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**Check Sheets  
for  
Programmatic Accreditation  
2012 Edition**

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**Council on Occupational Education  
7840 Roswell Road  
Building 300, Suite 325  
Atlanta, GA 30350**

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## GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

In order to provide consistency in the evaluation process, check sheets will be used in evaluating or determining the program's compliance with the conditions and criteria for accreditation.

The primary responsibility of the visiting team is to determine if the program is in compliance with the conditions and criteria for accreditation. In order to provide consistency in the evaluation process, the visiting team will use the following check sheets to document whether conditions and criteria are being met.

Either **YES** or **NO** must be checked for each statement on the check sheets. In appropriate cases, **N/A** (not applicable) may be checked.

The team will then write findings and make recommendations for each item on the check sheets not met.

The TRS column on the check sheets identifies the numbering system used in the COE Team Report Software. In some cases, numbering in the *Handbook of Accreditation* and the COE Team Report Software will vary. When using these check sheets on team visits, refer to the TRS# column when entering responses in the software.

### **YES Items**

For all items marked YES on the check sheets, the team must have documentation to verify program compliance. No findings are written for items marked YES unless the team wants to write suggestions or commendations. The team is encouraged to provide consultative assistance by writing suggestions. Justification for any suggestion given will be included in the findings. Commendations may be written in the findings. No recommendations are ever written for items marked YES.

### **NO Items**

For all items marked NO on the check sheets, the team must have found no documentation or inadequate documentation to verify program compliance. Findings and recommendations **MUST** be written for any item marked NO. Before findings and recommendations are written, it must be determined that the program is in violation of a condition or criterion and that the documentation has not been overlooked. When documentation cannot be found, the team must request the documentation from the unit staff member responsible for the area in question. Findings must be written in narrative form to describe what the team found or did not find to determine the program's noncompliance with the item on the check sheet and to provide a clear rationale for the recommendation(s). Make use of the terminology in the statements on the check sheets in writing the findings. Recommendation(s) must be in narrative form and should also make use of the terminology in the statements on the check sheets to make sure the recommendation clearly relates to the findings and the item marked NO on the check sheet. Normally, there will be one recommendation written for each NO on the check sheet.

### **Compound Statements**

Some of the statements on the check sheets are compound statements. If the program is not in compliance with any part of the statement, NO must be checked. Only that part of the statement with which the program is not in compliance will be addressed in the findings and recommendation(s).

### **Conditions and Criteria for Accreditation**

One set of check sheets will be completed for each educational program seeking accreditation at the each campus of the institution. The check sheets will be included as part of the team report.

### **Definitions**

A **recommendation** is defined as a statement by the team pointing out that the program is in violation of a condition or criterion. Recommendations require that the program remove the violation and submit documentation assuring the Commission that the violation has been corrected.

A **suggestion** is defined as a statement written by the team pointing out improvements that might be made in a program to promote educational improvement. The program may respond to suggestions but is not required to do so.

***Highlighted areas indicated changes from the previous edition.***

## CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

Conditions of accreditation apply to all programs regardless of the mode of delivery (traditional, hybrid, or distance education). The Council does not accredit institutions/programs that offer instruction via correspondence education.

CONDITIONS	YES	NO
1. The occupational education program is located in an institution that is accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education unless a waiver is granted by the Commission for a program operated by a local education agency, a non-traditional provider of education and training, or other situation for which waiver is considered justified by the Commission		
2. The occupational education program offers an associate degree or lesser credential in a postsecondary occupational area.		
3. The occupational education program utilizes a campus-based instructional delivery system with at least 25 percent of the program's total FTE being derived from traditional enrollments.		
4. The occupational education program demonstrates that it meets the minimum required benchmarks for completion, placement, and/or licensure exam pass rates.		
5. The occupational education program is legally authorized to operate within the jurisdiction in which it is located.		
6. The occupational education program has been in continuous operation providing instruction for a period of time sufficient for at least one class of students to complete.		
7. The occupational education program is able to provide a letter of good standing from the institutional accreditor or other appropriate oversight agency.		
8. The occupational education program is in compliance with all institutional accrediting agency and/or Federal agency requirements applicable to accreditation of the institution that operates the career and technical department or program.		
9. The on-site administrator or other full-time employee of the career and technical department or program attended a Candidate Academy within three to fifteen months prior to hosting the accreditation visiting team.		
10. The program agrees to comply with all requirements of the Council pertinent to programmatic accreditation.		
11. The institution has informed the Commission of all substantive changes related to its accredited program(s).		
12. Accredited programs comply with all applicable Commission policies.		

# Criteria for Programmatic Accreditation

## POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

Criteria for programmatic accreditation apply to all postsecondary programs regardless of the mode of delivery (traditional, hybrid, or distance education). **The Council does not accredit institutions/programs that offer instruction via correspondence education.**

CRITERIA			
<b>A. Admissions and Student Services</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. The admissions policy of the program is consistent with the institution's admissions policies.			
2. Admission requirements offer reasonable expectations for successful completion of the program regardless of the delivery mode.			
3. Appropriate career counseling, orientation, and placement services are available to support the program.			
<b>B. Programs</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. The program is congruent with the mission of the institution and with the occupational needs of the people served by the institution.			
2. The objectives for the program are evaluated annually.			
3. The program has clearly stated objectives, defined content relevant to these objectives and the current needs of business and industry, and student evaluation based on the program objectives and content.			
4. A systematic process has been implemented to document that the objectives and content of the program are current.			
5. At least every two years, three bonafide potential employers review the program and recommend admission requirements, program content, program length, program objectives, competency tests, instructional materials, equipment, method of evaluation, and level of skills and/or proficiency required for completion, and appropriateness of the delivery mode for the program.			
6. The institution considers the length and the tuition of the program in relation to the documented entry-level earnings of completers.			
7. Courses required for the program are offered with sufficient frequency for the student to complete the program within the publicized time frame.			
Associate Degree programs meet the following requirements:			
8. The appropriate applied degree title, such as Associate of Applied Technology, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Occupational Studies, Associate of Science, or Associate of Occupational Technology, is used.			
9. The program has a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours.			
10. The program includes a minimum of 15 semester hours or 23 quarter hours of general education courses, with a minimum of one course from each of the following areas: humanities, behavioral sciences, natural or applied sciences, and mathematics.			
The program, regardless of location or mode of delivery, is qualitatively consistent, and must:			
11. Be approved and administered under established institutional policies and procedures and supervised by an administrator who is part of the institutional organization.			
12. Have appropriate involvement of on-campus administrators and faculty in planning, approval, and on-going evaluation.			
13. Have individual student records, including period of enrollment, financial, and educational program records, permanently maintained by the institution at the main campus.			
14. Be described in appropriate catalogs, brochures, and/or other promotional materials and include tuition/fee charges, refund policies, admissions and academic requirements, and information technology requirements.			
15. Provide for timely and meaningful interaction among faculty and students.			

CRITERIA			
<b>B. Programs (Continued)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
16. A credit hour is equivalent to a minimum of each of the following: one semester credit for 15 clock hours of lecture, 30 clock hours of laboratory, or 45 clock hours of work-based activities; or one quarter credit for 10 clock hours of lecture, 20 clock hours of laboratory, or 30 clock hours of work-based activities.			
<b>C. Instruction</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. Academic competencies and occupational skills are integrated into the program.			
2. The program provides training in the competencies essential to success in the relevant occupation, including job knowledge, job skills, work habits, and attitudes.			
3. The sequence of instruction required for program completion (lecture, lab, and work-based activities) is effectively organized in order to maximize the learning of competencies essential to success in the occupation.			
Occupational advisory committees appointed for each program or program area are used to ensure that desirable, relevant, and current practices of each occupation are being taught. Each committee must be composed of individuals external to the institution and must:			
4. Consist of a minimum of three members who represent the geographical service area covered by the program area;			
5. Have expertise in the occupational areas taught by the program;			
6. Meet at least twice annually;			
7. Have at least two members physically present at each meeting; and,			
8. Keep minutes to document their activities and recommendations.			
9. The occupational advisory committee reviews, at least annually, the appropriateness of the type of instruction (such as lecture, laboratory, work-based instruction, and/or mode of delivery) offered within the program to assure that students gain competency with specific skills required for successful completion of the program.			
10. Job-related health, safety, and fire-prevention are an integral part of instruction.			
11. To develop skill proficiency, sufficient practice is provided with equipment and materials similar to those currently used in the occupation.			
12. Instructional supplies are available in adequate variety and quantity to support the program.			
13. All instruction is effectively organized as evidenced by course outlines, lesson plans, competency tests, and other instructional materials.			
14. The program uses a systematic, objective, and equitable method of evaluating student achievement based on required competencies.			
15. Each work-based activity has a written instructional plan for students specifying the particular objectives, experiences, competencies, and evaluations that are required.			
16. The instructional plan designates the on-site employer representative responsible for guiding and overseeing the students' learning experiences and participating in the students' written evaluations.			
17. All work-based activities conducted by the program are supervised by a designated employee possessing appropriate qualifications.			

<b>CRITERIA</b>			
<b>D. Program Outcomes</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. Individual student progress data, including (a) appropriate evaluations of knowledge and skills required for occupation(s) studied and (b) notations of completion(s) of and/or withdrawal from programs, are maintained and made a part of his/her record.			
2. The institution submits accurate and verifiable program completion data each year to the Commission for comparison with required benchmarks, meets the required benchmarks for completion, and takes any actions required by the Commission due to program completion rates failing to meet required benchmarks.			
3. The institution submits accurate and verifiable program placement data each year to the Commission for comparison with required benchmarks, meets the required benchmarks for placement, and takes any actions required by the Commission due to program placement rates failing to meet required benchmarks. (This criterion does not apply to secondary students.)			
4. For each educational program requiring a licensure examination, The institution submits accurate and verifiable licensure performance data each year to the Commission for comparison with required benchmarks, meets the required benchmarks for licensure exam pass rates, and takes any actions required by the Commission due to program licensure exam pass rates failing to meet required benchmarks. (This criterion does not apply to secondary students.)			
The program has a written plan to ensure that follow-up is systematic and continuous, and includes the following elements:			
5. Identification of responsibility for coordination of all follow-up activities.			
6. Collection of information from completers and employers of completers.			
7. Information collected from completers and employers of completers focused on program effectiveness for various modes of delivery and relevance to job requirements.			
8. Placement and follow-up information used to evaluate and improve the quality of program outcomes.			
9. Placement and follow-up information made available at least on an annual basis to all instructional personnel and administrative staff of the program.			

CRITERIA			
E. Distance Education	YES	NO	N/A
Distance education criteria apply only to programs where 50% or more of the required instructional hours are <u>available</u> via distance education.			
1. The delivery of distance education programs is consistent with the institution's mission, goals, and objectives.			
2. The institution determines students are qualified by prior education or equivalent experience to be admitted to a program including, in the case of international students, English language skills.			
3. The institution informs the prospective students of technical competence, cost and timeframe required for the program.			
4. The institution's advertising, recruiting, and admissions material clearly and accurately represent the program, the services available, and the necessary hardware and software requirements for the distance education program.			
5. The distance education program is identical to those on campus in terms of the quality, rigor, breadth of academic and technical standards, completion requirements, and the credential awarded.			
6. The institution directly verifies the currency and quality of all contracted courseware on an annual basis, is directly responsible for such currency and quality, and maintains curriculum oversight responsibility within all contracts.			
7. The program utilizes a standardized course template, course descriptions, learning objectives, course requirements (i.e. standard syllabus, outcomes, grading, resources, etc.), and learning outcomes of its programs in order to facilitate quality assurance and the assessment of student learning.			
8. The institution provides a coherent plan for the student to access all courses necessary to complete the program.			
9. The institution continues the program for a period sufficient to enable all admitted students to complete a degree, diploma, or certificate in a publicized timeframe.			
10. The institution monitors student progress and participation by means such as course management systems that provide student time online, frequency of logins, electronic footprints, electronic grade book, and percentage of course completed.			
11. The institution's evaluation of the distance education program takes place in the context of the regular evaluation of all programs on an annual basis.			
12. The learning outcomes of students in the distance education program are comparable to those of campus-based students.			
13. The program's distance education students have access to online learning resources and can effectively utilize those resources to support their learning.			
14. The distance education program is designed to maximize interaction between and among faculty and students.			
15. The institution ensures timeliness and quality of its responses (synchronously or asynchronously) to students' requests by placing a requirement on response time of no more than 24 hours within the institution's published operational schedule of the program/course.			

# Criteria for Programmatic Accreditation

## SECONDARY PROGRAMS

Criteria for programmatic accreditation apply to all secondary programs regardless of the mode of delivery (traditional, hybrid, or distance education).

CRITERIA			
<b>A. Admissions and Student Services</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. The admissions policy of the program is consistent with the institution's admissions policies.			
2. Admission requirements offer reasonable expectations for successful completion of the program regardless of the delivery mode.			
3. Appropriate career counseling, orientation, and placement services are available to support the program.			
<b>B. Programs</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. The program is congruent with the mission of the institution and with the occupational needs of the people served by the institution.			
2. The objectives for the program are evaluated annually.			
3. The program has clearly stated objectives, defined content relevant to these objectives and the current needs of business and industry, and student evaluation based on the program objectives and content.			
4. A systematic process has been implemented to document that the objectives and content of the program are current.			
The program, regardless of location or mode of delivery, is qualitatively consistent, and must:			
5. Be approved and administered under established institutional policies and procedures and supervised by an administrator who is part of the institutional organization.			
6. Have appropriate involvement of on-campus administrators and faculty in planning, approval, and on-going evaluation.			
7. Have individual student records, including period of enrollment, financial, and educational program records, permanently maintained by the institution at the main campus.			
8. Be described in appropriate catalogs, brochures, and/or other promotional materials and include tuition/fee charges, refund policies, admissions and academic requirements, and information technology requirements.			
9. Provide for timely and meaningful interaction among faculty and students.			
<b>C. Instruction</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
1. Academic competencies and occupational skills are integrated into the program.			
2. The program provides training in the competencies essential to success in the relevant occupation, including job knowledge, job skills, work habits, and attitudes.			
3. The sequence of instruction required for program completion (lecture, lab, and work-based activities) is effectively organized in order to maximize the learning of competencies essential to success in the occupation.			
4. An occupational advisory committee is used to ensure that desirable, relevant, and current practices of the occupation are being taught. The committee (a) is composed of at least three members, all being external to the institution and representative of the geographical service area covered by the program area; (b) meets at least twice annually with a majority of official members present; and (c) keeps minutes of each meeting to document their activities and recommendations.			

CRITERIA			
C. Instruction	YES	NO	N/A
5. The occupational advisory committee reviews, at least annually, the appropriateness of the type of instruction (such as lecture, laboratory, work-based instruction, and/or mode of delivery) offered within the program to assure that students gain competency with specific skills required for successful completion of the program.			
6. Job-related health, safety, and fire-prevention are an integral part of instruction.			
7. To develop skill proficiency, sufficient practice is provided with equipment and materials similar to those currently used in the occupation.			
8. Instructional supplies are available in adequate variety and quantity to support the program.			
9. All instruction is effectively organized as evidenced by course outlines, lesson plans, competency tests, and other instructional materials.			
10. The program uses a systematic, objective, and equitable method of evaluating student achievement based on required competencies.			
11. Each work-based activity has a written instructional plan for students specifying the particular objectives, experiences, competencies, and evaluations that are required.			
12. The instructional plan designates the on-site employer representative responsible for guiding and overseeing the students' learning experiences and participating in the students' written evaluations.			
13. All work-based activities conducted by the program are supervised by a designated employee possessing appropriate qualifications.			
D. Program Outcomes	YES	NO	N/A
1. Individual student progress data, including (a) appropriate evaluations of knowledge and skills required for occupation(s) studied and (b) notations of completion(s) of and/or withdrawal from programs, are maintained and made a part of his/her record.			
2. The program submits accurate and verifiable completion data each year to the Commission for comparison with similar COE-accredited programs, meets the minimum required benchmarks, and takes any actions required by the Commission due to the completion rate being unacceptably lower than the completion rates for peer programs.			
E. Distance Education	YES	NO	N/A
Distance education criteria apply only to programs where 50% or more of the required instructional hours are <u>available</u> via distance education.			
1. The delivery of distance education programs is consistent with the institution's mission, goals, and objectives.			
2. The institution determines students are qualified by prior education or equivalent experience to be admitted to a program including, in the case of international students, English language skills.			
3. The institution informs the prospective students of technical competence, cost and timeframe required for the program.			
4. The institution's advertising, recruiting, and admissions material clearly and accurately represent the program, the services available, and the necessary hardware and software requirements for the distance education program.			
5. The distance education program is identical to those on campus in terms of the quality, rigor, breadth of academic and technical standards, completion requirements, and the credential awarded.			
6. The institution directly verifies the currency and quality of all contracted courseware on an annual basis, is directly responsible for such currency and quality, and maintains curriculum oversight responsibility within all contracts.			

CRITERIA			
E. Distance Education	YES	NO	N/A
7. The program utilizes a standardized course template, course descriptions, learning objectives, course requirements (i.e. standard syllabus, outcomes, grading, resources, etc.), and learning outcomes of its programs in order to facilitate quality assurance and the assessment of student learning.			
8. The institution provides a coherent plan for the student to access all courses necessary to complete the program.			
9. The institution continues the program for a period sufficient to enable all admitted students to complete a degree, diploma, or certificate in a publicized timeframe.			
10. The institution monitors student progress and participation by means such as course management systems that provide student time online, frequency of logins, electronic footprints, electronic grade book, and percentage of course completed.			
11. The institution's evaluation of the distance education program takes place in the context of the regular evaluation of all programs on an annual basis.			
12. The learning outcomes of students in the distance education program are comparable to those of campus-based students.			
13. The program's distance education students have access to online learning resources and can effectively utilize those resources to support their learning.			
14. The distance education program is designed to maximize interaction between and among faculty and students.			
15. The institution ensures timeliness and quality of its responses (synchronously or asynchronously) to students' requests by placing a requirement on response time of no more than 24 hours within the institution's published operational schedule of the program/course.			