



Accreditation Manual Supplement for International Programs

REVISED: August 2022

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POSITION STATEMENT ON ACCREDITATION OF INTERNATIONAL NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The ACEN is committed to quality in all types of nursing education programs and encourages self-evaluation, peer review, and the promotion of educational equity, access, and mobility through the functions of accreditation. Recognizing that accreditation is one way of enhancing the quality of nursing education and is a way to facilitate the nursing profession being the best and strongest it can be worldwide, the ACEN welcomes nursing programs outside the United States and U.S. Territories to pursue international nursing accreditation.

The ACEN asserts that accreditation is a voluntary, self-regulatory process by which non-governmental entities recognize educational institutions or programs that have been found to meet or exceed standards and criteria for educational quality. The ACEN acknowledges that nursing education programs located outside of the United States and its Territories can benefit from adherence to best practices and generally accepted guidelines for nursing education incorporated in the ACEN Standards and Criteria. To fulfill its mission to support the interests of nursing education, nursing practice, and the public, the ACEN seeks to broaden the impact of accreditation to encompass nursing education programs across the globe.

Therefore, in a spirit of cooperation, openness, and mutual respect consistent with its organizational values, the ACEN extends accreditation and related services to international nursing education programs.

Original Statement: February 2010; Revised August 2018, Revised August 2022

ELIGIBILITY

All nursing education programs accredited by the ACEN must meet the following eligibility requirements as listed below:

- Placement within a governing organization that is accredited by an approved accrediting agency or holds unconditional approval by the appropriate regulatory agency that has legal authority for education programs within the country.
- Placement within a governing organization that is authorized to grant the credential awarded at the completion of the program.

Nursing education programs located outside the United States and its Territories must meet the following additional eligibility requirements.

- Program faculty and students must speak and understand English. The program must produce all documents and written materials required for the accreditation processes in English.
- The region in which the program is located must be safe for travel as identified by the U.S. State Department at the time of the travel for the ACEN peer evaluators and/or staff.
- Program must agree to host a minimum of two onsite visits, including a mandatory onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy and the onsite initial accreditation visit. [Note: Nursing education units seeking accreditation for a second nursing program have the option of declining the Advisory Visit for International Candidacy as a component of the candidacy process.]
- Program has financial resources adequate to meet all fiscal responsibilities related to the ACEN accreditation processes including International Candidacy Eligibility Application, Candidacy, and two onsite visits.
- The nursing program must establish and provide documentation that it has obtained requisite

governmental and regulatory approval to seek ACEN accreditation, if required.

INTERNATIONAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Nursing programs located outside the U.S. considering accreditation by the ACEN should contact the ACEN to begin the process. International programs must complete and submit the International Candidacy Eligibility Application to determine their eligibility for International Candidacy. The International Candidacy Eligibility Application must be accompanied by an [International Candidacy Eligibility Application fee](#).

An ACEN determines a program's eligibility and suitability for ACEN accreditation by reviewing the [International Candidacy Eligibility Application](#). Possible results of the review include the following:

- a. The program is deemed eligible to pursue International Candidacy.
- b. The program is asked to submit additional information/clarification.
- c. The program is deemed ineligible to pursue International Candidacy and will be withdrawn from the process.

International nursing education programs determined to be eligible for International Candidacy will be scheduled for a mandatory onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy. In preparation for the onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy, programs will submit an International Candidacy Presentation, which will be provided to site visitors a minimum of six weeks prior to the onsite visit.

The International Candidacy Presentation will address the same selected Criteria as other programs pursuing Candidacy with the ACEN. See the [Candidacy Presentation – Written Instructions](#).

The onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy will be conducted by one or two ACEN representatives. The purpose of the onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy is to determine whether a program may proceed with the Candidacy process. Following the onsite Advisory Visit for International Candidacy, an Advisory Visit for International Candidacy Report is submitted by the reviewers.

Based on the recommendations of the reviewers in the Advisory Visit for International Candidacy Report, the ACEN will take one (1) of the following actions:

1. Approval of International Candidacy: The nursing program (a) demonstrated it is currently compliant with the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed or demonstrated the potential to be compliant with the ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed within the Candidacy timeframe, and (b) demonstrated the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed. Approval of International Candidacy does not guarantee that the program will achieve initial accreditation.
2. Extension of Time to Achieve Candidacy (Deferral): The nursing program (a) made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate it is currently compliant with the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed or made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate the potential to be compliant with the ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed during the Candidacy timeframe, and (b) made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed. The program is advised to complete specified actions/implement specific changes or modifications; the program will need to resubmit the Candidacy Presentation within one year of notification (deferral). To proceed, the program must submit an International Candidacy Presentation Addendum within one year of notification

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describing how the recommended actions/concerns have been addressed. If the Addendum is approved by the ACEN Directors, International Candidacy is approved with the onsite accreditation visit to be scheduled within the Candidacy timeframe as noted above. If the Addendum is not approved, then the program is disapproved, and the ACEN will withdraw the program from the International Candidacy process.

3. Disapproval of International Candidacy: The nursing program (a) did not demonstrate it is currently compliant with the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed or did not demonstrate the potential to be compliant with the ACEN Standards and Criteria the Candidacy timeframe, and (b) did not demonstrate the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed. ACEN withdraws the program from the candidacy process. No fees will be refunded if a program is withdrawn.
4. Program is not eligible: ACEN withdraws the program from the International Candidacy process. No fees will be refunded if a program is withdrawn.

SELF-REVIEW AND SELF-STUDY REPORT

The sections of the ACEN Accreditation Manual (available online at www.acenursing.org) related to the self-review and Self-Study Report apply to all programs, including those located outside the United States and its Territories. All programs electing to participate in accreditation activities are required to abide by the policies and procedures as outlined in the [ACEN Accreditation Manual](#).

THE SITE VISIT, including the Consulting and Accreditation Visits

The section of the ACEN Accreditation Manual related to the Site Visit applies to all programs located outside the United States and its Territories.

Length of Visit

Advisory Visits for International Candidacy and Accreditation visits for nursing programs located outside the United States and its Territories will be a minimum of five days for a single program. The onsite portion of the visit will be a minimum of three full days. A nursing education unit with more than a single nursing program may require additional days

Assignment of Site Visit Team

Peer evaluators for international programs will be selected from a pool of peer evaluators. The number of peer evaluators will be determined by the ACEN and will be based on the program type(s), length of travel, geographic location, and the complexity of the program(s) (e.g., number of students and faculty, use of distance education, locations, on-ground transportation logistics).

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Team Chair, Team Members, and nursing program as listed in the ACEN Accreditation Manual apply to all nursing programs, including those located outside the United States and its Territories. The following additional responsibilities apply in reference to visit arrangements:

| Area | Responsibility | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Nursing Education Unit | Peer Evaluator |
| Travel | <p>Responsible for all travel costs incurred for each reviewer/peer evaluator; travel will be at business class or higher for each reviewer/peer evaluator; Advisory Visit for International Candidacy/Accreditation Visit fees and airline travel expenses will be submitted prior to the Advisory Visit for International Candidacy/Accreditation Visit; additional fees incurred during the Advisory Visit for International Candidacy/Accreditation Visit will be submitted upon receipt of the invoice</p> <p>Responsible for arranging all local and on-ground transportation during the onsite visits; on-ground transportation</p> | <p>Responsible for working with the ACEN staff to book airfare in accordance with ACEN travel policy (ACEN books international travel for the peer evaluator but works with the peer evaluator to determine the itinerary)</p> |
| Hotel Accommodations | <p>Responsible for arranging hotel accommodations for reviewers/peer evaluators; accommodations must include a separate, private room for each reviewer/peer evaluator at a hotel pre-approved by ACEN</p> <p>Responsible for directly paying the costs for hotel accommodations; accommodations are subject to ACEN approval</p> | |
| Food/Beverages | <p>Provide customary food/beverages during the hours that reviewers/peer evaluators are on-campus or visiting clinical settings (e.g., lunch and bottled water); may make arrangements for restaurant(s) at hotel to be included in room arrangements (e.g., breakfast, dinner)</p> | <p>Food not provided by the program during the site visit will be invoiced to the program; reviewers/peer evaluators will be reimbursed for their expenses</p> |
| Interpreter and Translator Services | <p>Responsible for providing and arranging professional interpreter services during the visit; interpreter and translator services are subject to ACEN approval</p> | |

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| Cultural Sensitivity | Provide information in advance of each visit related to customs, traditions, and expectations related to but not limited to dress and food | Familiarization with local customs and traditions; review cultural packet provided by the ACEN prior to the visit Abide by customs and traditions to the fullest extent possible during the onsite visit |
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| Area | Responsibility | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| | Nursing Education Unit | Peer Evaluator |
| Agenda for Site Visits | <p>Proposed detailed agenda for each visit due to ACEN a minimum of six weeks in advance of the visit</p> <p>Responsible for arranging interviews between reviewer/peer evaluators and the nurse administrator, administrators of the governing organization, faculty, clinical agency representatives, current students, graduates, public, general education faculty, and student services personnel</p> <p>Agenda to include time for reviewer/peer evaluators to take breaks, review program materials/documents as well as travel to/from hotel/college and all scheduled meetings on the agenda.</p> | <p>Team Chair drafts agenda in collaboration with the nurse administrator</p> |
| Security | <p>Prior to reviewer/peer evaluators' travel, assessment will be made at the time of the visit to determine security needs for reviewers/peer evaluators. Arrangements and associated costs are the responsibility of the nursing program. All security arrangements are subject to ACEN approval.</p> | |

Information related to the Candidacy Presentation, Site Visit Report, Evaluation Review Panel, Board of Commissioners, Policies and Procedures, Standards and Criteria, and the glossary apply to all programs seeking accreditation, including those located outside the US or its Territories. Please see the [ACEN Accreditation Manual](#) for information on each of these.