

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS

IV. B. 1. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

MINOR AND SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM CHANGES

When an institution having an accredited entry-level occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational program makes a decision to change the program, the following review procedures apply:

- Minor Program Changes or Additions

Minor program changes or additions should be detailed in a letter to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®), c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department. A scanned, signed copy of the letter may be sent electronically to accred@aota.org. This information will be forwarded to the ACOTE reviewers assigned to the program and the program will be notified if any additional information is required. There is no separate accreditation action necessary for such changes. Minor program changes include the following:

- admission requirements and selection criteria
- curricular adjustments
- changes between quarter/semester systems
- move to new facilities within the current administrative unit on the same campus (include information on how the change of location affects compliance with the Standards, such as the impact on classrooms, laboratory, storage, offices, and space for private advising of students)
- physical resources
- changes in the table of organization

- Significant Program Changes or Additions

Significant program changes or additions require ACOTE review and approval prior to the admission of students into the new/changed program. The following are considered to be significant program changes or additions:

- addition of a student cohort
- addition of a weekend or evening cohort
- addition of an extended or part-time cohort
- addition of a distance learning cohort
- a planned increase in headcount enrollment of 50% or more within one institutional fiscal year
- addition or change of participating colleges in an accredited consortium
- move to new facilities within the current administrative unit, but at a different campus (include information on how the change of location affects compliance with the Standards, such as the impact on classrooms, laboratory, storage, offices, and space for private advising of students)

Programs must submit a letter to ACOTE, c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department, that requests approval for the significant change. The letter must be signed by the program director and the administrator to whom the program director reports and may be sent electronically to accred@aota.org. The letter must include the following information:

- the proposed addition or change;
- the requirements for institutional/state approval of the addition or change and the status of that approval;
- the month/year the proposed addition or change would occur; and
- the accommodations to support the addition/change, including implications for 1) faculty, mentors, or other support staff composition, 2) resources, 3) budget, 4) curriculum design, 5) admission information and criteria, 6) course sequence, 7) course content, and 8) fieldwork.

Upon review of the submitted information by ACOTE, the program will be notified whether the accreditation status of the existing program will accrue to the addition or change or if additional information is required. The accreditation status of the existing program will not accrue to the additional/changed program until ACOTE accreditation review procedures are successfully completed. Note: Only ACOTE accredited programs will be

approved for significant change requests. When considering significant change requests, ACOTE will consider any outstanding areas of noncompliance.

DETERMINATION OF A MINOR CHANGE OR SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

If it is not clear whether the change is classified as a minor change or a significant change, the program must submit a letter to the ACOTE Chairperson, c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department, that requests clarification. The letter must be signed by the program director and the administrator to whom the program director reports and may be sent electronically to accred@aota.org. The letter must include information about the proposed addition or change, the requirements for institutional/state approval of the addition or change, and the status of that approval. That information will be reviewed by the ACOTE Executive Committee and a determination of the applicable policy will be made and communicated to the program.

CHANGES OF PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP OR INSTITUTION'S NAME

As required by Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) Accreditation Standard A.1.5, institutions must submit notification of the transfer of program sponsorship or change of the institution's name to ACOTE, c/o the AOTA Accreditation Department, within 30 days of the sponsorship transfer or change of the institution's name. This notification must include details of the transfer or change, the impact on the occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant program, and the regional/national accreditation status of the new sponsoring institution. A scanned, signed copy of the letter may be sent electronically to accred@aota.org.

This information will be forwarded to the ACOTE reviewers assigned to the program and the program will be notified if any additional information is required. There is no separate accreditation action necessary for such changes if the program is remaining within the current facility with no change in resources or delivery model. NOTE: If the new sponsoring institution plans to relocate the program to a different institution within the next 5 years, it must apply for separate accreditation through the initial accreditation process described in ACOTE Manual Section III.A.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES REQUIRING SEPARATE ACCREDITATION ACTION

In any of the following situations, programs must apply for separate accreditation through the initial accreditation process described in ACOTE Manual Section III.A.:

1. An institution with an accredited occupational therapy master's or doctoral program seeks to add a new occupational therapy assistant program.
2. An institution with an accredited occupational therapy master's program seeks to add a new occupational therapy doctoral program.
3. An institution with an accredited occupational therapy assistant program seeks to add a new occupational therapy master's or doctoral program.

NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

Accredited occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant programs that are planning to seek accreditation for an additional location must follow the initial accreditation process described in ACOTE Manual Policy IV.B.2. Additional Locations.