



ACCREDITING BUREAU OF HEALTH EDUCATION SCHOOLS
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ABHES BULLETIN

To: ABHES-Accredited Institutions
From: Carol A. Moneymaker, Executive Director
Date: June 8, 2012
Ref: Application for Exclusion of Continuing Education Courses or Program

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES or the Commission) has received a number of inquiries regarding the *Application for Exclusion of Continuing Education Courses or Program*. At its May meeting, the Commission reviewed the requirements relating to continuing education exclusions and determined that the current policy remains appropriate.

The policy permits certain educational activities to be excluded from ABHES accreditation, providing these courses or program/s meet the following prerequisite requirements, as outlined in Chapter III, Section B, Subsection 1 (iv.), of the *Accreditation Manual*:

- 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 H (Vocational English as a Second Language).*

Based on its review, the Commission reconfirmed that any courses or program/s considered vocational in nature or scope do not fall within the parameters of the exclusion. For example, a short-term course or program in the areas of Phlebotomy; EKG Technician; Nurse Aide; Nurse Assistant; Medical Billing and Coding; other health education disciplines; and other occupations in which vocational training is necessary for employment are not eligible for exclusion by ABHES. It is noted the examples provided are programs commonly accredited throughout the country by ABHES and considered vocational. The Commission determined that such courses or program/s include an occupational objective regardless of length and enrollment criteria.

Examples of commonly accepted short-term courses or programs that fall within the exclusion category may include brief (i.e., 1-2 day) seminars or workshops which focus on a particular aspect of an academic discipline necessary to maintain employment (via Continuing Education Units (CEUs)); seminars to prepare for certification exams; or an update to an existing skill-set (e.g., an individual working as an administrative medical assistant who must be trained on new, required coding practices). Other examples may include a seminar or workshop on CPR; American Heart Association – BLS, ACLS, PALS; Massage

Therapy-related course/s; singularly focused courses such as Paramedic Refresher; ICD-10 CM Training; or Classification of Diseases, to list only a limited sample.

The ABHES *Application for Exclusion of Continuing Education Courses or Program* has been updated for clarity and institutions are now asked to include the following with their submission:

1. A detailed description of the educational objectives of the short-term course or a detailed synopsis of the activities or courses contained within the program.
2. The intended target audience and/or student expected to undertake the short-term training.
3. A detailed description of the criteria for enrollment.
4. The type of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) awarded, if applicable. Institutions may not award academic credit or confer an academic credential. A copy of the document provided to the participant upon completion of the course or program must be submitted with the application.

If an institution's currently approved exclusion does not meet the ABHES requirements as described in this bulletin, the institution must request reconsideration by ABHES no later than **July 1, 2012**. Otherwise, the institution must discontinue the excluded courses or programs and teach out any currently enrolled students no later than **July 31, 2012**.

If the institution wishes to continue offering previously excluded short-term courses or program/s which do not meet the requirements of III.B.1.iv as noted above, the institution must submit an Application for New Program Approval. The application fee will be waived (only for those previously excluded).

Institutions with a pending (unapproved) Application for Exclusion of Continuing Education Courses or Program are advised to contact the ABHES office to review and discuss whether the recently submitted exclusion request meets the Commission's expectations as outlined in Chapter III, Section B, Subsection 1 (iv.), of the *Accreditation Manual*.

Institutions may access the revised application via the following link:

http://www.abhes.org/assets/uploads/files/Application_for_Exclusion_of_Courses_or_Programs_6-2012.doc

For questions regarding the Continuing Education Exclusion application process, please contact Thomas J. Cornacchia, Director of Curriculum and Policy Development at 703.917.9596 or tcornacchia@abhes.org.