



ACCREDITING BUREAU OF HEALTH EDUCATION SCHOOLS  
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## MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Carol Moneymaker, Executive Director

DATE: August 3, 2012

SUBJECT: Final Revisions to *Accreditation Manual* - Effective Immediately

Following distribution on May 24, 2012, to solicit public comment, the Commission of the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) approved final revisions to the 17th Edition of the *Accreditation Manual*, **effective immediately**. New language is **underlined** and **~~deleted~~** language struck.

Visit [www.abhes.org](http://www.abhes.org) News link, should you wish to review again the proposed changes that resulted in these final revisions.

The revised Accreditation Manual is posted at [www.abhes.org/publications](http://www.abhes.org/publications).

1. Self-Evaluation Reports

**Chapter III- General Procedures  
(Applies to Institutions and Programs)**

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

**Subsection 2- Self-Evaluation Report and analysis**

The purpose of a Self-Evaluation Report is to:

- a. provide an institution or program an opportunity to describe and to evaluate its educational processes in rigorous detail;
- b. allow an institution or program to take necessary corrective action to improve its organizational efficiency and the quality of educational instructional services;
- c. ensure an institution or program is properly oriented and prepared for evaluation;  
and
- d. provide a visitation team and the Commission with a complete and accurate description of all facets of an institution's or program's operation.

To accomplish these purposes, instructions for completing a Self-Evaluation Report are supplied for the convenience and assistance of staff members and executives charged with the responsibility of coordinating preparation of a Self-Evaluation Report. Information provided in a Self-Evaluation Report must be accurate, thorough and fully documented. **All parts (narrative & exhibits) of the Self-Evaluation Report are to be submitted in English.** A Self-Evaluation Report, as is required for an application, must be signed by the chief executive officer. Additionally, an institution must complete an Updated Information Report, which is provided by ABHES prior to the evaluation visit, to identify any changes that may have occurred since the submission of the Self-Evaluation Report.

2. Credit Hour Conversions

**Chapter IV- Evaluation Standards Applicable to Institutionally-Accredited Members**

***IV.G.2. 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:

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Semester</u>	
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:

<u>Quarter system</u>		<u>Semester system</u>	
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 based upon one of the following:**

**A. 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.

**B. Non-terminal or fully transferable programs whose length is at least two academic years**

Institutions and programs must adhere to standard academic conversion formulas regarding additional outside (student preparation) hours on a course-by-course basis, as follows:

- i.) For every one hour of in-class lecture work there must be two (2) hours of outside preparation. These hours must be documented and justified.
- ii.) For each hour of in-class laboratory work (in certain cases, this would also apply to clinical work experiences) there must be one (1) hour of outside preparation. The institution or program is expected to justify these outside preparation hours on a case-by-case basis).

**Chapter V- Evaluation Standards Applicable to All Educational Programs**

***V.I.1. A program has an established documented plan for assessing its effectiveness as defined by specific outcomes.***

The Program Effectiveness Plan includes clearly stated:

**c. program retention rate**

At a minimum, an institution maintains the names of all enrollees by program, start date, and graduation date. The method of calculation, using the reporting period July 1 through June 30, is as follows:

$$(EE + G) / (BE + NS + RE) = R\%$$

EE= Ending Enrollment (as of June 30)

G= Graduates

BE= Beginning Enrollment (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**)

R% = Retention Percentage

## APPENDIX A ENROLLMENT OF ABILITY-TO-BENEFIT STUDENTS

ABHES requires that institutions accepting students, regardless of method of payment, who do not possess a high school diploma or its equivalent (General Equivalency Diploma), abide by the following requirements in admitting individuals to programs of 300 hours or more who may benefit from the training, hereby referred to as ability-to-benefit (ATB) students.

1. ATB students are not admitted into academic degree program(s).
2. An individual is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the state in which the institution is located and demonstrates the ability to benefit from the training offered.
3. An admission policy for all ATB students is based on the institution's stated objectives and is administered as written and published.
4. An institution consistently applies its criteria and maintains records for determining the student's ability to benefit from the training offered. These records include the following:
  - ~~a.~~ **proper screening of each applicant;**
  - ab.** a signed recommendation by an appropriate individual(s) making the acceptance determination;
  - be.** independent administration of a valid, recognized standardized test, prior to enrollment (if a timed test, the time limit must be observed and passing score measured against an adhered-to norm);
  - cd.** practicum examinations, if applicable;
  - de.** complete records of adequate pre-admission and continuous advising; and
  - ef.** remediation, as necessary.
5. An institution maintains complete student records that document testing, screening, and counseling and that validate the basis of admission of each student.
6. An institution demonstrates and fully documents the entire system used for accepting students deemed to have the ability-to-benefit from the training offered.
7. An institution determines the student may develop marketable skills.
8. An institution makes a preliminary assessment of student advising and remediation requirements.
9. Annual evaluations are performed to verify the reliability and validity of an institution's admission requirements for ATB students, including the relationship between the test scores

and student retention and employment outcomes. Results of these evaluations are used in setting admission entrance requirements, including minimum test scores.

~~These requirements may be in part different from those of the U.S. Department of Education. Institutions are urged to adhere to all requirements.~~

Note: Students who do not have a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent or have not completed a secondary school education in a home school setting that is treated as a home school or private school under State law will no longer be eligible for Title IV federal student assistance if enrolled in a program of study on or after July 1, 2012. Students will qualify for Title IV under one of the ability-to-benefit alternatives if the student was enrolled in an eligible program prior to July 1, 2012.

## APPENDIX H VOCATIONAL ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The following requirements are for institutions offering stand-alone Vocational English-as-a-Second Language (VESL) programs ~~and/or VESL coursework as part of an approved program~~. A stand-alone VESL program is considered outside of health education; thus, the institution must ensure continued adherence to the predominance requirement described in ~~H.A.1.A.b. II.A.1.a.2.~~ of the *Accreditation Manual*.

### Stand-Alone VESL Programs

The requirements for reporting information on stand-alone VESL programs are the same as for all other programs (see III.B. of the *Accreditation Manual*).

The objective of a stand-alone VESL program offered at an ABHES-accredited institution is to enhance the English-language proficiency of individuals who have pre-existing training or skills in a health care profession. Students are enrolled in the VESL program because they cannot use that training or skills due to their English-speaking deficiency. No vocational training is provided in a stand-alone VESL program.

In order to receive approval from ABHES to provide stand-alone VESL programs, the institution shall:

1. Adhere to the stated mission of the program when developing the curricula.
2. Administer, at entrance and exit, a nationally recognized exam of English comprehension. ~~(e.g., Test of English as a Foreign Language, Test of Spoken English.)~~
2. Provide documentation that all admitted students are enrolled in accordance with ABHES requirements (IV.E.3. of the *Accreditation Manual*).
3. Verify through documentation or other assessment at entrance that the enrolling student already has the pre-existing vocational training to become employable in the field.
4. Describe the placement services, if different from those in place for graduates of other programs.

5. Employ faculty who have instructional experience in ESL or VESL.

***Compliance with this appendix does not ensure that a program will be determined by the U.S. Department of Education to be eligible for Title IV participation. Should the institution desire Title IV funding for a VESL program, it should discuss program eligibility with the appropriate Department of Education representative.***