



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT & PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

POLICY & PROCEDURES ACC-04: ACCREDITATION DECISION APPEAL PROCESS

PREAMBLE

Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC) members make recommendations about the accreditation status of an education program based on all available documentation (i.e., a comprehensive review of the program's Self Study Report, the program's response to the Self-Study Report, and reports submitted by the Peer Review Team and the Primary Reviewer). There are three possible accreditation decisions: accreditation, non-accreditation, or deferral of decision.

The Boards of Directors of CAOT and PEAC are presented with the accreditation recommendation of the JAC, and are responsible for ratifying/approving the recommendation. Once ratification/approval is received, the accreditation decision-making process is complete. The education program is then notified in writing of the decision.

The following conditions apply regarding an appeal of an accreditation decision:

- If a program requests an appeal of a decision, the decision shall not become effective until the date upon which the Appeal Board makes a final decision.
- If a program becomes non-accredited, students who started in the program will be considered graduates of an accredited program, granted the program respects certain conditions. The conditions may, for example, specify requirements for academic or clinical education, and are determined on a case-by-case basis.

The following policy and procedures outline the processes that can be undertaken by a program in order to appeal an accreditation decision made through the OTA & PTA EAP by the Boards of Directors of PEAC and CAOT.

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 There is an appeal process in place to provide for fair and equitable adjudication for accreditation decisions.
- 1.2 The accreditation decision of the OTA & PTA EAP Joint Accreditation Committee, CAOT Board and PEAC Board may be appealed only on the grounds that the OTA & PTA EAP, PEAC and CAOT failed to comply with established accreditation program policies and procedures, and that the lack of compliance significantly affected the accreditation decision.
- 1.3 The Appeal Board shall consist of three members appointed by CAOT and PEAC including one occupational therapist with experience in occupational therapy/occupational therapist assistant education and accreditation, one physiotherapist with experience in physiotherapy/physiotherapist assistant education

and accreditation, and one external accreditation expert (external to the two professions) who will act as the Chair of the Appeal Board (see TOR-04 Appeal Board).

- 1.4 None of the members of the Appeal Board will have participated in any deliberations related to the accreditation award under appeal and must verify in writing that they have not reached a conclusion with respect to the appeal. None of the members will demonstrate any real or perceived conflict of interest, and will be required to complete a conflict of interest declaration (FORM-11) prior to appointment to the Appeal Board.
- 1.5 All members of the Appeal Board, including the Chair, will vote during the appeal process.
- 1.6 The accreditation award in place at the time of the on-site visit will remain in place until the Appeal Board (see TOR-04 Appeal Board) renders its decision.
- 1.7 During an appeal, the Appeal Board will only consider the record (evidence, documents, and other information) that was available when the disputed accreditation decision was made.
- 1.8 On appeal, the education program carries the burden of proof. Evidence must be submitted that supports the education program's claim that the disputed accreditation decision made by the accreditation program was:
 - a. attributable to a failure to comply with established policies and procedures,
 - b. not supported by substantial evidence on the record, or
 - c. a result of a significant error of fact
- 1.9 Decisions are based solely on the information presented at the appeal hearing. A majority decision is binding on all parties.

2.0 PROCEDURES

- 2.1 The college or university will submit a request in writing for reconsideration within thirty (30) days of receipt of the accreditation decision. The request in writing must be signed by a chief administrative officer at the institution. There is a \$200 administrative fee to file an appeal.
- 2.2 Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the OTA & PTA EAP Program Manager will arrange a meeting of appropriate representatives of the OTA & PTA EAP and the college or university to ensure that the reasons for the accreditation decision are fully understood. Within fourteen days of the conclusion of this meeting, the college or university must indicate in writing if it wishes to withdraw the request or if it wishes to continue with the appeal process.
- 2.3 Should the college or university decide to proceed with the appeal process it must submit documentation to support the request within thirty (30) days. Documentation

must be submitted electronically through the OTA & PTA EAP's secure upload process.

- 2.4 Following the review of evidence, the Appeal Board shall determine its decision, which will be to uphold or modify the decision. The Appeal Board's decision shall be provided in writing to the OTA & PTA EAP within two weeks of the termination of the review and shall include a summary of the evidence and reasons for the decision.
- 2.5 As soon as is possible after the Appeal Board has made its decision, the OTA & PTA EAP will provide notice of the decision, in writing, to CAOT and PEAC for information and review. The Appeal Board decision is final, and supersedes any decision of the Boards of Directors of CAOT or PEAC.
- 2.6 The OTA & PTA EAP will provide notice of the decision, in writing, to the chief administrative officer of the college or university, the administrator to whom the education program coordinator reports, and the education program coordinator.
- 2.7 Should the Appeal Board recommend that the accreditation decision be upheld, the Appeal Board's' expenses will be borne by the education program; otherwise they will be borne by the OTA & PTA EAP. The education program and the OTA & PTA EAP are each responsible for their own expenses associated with representation at any face-to-face meeting.

3.0 TIMELINE FOR ACTIVITIES

Activity	Timing	Responsibility
Notification of accreditation decision and right to request review or reconsideration of decision		OTA & PTA EAP
Submit request for appeal in writing.	Within 30 days of notification of the accreditation decision	Chief Administrative Officer of the institution
Meeting of OTA & PTA EAP and college/university representatives	Upon receipt of request for appeal.	OTA & PTA EAP and & College/ University
Confirmation of intent regarding appeal	14 days after meeting of OTA & PTA EAP and education program	College/University
Submission of documentation to support request for appeal	30 days after meeting	College/University
Establish date for Appeal Board Meeting	Meeting held within 30 days of OTA & PTA EAP's receipt of documentation from the education program	OTA & PTA EAP
Submission of recommendation of Appeal Board to OTA & PTA EAP	Within 14 days of the Appeal Board meeting	Appeal Board

Activity	Timing	Responsibility
Review of recommendation by PEAC and CAOT	Within 7 days of receipt of recommendation of Appeal Board	PEAC and CAOT
Provision of notice to college/university, and education program of decision made by Appeal Board	As soon as possible following review by PEAC and CAOT	OTA & PTA EAP

Policy Number: ACC-04	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
<i>June 2013</i>	TOR-04 Appeal Board
	Program Accreditation Handbook
	GUIDE-03 Fee Schedule
	FORM-11 Conflict of Interest declaration