

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT AND PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

GUIDE-02 ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Summary of the Accreditation Review Process

The Accreditation Review process consists of the following steps:

- Letter of Intent to Participate in an Accreditation Review
- Participation in Program Orientation teleconference
- Submission of the Self Study Report by the program
- Selection of the Peer Review Team (PRT)
- Offsite Review
- Onsite Review
- Peer Review Team Report
- On-going monitoring of compliance with accreditation standards.

A summary of the timelines involved in the Accreditation Review Process is provided in Appendix I.

1.0 Letter of Intent to Participate in an Accreditation Review

Once the program is awarded Candidacy Status, it submits a letter of intent to participate in a full accreditation review. Programs providing combined OTA and PTA education must apply to have both components accredited; only programs providing single discipline programs can apply to have a single component accredited. The OTA & PTA EAP Program Manager will establish a schedule for the off-site and Onsite Review, in collaboration with the educational program.

2.0 Program Orientation Teleconference

Once the Letter of Intent has been received by the OTA & PTA EAP, the program will be contacted to schedule a Program Orientation teleconference. The purpose of this teleconference is to review the accreditation process and highlight resources available to assist the program in the preparation and submission of the Self Study Report.

3.0 Self Study Report (SSR)

The program faculty and staff prepare the Self Study Report (SSR) and related documentation required for the accreditation process. The OTA & PTA EAP Program Handbook, Accreditation Standards and Self Study Inventory outline the documentation required to demonstrate the program's compliance with the accreditation standards.

One electronic copy of the Self Study Report and documentation must be submitted to the OTA & PTA EAP five months in advance of the date of the Onsite Review. Copies of the

Self Study Report are then shared with the members of the Peer Review Team (PRT) four months in advance of the onsite visit.

4.0 Peer Review Team

The PRT for combined OTA and PTA education programs will consist of four members: one occupational therapist representing CAOT, one physiotherapist representing PEAC, one occupational therapist OTA/PTA educator and one physiotherapist OTA/PTA educator. The PRT for single discipline programs (e.g.: PTA) will be composed of two members of the program's discipline. (See [TOR-01 Peer Review Teams](#)).

Ten months prior to the date of the Onsite Review, the program will be presented with the names of the potential PRT members. The program has the right to request that alternate individuals participate as PRT members if there are actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest (see Policy [ACC-02 - Conflict of Interest](#)).

5.0 Offsite Review Process

The purpose of the Offsite Review process is to highlight gaps in the evidence submitted to date which will need focus during the Onsite Review, and to ensure that 80% compliance has been achieved based on the submitted evidence for Standard 6 OTA and Standard 6 PTA. Four months prior to the Onsite Review, the SSR including appendices will be made available to the members of the PRT. In the Offsite Review, the Peer Review Team reviews the SSR in detail and begins to complete the Peer Review Team Offsite Review Report. The PRT along with the Program Manager of OTA & PTA EAP hold a teleconference meeting to conduct the Offsite Review. The PRT reviews the evidence for compliance with the Accreditation Standards, with a focus on compliance with Standard 6. OTA competencies are reviewed by the occupational therapist PRT members and PTA competencies are reviewed by the physiotherapist PRT members. Compliance with 80% of the criteria in Standard 6 OTA and Standard 6 PTA based on submitted evidence is necessary in order to warrant proceeding to an on-site visit. If the decision is made to proceed, the PRT prepares an Offsite Review Report which is provided to the Program three months prior to the onsite visit.

6.0 Onsite Review

The purpose of the on-site visit is for the on-site PRT to verify and supplement the evidence provided in the Self Study Report, to assess the program in its environment and to address any issues that have been identified in the Offsite Review.

5.1 Onsite Review Schedule

The Onsite Review will take place over a two day period with the PRT members meeting the afternoon prior to the visit to coordinate activities. The proposed schedule for the on-site visit is sent to the OTA & PTA EAP by the program three months in advance of the on-site visit. Any revisions required are discussed by the program coordinator, the Program Manager and the PRT Chair. The schedule is then forwarded to the PRT.

Important considerations related to the on-site visit include:

- Meetings should start no earlier than 8:00am and be concluded by 6:00pm;
- Meetings with individuals should be 20 to 30 minutes, while group meetings should be held for 45-60 minutes;
- Frequent break times should be scheduled for the PRT;
- Ideally, all meetings should be held in one room to minimize travel time; and
- Time should be scheduled to meet with the program coordinator at the start and completion of each day, if required.

A sample on-site agenda is presented in [Appendix II](#).

5.2 Onsite Review Process

The PRT will carry out interviews with: faculty, staff, students and graduates of the education program; institution administrators and other individuals who may be involved in the program; clinicians/preceptors who supervise students on fieldwork placements; and employers of graduates.

At the end of the visit the PRT Chair thanks the program for its collaboration and provides a brief general overview of the process and the timeline to expect following the visit. **The PRT does not make an award recommendation or discuss the accreditation award at that time.** The accreditation award recommendation is made by the Joint Accreditation Committee (see Policy [ACC-03 Accreditation Decisions](#)) and approved/ratified by the Boards of Directors of CAOT and PEAC.

7.0 PRT Report

PRT Members prepare and submit their report to the OTA & PTA EAP within three weeks of completion of the on-site visit. Included in the report is information about the program's compliance with the accreditation standards, identified strengths, and areas for improvement. The report does not include any recommendation for the accreditation award. The OTA & PTA EAP reviews the report and edits for clarification, consistency and formatting, and provides it to the PRT for verification. It is then forwarded to the program coordinator who has the opportunity to clarify any factual errors or misinterpretations that were identified; no new information can be included in the Program Response. The Program Response is due within three weeks following receipt of the Report, and the program's response is included in the dossier prepared for accreditation decision-making.

8.0 Accreditation Decision

A confidential accreditation dossier is prepared which includes the program's SSR, the PRT Report, the program's response to the PRT Report and the Primary Reviewer report. These documents are forwarded to the Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC) Members, in preparation for discussion at the next JAC meeting. The JAC recommends the accreditation award based on the information provided; the Boards of Directors of CAOT and PEAC approve/ratify the JAC's recommendation.

A letter is sent to the program to inform them of the accreditation decision, and the necessary follow up requirements. For more details, see Policy [ACC-03 Accreditation Decisions](#).

| Guideline Number: GUIDE-02 | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Date of last revision | Associated documents |
| <i>May 2011</i> | ACC-03 Accreditation Decisions |
| <i>Nov 2012</i> | ACC-02 Conflict of Interest |
| <i>Nov 2016</i> | TOR-01 Peer Review Teams |
| | PRT Accreditation Handbook |
| | Program Accreditation Handbook |

APPENDIX 1

Timelines involved in the Accreditation Review Process

| Timeframe | Activity | Responsibility |
|---|---|--|
| Candidacy Status | | |
| Selected by the program | Application for Candidacy Status | Education Program |
| 3-6 months after receiving initial application | Granting of Candidacy Status | OTA & PTA EAP |
| Upon confirmation of Candidacy Status | Letter of Intent to participate in full accreditation review | Education Program |
| Within 2 months of receipt of Letter of Intent | Confirmation of Onsite Review date | OTA & PTA EAP |
| Once onsite dates established | Program Orientation Teleconference | OTA & PTA EAP and Education Program |
| Offsite Review | | |
| 10 months prior to Onsite Review | Program presented with names of potential peer review team members PRT members confirmed | OTA & PTA EAP |
| 5 months prior to Onsite Review | Submission of the Self Study Report to OTA & PTA EAP | Education Program |
| 2 months prior to Offsite Review teleconference | Self Study documents sent to PRT members | OTA & PTA EAP |
| 2-3 months prior to Onsite Review | PRT teleconference (Offsite Review) to review Self Study Report. PRT report summarizes findings from Self Study(off-site) review. PRT report sent to program. | OTA & PTA EAP and PRT PRT OTA & PTA EAP |
| Onsite Review | | |
| 3 months prior to Onsite Review | Proposed visit schedule sent to OTA & PTA EAP who then send it on the PRT | Education Program |
| | Onsite Review of program by PRT | Education Program and PRT |
| Follow Up | | |
| 2 weeks after onsite visit | Submission of PRT report to OTA & PTA EAP | PRT |
| 4 weeks after onsite visit | Report edited and sent to program coordinator for response | OTA & PTA EAP |
| 6 weeks after onsite visit | Program response to PRT report sent to OTA & PTA EAP | Education Program |
| For next scheduled JAC meeting | Program documents sent to Joint Accreditation Committee Joint Accreditation Committee recommends the accreditation award | OTA & PTA EAP Joint Accreditation Committee |
| For next scheduled PEAC and CAOT meetings | Accreditation award approved/ratified by CAOT Board and PEAC Council Program informed of accreditation award | CAOT Board & PEAC Council OTA & PTA EAP |
| During 6 year accreditation interval | Program follow-up as appropriate according to conditions of the accreditation award. Submission of annual fees and reports | Education Program |

APPENDIX II

Sample Onsite Visit Agenda

The schedule below is a guide to assist in planning the on-site visit. The timing, participants and order of activities may vary according the characteristics and needs of individual programs.

Day 1

| Time | Place | Participants/Activity | PRT Members |
|-------|-------|---|-------------|
| 14:00 | Hotel | Team Coordination Meeting | All |
| 16:00 | Hotel | PRT and Program coordinator (includes follow up on comments made in the offsite report) | All |
| 18:00 | Hotel | Team Coordination meeting | All |

Day 2

| Time | Place | Participants | PRT Members |
|-------|--------|--|------------------|
| 08:00 | Onsite | Program coordinator and Faculty Orientation | All |
| 08:30 | Onsite | Tour of facilities | All |
| 09:30 | Onsite | Dean | All |
| 10:00 | Onsite | BREAK | |
| 10:30 | Onsite | OTA Faculty including Fieldwork Coordinator (individual interviews) | OTA PRT Members |
| | | PTA Faculty including Fieldwork Coordinator (individual interviews) | PTA Team Members |
| 12:00 | Onsite | LUNCH | All |
| 13:00 | Onsite | Administrative support staff | All |
| 13:30 | Onsite | Individuals responsible for learning resources (librarian, technology) | All |
| 14:00 | Onsite | OTA Fieldwork Preceptors | OTA PRT Members |
| | | PTA Fieldwork preceptors | PTA Team Members |
| 15:00 | Onsite | Students | All |
| 16:00 | Onsite | Graduates | All |
| 16:30 | Onsite | Employers | All |
| 17:00 | onsite | Program coordinator | All |

Day 3

| Time | Place | Participants | PRT Members |
|-------------|--------|---|-------------|
| 8:00 | Onsite | Program coordinator | All |
| 8:30 | Onsite | Program heads, faculty from other programs | All |
| 9:30 | Onsite | Report preparation time Additional interviews as necessary | All |
| 12:30 | Onsite | Closing Meeting with Program head and others as determined | All |
| 13:00-13:30 | Onsite | Lunch | All |
| 13:30-16:00 | Onsite | Report preparation time | All |