prepared meeting minutes are maintained, distributed and used to improve program effectiveness.***

~~Prepared minutes of meetings are maintained, distributed and used to improve curricula.~~ Meeting minutes include member participation, topics discussed, summary of significant outcomes and activities, areas of

unfinished business with projection for completion, and a list of recommendations made by the advisory board, and the program's or institution's response to these recommendations.

**SECTION B – Curriculum, Competencies, Clinical Experience**  
**(see Glossary for definition of clinical experiences)**

**V.B.4.a.** *External clinical experiences are available to serve the diverse needs of a program(s).  
(for applicable programs)*

Prior to initial assignment of students to a clinical experience site, an individual employed by the institution who meets the minimum qualifications of a program faculty member is responsible to prepare a signed documented evaluation ensuring that a viable environment exists for an effective learning experience that provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate required competencies.

Students are provided assistance in seeking placement at an externship site; the responsibility for placing students rests with the institution or program.

A program administrator maintains current, signed clinical affiliation agreements for all active clinical experiences.

Program administrators ensure that clinical preceptors hold a current license, certification or other credential as required by local, state and/or federal laws to work in the field.

**SECTION E – Program Management**

**Subsection 1 – Program administration**

**V.E.1.d.** ~~*An annual*~~Annual ~~*program of training for program supervisors, either institution-wide or by program,*~~ is provided for the improvement of education-related management skills.

Documentation of training and evidence of attendance is required. Training topics focus on program management functions and administrative responsibilities as it pertains to the educational product.

**SECTION H – Disclosures**

**V.H.1.** *A program is approved by the Commission.*

Programs must be offered and delivered as approved by the Commission. Changes (as defined by Section III, Subsection B.) in these programs or the addition of new programs have been approved by the Commission prior to implementation.

**V.H.12.** *A program accurately presents its accreditation status to the public.*

If a program releases incorrect information regarding its accreditation status, the contents of a site visit report, or accreditation actions with respect to the program, it must expeditiously make a public disclosure of correction through the same means of advertising. No reference to ABHES accreditation can be made in reference to any program prior to final action by ABHES granting inclusion of a program within an institution's current grant of accreditation or the granting of programmatic accreditation. Institutions or programs in the initial application stage, either for accreditation or a substantive change (see III.B. of the Accreditation Manual) may not make any reference to ABHES accreditation.

The program clearly communicates its accreditation status to its prospective and enrolled students in the following situations: (i) the program does not currently hold programmatic accreditation that might have implications for the graduates to become employed in the profession, or (ii) the program is subject to an adverse action that might result in the loss of accreditation.

**V.H.23.** *All representations regarding the program are accurate, complete and not misleading.*

All statements made by personnel are based on accurate, verified facts and are provided in a manner and in a context to assure that a reasonable recipient is not misled. Any information with regard to salary, employment opportunities and employment information to students, prospective students and the public is accurate and realistic.

Prior to admission, students are clearly advised of any credentialing or licensing requirements available or necessary for employment in the field.

## **SECTION I – Program Effectiveness**

### **Subsection 1 - Student achievement indicators**

**V.I.1.a.** *A program demonstrates that students complete their program.*

The retention rate is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation, for the reporting period July 1 through June 30, as follows:

$$\text{Retention Rate} = (\text{EE} + \text{G}) / (\text{BE} + \text{NS} + \text{RE})$$

EE= Ending Enrollment (Number of students in class, on clinical experience and/or leave of absence on as-of June 30)

G= Graduates

BE= Beginning Enrollment (Number of students in class, on clinical experience and/or leave of absence on as-of July 1)

NS= New Starts

RE= Re-Entries (number of students that re-enter into school who dropped from a previous annual report time period)

At a minimum, an institution maintains the names of all enrollees by program, start date, and graduation date.

**V.I.1.d.** *A program demonstrates that graduates are successfully employed in the field, or related field, for which they were trained.*

An institution has a system in place to assist with the successful initial employment of its graduates. A graduate must be employed for 15 days and the verification must take place no earlier than 15 days after employment.

The placement rate is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation, for the reporting period July 1 through June 30, as follows:

$$\text{Placement Rate} = (\text{F} + \text{R}) / (\text{G}-\text{U})$$



F = Graduates placed in their field of training  
R\* = Graduates placed in a *related* field of training  
G = Total graduates  
U\*\* = Graduates unavailable for placement

\*Related field refers to a position wherein the majority of the graduate's job functions are related require the use of to the skills and knowledge acquired through successful completion of the training program.

\*\*Unavailable is defined only as documented: health-related issues, military obligations, incarceration, continuing education status, or death.

**Important Note:** graduates pending required credentialing/licensure in a regulated profession required to work in the field and, thus, not employed or not working in a related field as defined above, should be reported through back-up information required in the Annual Report. This fact will then be taken into consideration if the program placement rate falls below expectations and an Action Plan is required by ABHES.

At a minimum, an institution maintains the names of graduates, place of employment, job title, employer telephone numbers, and employment and verification dates.

The institution must provide additional documentation (examples may include but not limited to position description, job description, employer letter, graduate attestation) and rationale to justify graduates identified as self-employed, employed in a related field, or unavailable for employment.

*V.I.I.e. A program demonstrates that its required constituencies participate in completing program surveys.*

A program must survey the following constituencies: current students (~~classroom and clinical experience~~), clinical extern affiliates, graduates, and employers.

The purpose of the surveys is to collect data regarding a perception of a program's strengths and weaknesses.

Accordingly, a program must document that at a minimum the survey data included in its effectiveness assessment include the following:

**Student:**

Student surveys provide insight regarding student satisfaction relative to all aspects of the program such as instruction, educational resources, and student services, and as well as their clinical experience. The surveys identify strengths and weaknesses from a student's perspective.

**Clinical extern affiliate:**

Externship site surveys include a critique of students' knowledge and skills upon completion of their in-school training and reflect how well the students are trained to perform their required tasks. They include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses, and proposed changes, in the instructional activities for currently enrolled students. The sites also evaluate the responsiveness and support provided by the designated school representative, who visited the site and remained in contact with the site throughout the duration of the students' externship.

**Graduate:**

A program has a systematic plan for regularly surveying graduates, which determines if: (i) graduates have been informed of applicable credentialing requirements (ii) the classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences prepared students for employment and (iii) graduates are satisfied with their educational training.

**Employer:**

A program has a systematic plan for regularly surveying employers, which determines if: (i) information on whether the skill level of the employee is adequate, and (ii) if the employer would hire another graduate from the program.

The survey participation rate is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation, for the reporting period July 1 through June 30, as follows:

**Survey Participation Rate = SP / NS**

SP = Survey Participation (those who actually filled out the survey)

NS = Number Surveyed (total number of surveys sent out)

*V.I.1.f. A program demonstrates that each constituency satisfaction rate is determined ~~it has developed survey satisfaction benchmarks based on required constituency program surveys.~~*

~~A program must establish satisfaction benchmarks for current students (classroom and clinical experiences), clinical extern affiliates, graduates, and employers. The purpose of the benchmarks is to create a reference for collect data regarding satisfaction with the program's stated objectives and goals.~~

The ~~benchmark~~ satisfaction rate is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation, for the reporting period July 1 through June 30, as follows:

**~~Benchmark~~ Satisfaction Rate = SL/SP**

SL = Satisfaction ~~level~~ Level

SP = Survey Participation

~~At a minimum, an annual review of the results is conducted and shared with administration, faculty and advisory boards. Decisions and action plans are based upon the review of the surveys, and any changes made are documented (e.g., meeting minutes, memoranda).~~

~~Accordingly, a program must document that at a minimum the survey data included in its effectiveness assessment include the following:~~

**~~Student (classroom and clinical experience):~~**

~~Student surveys provide insight regarding student satisfaction relative to all aspects of the program such as instruction, educational resources, and student services, as well as their clinical experience. The surveys identify strengths and weaknesses from a student's perspective.~~

**~~Clinical extern affiliate:~~**

~~Externship site surveys include a critique of students' knowledge and skills upon completion of their in-school training and reflect how well the students are trained to perform their required tasks. They include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses, and proposed changes, in the instructional activities for currently enrolled students. The sites also evaluate the responsiveness and support provided by the designated school representative, who visited the site and remained in contact with the site throughout the duration of the students' externship.~~

**Graduate:**

~~A program has a systematic plan for regularly surveying graduates, which determines if: (i) graduates have been informed of applicable credentialing requirements (ii) the classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences prepared students for employment and (iii) graduates are satisfied with their educational training.~~

**Employer:**

~~A program has a systematic plan for regularly surveying employers, which determines if: (i) information on whether the skill level of the employee is adequate, and (ii) if the employer would hire another graduate from the program.~~

**Subsection 2 – Program Effectiveness Plan (PEP) content**

*V.I.2. A program has an established documented plan for assessing its effectiveness as defined by specific outcomes.*

While each program must represent each element required below, the plan may be a comprehensive one which collectively represents all programs within the institution or may be individual plans for each distinct program.

The Program Effectiveness Plan clearly describes the following elements:

**a. student population**

A description of the characteristics of the student population is included in the Plan.

**b. program objectives**

Programs objectives are consistent with the field of study and the credential offered and include as an objective the comprehensive preparation of program graduates for work in the career field.

**c. program retention rate**

The retention rate for the previous two years and the current year is identified which is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation for the reporting period July 1 through June 30. Based upon these rates, the institution must then identify its retention rate goal for the next reporting year and the factors considered in determining such a goal and the activities undertaken to meet the goal.

**d. credentialing examination participation rate**

The credentialing examination participation rate for the previous two years and the current year is identified which is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation for the reporting period July 1 through June 30. Based upon these rates, the institution must then identify its credentialing

participation rate goal for the next reporting year and the factors considered in determining such a goal and the activities undertaken to meet the goal.

**e. credentialing examination pass rate**

The credentialing examination pass rate for the previous two years and the current year is identified which is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation for the reporting period July 1 through June 30. Based upon these rates, the institution must then identify its credentialing pass rate goal for the next reporting year and the factors considered in determining such a goal and the activities undertaken to meet the goal.

**f. job placement rate**

The job placement rate for the previous two years and the current year is identified which is determined by using the ABHES required method of calculation for the reporting period July 1 through June 30. Based upon these rates, the institution must then identify its placement rate goal for the next reporting year and the factors considered in determining such a goal and the activities undertaken to meet the goal.

**g. satisfaction surveys of students ~~(classroom and clinical experience)~~, clinical extern affiliates, graduates and employers**

At a minimum, an annual review of results of the surveys is conducted, and results are shared with administration, faculty and advisory boards. Decisions and action plans are based upon review of the surveys, and any changes made are documented (e.g., meeting minutes, memoranda).

The institution establishes: 1) a goal for the percent of surveys returned and 2) benchmarks for the level of satisfaction desired.

A program must establish satisfaction benchmarks for students, clinical extern affiliates, graduates, and employers. A benchmark is a point of reference by which constituency satisfaction can be assessed. The purpose of the benchmarks is to create a reference for satisfaction with the program's stated objectives and goals.

**h. If program is offered in a blended or full distance education format, the PEP includes an assessment of the effectiveness of the instructional delivery method.**

**Subsection 3 - Outcomes assessment**

***V.I.3. A program has a process for assessing effectiveness annually.***

The Program Effectiveness Plan specifies a process and a timetable for thise annual assessment of program effectiveness.

~~The plan must:~~

i. Identify the process for how data were collected, timetable for data collection, and parties responsible for data collection.

ii. Include an assessment of the curriculum that uses tools which might include examinations, advisory board input, competency and skill outcomes, faculty review of resource materials, and graduate and employer surveys. Results of the assessment are not required to be reported to ABHES, but are considered in annual curriculum revision by such parties as the program supervisor, faculty, and the advisory board. Changes adopted are included in the program effectiveness plan.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **DEGREE PROGRAM STANDARDS**

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to accredit occupational science, applied science, and academic associate degrees. These degree programs must comply with all policies, procedures, and standards described throughout the *Accreditation Manual*, including the general evaluation standards (Chapter IV), applicable program standards (Chapters VI-VIII), and appendices. This chapter contains additional specific requirements for degree programs.

Degree programs represent a significant additional educational commitment by the institution. The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that institutions offering degree programs have the ability to meet this educational commitment and that they only award degrees to eligible students who, within the required time frame, complete program requirements.

Degree programs are normally measured in credit hours (quarter or semester) and accrediting standards pertaining to credits hours apply.

#### **SECTION A – Occupational and Applied Science Degrees**

An Associate of Occupational Science (AOS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), or another title as designated or permitted by state law or regulations may be awarded to students who complete an occupational program that provides preparation for entry-level employment in a specific occupational field.

Catalogs and other promotional materials used for an AOS degree clearly state the purpose of the program and clarify that an AOS degree is a terminal occupational degree and the academic credits earned may or may not be transferable to another higher-level degree program.

An AAS may be awarded to students who complete an educational program that provides preparation for entry-level employment in a specific field as well as skills and knowledge that permit advancement in the field. AAS degrees include a significant component of general education courses. Institutions offering AAS degrees are encouraged to pursue articulation agreements with other institutions of postsecondary education to provide opportunities for academic mobility. Institutions offering an AOS or AAS degree must disclose in catalogs and other promotional materials that transferability of credits to other institutions is at the discretion of the receiving institution and that the institution makes no guarantees of transferability.

#### **Subsection 2 – Faculty**

##### **VI.A.2. *Faculty consists of qualified individuals.***

Instructors of occupational courses possess the following:

- a. Current licenses, certifications, or other designations as required by local, state, or federal laws to work in the field;
- b. Graduation from a program in the field in which they teach, accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or an otherwise recognized training entity (e.g., hospital-based program) in the specialty field; and

- c. A minimum of three years of occupational experience in the subject field or in a closely related field; or
- d. A minimum of four years of job-related training and experience for those instructors who are not graduates from a program in the field in which they teach.

Instructors of general education possess a baccalaureate degree and academic preparation ~~with education~~ in specific courses being taught.

~~In addition, all instructors must demonstrate strength in instructional methodology, delivery, and techniques as evidenced by evaluation by a program supervisor or director of education within 30 days of beginning instruction.~~

## **SECTION B – Academic Associate Degrees**

Academic associate degree programs may include Associate of Art and Associate of Science degree programs or any other associate degree program that meets the requirements of this section.

### **Subsection 2 – Faculty**

#### ***VI.B.2. Faculty consists of qualified individuals.***

All instructors hold, at a minimum, a baccalaureate degree with academic preparation in the specific courses being taught. Instructors of general education must have at least 15 semester credit hours or equivalent in the subject area or demonstrates equivalent, relevant training or experience in the subject matter (applicable to new faculty hires or instructors teaching new general education subjects after January 1, 2012).

Additionally, instructors of occupational courses possess the following:

- a. graduation from a program in the field in which they teach accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation; and
- b. a minimum of three years of occupational experience in the subject field or in a closely related field.

Exceptions to the baccalaureate degree requirement may be justified for instructors teaching technical or vocational subjects in fields in which baccalaureate degrees are not generally available. An institution must be able to justify the assignment of any instructor who does not hold a baccalaureate degree in the assigned teaching field.

**At least 50 percent of courses offered in the degree program must be taught by faculty possessing a baccalaureate degree or higher. Further, at least 50 percent of general education courses must be taught by faculty possessing a master's degree or higher. In all cases, the degree must be from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.**

## **SECTION C – Baccalaureate Degrees**

### **Subsection 2 – Program supervision and faculty**

**VI.C.2.a. A qualified individual supervises the program(s) offered by the institution.**

This individual supervises faculty, coordinates the training and teaching of the programs, and has ~~continuous~~ communication with and guidance of the Advisory Board. At a minimum, this individual possesses the following:

- a. An earned master's degree;
- b. a minimum of three years teaching or occupational experience in the subject field or a closely related field; and
- c. where applicable, certification in the occupation and meets state requirements.

**VI.C.2.b. Faculty consists of qualified individuals.**

~~The institution has a competent faculty in numbers to support the enrollment. In judging competence, consideration must be given to the academic preparation and experience of each instructor.~~

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~~Instructors hold, at a minimum, a baccalaureate-master's degrees from an accredited program recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) at a minimum and academic preparation in the specific courses being taught, and instructors teaching general education and other academic courses are assigned based on their major and minor academic preparation and related experience. Exceptions to the baccalaureate degree requirement may be justified, however, for instructors teaching technical or vocational subjects in fields in which baccalaureate degrees are not generally available who have demonstrable alternative expertise in the field, such as educational preparation at other than the baccalaureate degree level, professional certification, or significant related work experience. The institution must be able to justify the assignment of any instructor who does not hold a baccalaureate degree in the assigned teaching field.~~

~~Instructors must have at least 15 semester credit hours or equivalent in the subject area. In addition to the baccalaureate degree requirements outlined above, at least one half of all lower division courses and all upper division courses, including those core courses common to non-academic degree or non-degree programs, must be taught by faculty members. Faculty members holding graduate degrees, professional degrees such as J.D. or M.D., or baccalaureate degrees plus professional certification through a nationally recognized and accrediting certifying agency may meet the qualification requirement with justification. This calculation does not apply, however, to courses in fields in which graduate degrees, professional degrees, or professional certifications are not generally available.~~



**CHAPTER VII – ST  
PROGRAMMATIC EVALUATION STANDARDS  
FOR SURGICAL TECHNOLOGY**

**SECTION A – Curriculum, Competencies, Externship and/or Internal Clinical Experience**

***ST.A.1. The depth and breadth of the program’s curriculum enables graduates to acquire the knowledge and competencies necessary to become an entry-level professional in the surgical technology field.***

The program’s goals are:

- i. documented and written in a manner to ensure that the curriculum is current with industry standards,
- ii. meeting the demands of the communities of interest (e.g., students, graduates, employers, physicians, and the public), and
- iii. sufficiently comprehensive to ensure that students obtain appropriate hands-on training in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective learning domains that enables them to be competent, entry-level surgical technologists.

Competencies required for successful completion of the program are:

- i. clearly delineated,
- ii. commonly accepted, and
- iii. adhering to the current Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology, produced by the Association of Surgical Technologists ([www.ast.org](http://www.ast.org)).

Normally a minimum of 1,100 clock hours, including a 500 clock-hour clinical experience, is required for program completion. While each program will be assessed for its effectiveness in achieving program objectives and competencies, justification for deviations from the lengths identified above may require addressing such issues as student outcomes and employer satisfaction.

~~Students are advised, prior to admission and throughout the program, of any credentialing requirements necessary to achieve employment in the field. Focus is placed on credentialing requirements and opportunities to obtain employment.~~

## CHAPTER IX DISTANCE EDUCATION

### EVALUATION STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFERING DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools is recognized to accredit programs delivered utilizing distance education methodologies. ABHES defines distance education as a formal educational process using technologies (as listed in the glossary) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor. Correspondence education, which is typically self-paced with limited interaction between the students and instructor, is not within ABHES' scope of recognition and is therefore not eligible for accreditation by ABHES.

Institutions or programs seeking or holding accreditation by ABHES that offer blended or full distance education must comply with remaining accreditation standards described throughout the Accreditation Manual, including Chapter IV for all institutions, Chapter V for all programs, Chapter VI for degree-granting programs, Chapters VII and VIII for specialized programs, and all appendices, as applicable. This chapter (1) contains additional requirements specifically applicable to distance education, or (2) emphasizes requirements that are made more challenging by the lack of proximity among students, faculty, and administration.

#### SECTION A - ~~Objectives-Goals~~ and Oversight

*IX.A. Monitor academic progress to ensure that distance education students are advised of their progress in a timely manner and that assistance is offered, if needed.*

#### SECTION B - Curriculum, Competencies, Clinical Experiences

*IX.B 1. Provide in the distance education coursework for timely, regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students and among students.*

An institution or program demonstrates that interaction between faculty and students and among students ~~takes place within~~ is built into the distance education ~~delivery system curriculum~~ regardless if the course is offered in a blended or full distance education format.

*IX.B.2. The curricula for the distance education offerings are comparable in academic rigor to educational offerings on ground.*

Academic rigor of a distance education program or course (didactic, laboratory and clinical experiences) must be comparable with that of a program or course delivered on ground. Prior to beginning a clinical experience, competencies must be validated in writing along with a description of the method used to validate competencies.

## **SECTION E - Program Management**

### **Subsection 2 – Faculty requirements**

*IX.E.2.a. Distance education faculty have performance reviews to assess their effectiveness in the distance education environment.*

Distance education faculty are evaluated for their performance in the distance education environment as part of their 30-day and annual reviews (refer to V.E.2.~~a.iii~~-b.).

## **SECTION H - Disclosures**

*IX.H.5. Disclose in writing, prior to enrollment, any material circumstance that may adversely impact an applicant's ability to complete a program or gain employment in the field for which they applicant is ~~are~~ trained.*

If the institution or program offers distance education outside the state in which the institution or program is physically located, it must disclose to the student prior to enrollment and registration, any barriers to program completion, credentialing or employment for students receiving education in these states. The institution must further disclose that if the student relocates to a state in which the institution does not have approval to operate prior to program completion that this may adversely impact the student's ability to complete the program or gain in-field employment.

## APPENDIX C CATALOGS

The following items are to be incorporated:

1. Name, address, and telephone number.
2. Date of catalog printing.
3. Statement of history and ownership.
4. Names of the officers (may be included as an insert).
5. Mission statement
6. Listing of approvals, licensures, memberships in professional or trade associations (approvals or affiliations are clearly stated and properly presented, e.g., licensed by the state; member of associations).
7. Listing of agencies that accredit an institution, including the address and telephone number. The scope of accreditation is clearly designated (institutional or program accreditation).
8. Academic calendar listing program timelines, calendar break periods, and holidays (this may be included as an insert).
9. Listing of administrative staff and faculty (full- and part-time) that includes each faculty member's level of education, degrees, and name of institution conferring same. If a faculty member is on a part-time basis, or is considered a consultant or adjunct, such facts are clearly stated. The names of the management team of an institution and their titles are listed (this may be included as an insert).
10. Admission requirements and procedures (if applicable, include a clear statement of requirements for students to be admitted under the ability-to-benefit standard).
11. Educational programs offered, which includes the following information:
  - a. **Program objectives:** clearly defined statement of goals of program, type of instruction, level of occupation for which training is intended and for whom the training is intended. The courses and academic standards required for successful completion of the programs and the credential given for successful completion are also stated.
  - b. **Program schedule:** the number of total weeks and contact hours for the program. If credit hours are awarded, the credits are listed. A separate statement for the definition of credit (quarter or semester and its equivalent to clock hours) is included in the catalog.
  - c. **Course Descriptions:** sufficiently detailed to define the scope and sequence, hours, and credit awarded, if applicable (subject or "course" descriptions appears in the catalog but may be listed in a separate section).
  - d. **Program delivery:** an institution must identify the type of instructional delivery (i.e. residential, distance learning, or a combination of both.)

12. A general description of the facility, including classrooms, laboratories and equipment. All pictures used must be identified in the institutional catalog, brochures, and other printed material and clearly and explicitly state if they are not actually a part of the institution's facilities. All laboratories, classrooms, and other physical facilities are those actually used by an institution in the instruction of its students and are properly labeled.
13. Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.
14. Grading scale (system).
15. Student services describing available services to students, such as academic advising, tutoring, career advising, placement assistance, and facilities, specifically regarding accessibility for disabled students.
16. Cancellation and refund policies (see ABHES requirements for minimum standards) and policies for refunds to Title IV programs.
17. Tuition breakdown, including registration fee, tuition, and any other fees charged for each program. Any other costs such as books, supplies, and any/all costs of equipment and materials required to complete the program must be listed. Tuition payment plans, financial aid information and policies are listed (may be included as an insert).
18. A clear statement that an institution does not guarantee employment.
19. Nondiscrimination statement.
20. Rules and regulations (may be included in a student handbook with proper references made in the catalog).
21. A policy and published criteria addressing advanced placement and credit for experiential learning.
22. Full and complete disclosure of any portion of a program that is delivered in a language other than English.
23. A policy for transfer of credit that requires consideration of credit or clock hours earned from other at another –institutions accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA.) If the institution accepts credits earned at another institution that is not located in the United States or its territories the policy must include that the specific education is evaluated by an agency which attests to the qualitative and quantitative equivalency of the foreign education and the specific course or courses for which transfer credit is to be awarded. The institution must use the credential evaluation services of an agency that has published standards for membership, affiliations to international higher education associations, and are frequently linked to and used by federal agencies, state agencies, educational institutions and employers (e.g., NACES and AICE).

**If a common catalog is used for more than one institution, the following also applies:**

24. All institutions are of common ownership.
25. Any pictures of facilities are labeled to identify the institution.

26. Supervisory personnel from the corporate or highest administration level are identified.
27. Any information common to all institutions is clearly identified.
28. Full addresses are included and proper campus designation (main, non-main, satellite, separate classroom) is made.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS**

The following items are to be incorporated into an institution's enrollment agreement:

1. Title of agreement and date printed.
2. Name, address, and telephone number of the institution.
3. Program title.
4. Number of weeks ~~or months~~ typically required for completion and total clock hours if the program is a clock-hour program or total credit hours (quarter or semester) if the program is approved as a credit hour program.
5. Credential (degree, diploma, certificate) awarded upon completion.
6. Program tuition including registration fee and any other fees charged and the tuition period for which the agreement covers.
7. Estimated costs of learning resources that are required and available for purchase through the institution and any/all other costs of on-site equipment and materials required to complete the program.
8. Program start date and anticipated end date.
9. Employment guarantee disclaimer.
10. Acknowledgement that a student has received and read the agreement.
11. Signatures of applicant, parent or guardian, as applicable, and school official, and date signed.
12. Signature of institution's administrator responsible for making admission determination (excludes admission representative) and date signed.

## APPENDIX E RECORDS MAINTENANCE

Institutions and program(s) maintain records in an easily accessible and orderly fashion. Minimally, the following records must be maintained. A variety of methods may be used for retention of these documents.

### A. Students (current, withdrawn, graduate, LOA)

1. Enrollment agreement
2. Signed attestation of high school graduation or equivalent (e.g. diploma, transcript or GED)
3. Admission determination documentation (e.g., admission exam, counseling documentation for students admitted under an ability-to-benefit determination)
4. Financial records (e.g., required financial aid documentation, tuition payments, refund calculations and evidence of monies returned). Required for institutional members only.
5. Academic transcript (must be maintained indefinitely)
6. Attendance records (if applicable)
7. Progress reports or correspondence
8. Evaluations for externships and/or internal clinical experiences
9. Documentation of placement activity

Records must be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years after the end of the institution's most recent fiscal year during which the students were last enrolled.

### B. Faculty

- ~~1.~~ ~~Employment application~~
- ~~2~~1. Signed job description appropriate to position and level of responsibility.
- ~~3~~2. Resume or curriculum vitae
- ~~4~~3. Evidence of all degrees (official or unofficial transcripts), other education, and/or certifications
- ~~5~~4. Annual performance evaluations by supervisor.
- ~~6~~5. Evidence that classroom evaluation for new instructors is completed within 30 days of beginning instruction.
- ~~7~~6. Documentation of continued professional development, as applicable to employment position (e.g., continuing education, membership in professional organizations, attendance at relative workshops or seminars).
- ~~8~~7. Fully completed, signed and annually updated ABHES Faculty Data Sheets.



| 98. Completed Hepatitis B immunization or declination forms for at risk faculty.

## GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are provided for informational purposes only to assist institutions and programs in understanding and interpreting the Accreditation Manual and are not to be considered separate standards. The definitions include some of the most commonly used terms and are defined to reflect their most common usage. These definitions are drawn from no single resource and are offered by way of example rather than limitation.

**Clinical Experiences** - A supervised practical experience where students demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired. that involves planned activities promoting the acquisition and demonstration of knowledge and skills by providing opportunities for the application of theory through assignments in a health care setting.

i.)**External Clinical Experiences** – A field-based, externship or clinical experience accomplished through assignments in a health care setting such as a hospital, long-term care facility, clinic, community health agency, or other approved health care provider. A written agreement between the institution and the externship or clinical site includes specific learning objectives and evaluation criteria.

ii.)**Internal Clinical Experiences** – A campus-delivered clinical experience incorporating actual or simulated patient care.

**Foreign Education Equivalency** – Evaluation of a transcript from an institution located of the United States and its territories using an agency which attests to the qualitative and quantitative equivalency of the foreign education and the specific course or courses. The institution must use the credential evaluation services of an agency that has published standards for membership, affiliations to international higher education associations, and are frequently linked to and used by federal agencies, educational institutions and employers (e.g., NACES and AICE). (Note: language from [www.ed.gov/international/unsei/edlite-index.html](http://www.ed.gov/international/unsei/edlite-index.html))

**Institutional Accreditation-** A grant of accreditation includes all programs that are offered by the institution. provided to an institution that Programs are career-focused and designed to lead to employment and meets the accrediting body's standards.

**Preceptor-** An individual with professional expertise responsible for ~~instruction and~~ oversight of students on clinical sites. Preceptors hold current license, certification or other credential as required by local, state and/or federal laws to work in the field.

**Residential delivery** – All coursework within a program is delivered at an approved campus location

**Simulation** - A technique for practice and learning that imitates and replaces real experiences with guided ones that replicate aspects of the real world in a fully interactive fashion.