

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT & PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

POLICY & PROCEDURES ACC-14 –CANDIDACY STATUS

PREAMBLE

Application for Candidacy Status is a requirement for occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs to begin the accreditation process. While Candidacy Status denotes a formal affiliation of the education program with the Occupational Therapist & Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP), it does not assure future attainment of accreditation status.

Candidacy status provides an opportunity for education programs to work with the OTA & PTA EAP and to develop an understanding of how the accreditation standards serve as benchmarks for quality educational programs. It ensures access to informational opportunities about accreditation standards, self-study reports, reviews and processes and gives stakeholders assurance that a program has established a formal relationship with the accrediting agency. Candidacy status acknowledges that the program has met the minimum criteria required to proceed to a full accreditation review.

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1. Programs seeking accreditation must first apply for, and be awarded, candidacy status. Candidacy status represents a non-accredited affiliation with the OTA & PTA EAP indicating that an occupational therapist assistant (OTA) education program and/or physiotherapist assistant (PTA) education program in Canada is preparing for accreditation.
- 1.2. In order to be awarded candidacy status a program must provide evidence that:

Criterion
1. a certificate/diploma is granted by the educational institution.
2. the education program is affiliated with an institution authorized under applicable law to provide postsecondary education.
3. the individual responsible (i.e., program coordinator) for the OTA & PTA education program is an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, registered with no conditions with the appropriate provincial regulatory body.
4. the education program includes 500 OTA/PTA practicum hours, of which 150 are OTA hours and 150 are PTA hours. Single discipline programs must include 350 fieldwork hours.

Criterion

the education program has ensured that clinicians within the program's catchment area are able to provide the number of placements required for the program's students.

5. there is a curriculum framework document and an articulated educational philosophy
6. the program has a designated sustainable budget to achieve its stated goals and objectives.
7. there is identifiable program space

- 1.3. Applications for candidacy status must include a completed candidacy status application form ([FORM-01](#)), as well as a preliminary report ([FORM-02](#)) and appendices as required to provide evidence of compliance with the candidacy status criteria. The application must be accompanied by the required candidacy status application fee (see [GUIDE-03 Fee Schedule](#)).
- 1.4. Applications for candidacy status will be considered twice a year at face-to face Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC) meetings. The date for submission of a candidacy status application for consideration at the next JAC meeting will be posted on the OTA & PTA EAP website.
- 1.5. The JAC reviews candidacy status applications and makes a determination of compliance or non-compliance with candidacy status criteria. While no judgment of the likelihood of accreditation will be made, the JAC will make one of the following decisions:
 - a) The program demonstrates compliance with the criteria and candidacy status is awarded
 - OR
 - b) The program does not demonstrate compliance with the criteria and candidacy status is not awarded
- 1.6. Programs who do not demonstrate compliance with the candidacy status criteria will be given feedback regarding areas of non-compliance. The candidacy status fee will not be returned. If the program wishes to re-submit its application to address the areas of non-compliance, the resubmission must be accompanied by a \$200 administrative fee. If re-submission occurs more than two years from the initial submission, it must be accompanied by a second full candidacy status application fee.
- 1.7. Programs demonstrating compliance with candidacy status criteria will be awarded candidacy status. The program's name and status will be added to the list of affiliated programs on the OTA & PTA EAP website.
- 1.8. Programs awarded candidacy status by the JAC will be invoiced for the full annual accreditation fee beginning in the January of the calendar year following award of candidacy status.

- 1.9. Candidacy status is awarded for a maximum of a six-year period and will be rescinded once a full accreditation review is complete and an accreditation decision is made regarding the program's accreditation status.
- 1.10. Publication of candidacy status by the program is optional. Should a program choose to publish its candidacy status it must use required text below as provided by the OTA & PTA EAP, and include the full name, address and contact information for the OTA & PTA EAP.
- 1.11. Maintenance of candidacy status requires:
 - payment of the required annual accreditation fee
 - submission of reports of substantive change should changes within the program affect compliance with candidacy status criteria, including change in leadership/contact information (for details about changes requiring submission of a report of substantive change see policy [ACC-07 Substantive Change](#))
 - completion of the online annual report survey, sent to programs via URL link in January each year
 - use of the required candidacy status text, should the program choose to publish its candidacy status
- 1.12. Failure of the program to meet the requirements to maintain candidacy status will result in the program being placed on administrative probation (see policy [ACC-11 Administrative Probation](#)), and may result in the rescindment of candidacy status.
- 1.13. A program with candidacy status may voluntarily withdraw from the accreditation process at any time (see [ACC-15 Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation Process](#)), and disclose the decision to withdraw as outlined in policy [ACC-09 Disclosure](#).
- 1.14. A program which has successfully withdrawn from the accreditation process and which wishes to re-join the process in the future will be required to follow the candidacy status application process. Past candidacy or accreditation status will not be seen to affect future application for candidacy. Any fees unpaid at the time of withdrawal would be due upon re-application (see policy [ACC-15 Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation Process](#)).

2.0 PROCEDURES

- 2.1 The education program submits a candidacy status application, including the application form ([FORM-01](#)), a preliminary report (see template [FORM-02](#)) and required candidacy status application fee (see [GUIDE-03 Fee Schedule](#)).
- 2.2 Within one month of submission, OTA & PTA EAP staff review the application, and request additional information or clarification if required. The program is given the opportunity to revise the application and respond to requests/recommendations.

- 2.3 The JAC, at its next face to face meeting, completes a paper review of the candidacy status application and determines compliance of the program with the candidacy criteria.
- 2.4 If the program is not compliant with all candidacy status criteria, it will be notified and will be given feedback regarding the areas of non-compliance. The program can re-submit within two years of the original submission for an administrative fee of \$200.
- 2.5 If the program is compliant with all candidacy status criteria, the JAC will award candidacy status. The program will be notified, and the program will be added to the list of affiliated programs on the OTA & PTA EAP website.
- 2.6 A program awarded candidacy status will be scheduled for a full accreditation review within three years of becoming a candidate for accreditation.
- 2.7 A program choosing to publish its candidacy status must use the following required text:

The (Name of program/institution) has Candidacy Status and can now take the next step towards accreditation by the OTA & PTA EAP. Having Candidacy Status does not mean that the (name of the program) will be accredited once the process is finished, but the first step is complete.

OR

The (Name of program/institution) is seeking accreditation by the Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada. The program has been granted Candidacy Status, which denotes an affiliation with the OTA & PTA EAP and is a pre-requisite for accreditation of the education program. Candidacy Status does not assure that the program will be granted accreditation status once the program undergoes a full accreditation review.

- 2.8 Programs choosing to voluntarily withdraw from candidacy status must submit the decision to withdraw in accordance with [ACC-15 Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation Process](#).
- 2.9 A notification/request to voluntarily withdraw from the accreditation process must be received by the OTA & PTA EAP by August 31st each year in order for the program to avoid paying annual accreditation fees for the following calendar year.

Policy Number: ACC-14	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
<i>Nov 2015</i> <i>April 2016</i>	Program Accreditation Handbook
	GUIDE-01 Candidacy Status
	FORM-01 Candidacy Status Application
	FORM-02 Candidacy Status Preliminary Report Template
	ACC-07 Substantive Change
	ACC-09 Disclosure
	ACC-11 Administrative Probation
	ACC- 15 Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation Process
	FORM-11 Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation Process
	GUIDE-03 Fee Schedule