



ACCREDITING BUREAU OF HEALTH EDUCATION SCHOOLS | ABHES

7777 Leesburg Pike, Suite 314 N. · Falls Church, Virginia 22043  
Tel. 703/917.9503 · Fax 703/917.4109 · E-Mail: [info@abhes.org](mailto:info@abhes.org)

## ABHES NOTIFICATION

TO: ABHES-Accredited Institutions and Programs  
Interested Parties

FROM: Ms. India Tips, Interim Executive Director

DATE: July 25, 2018

SUBJECT: Surgical Technology 2-year Degree Requirement

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit, via programmatically, surgical technology programs. ABHES is one (1) of two (2) accrediting agencies in the United States that oversees the approval process of certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in surgical technology. Graduates of these programs are eligible to sit for the Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) credential.

All ABHES accredited surgical technology programs must meet the programmatic requirements outlined in Chapter VII-ST of the *Accreditation Manual* in addition to aligning the programs' curricula with the *Core Curriculum for Surgical Technology* 6th Edition (Core Curriculum), published by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST). The Core Curriculum included a section entitled, "The Associate Degree in Surgical Technology" that highlights the importance of an education beyond the diploma/certificate level to better equip graduates with the skills necessary to gain entry-level employment in the field of surgical technology.

The ABHES Commission continues to require that all accredited surgical technology programs confer an associate's degree by **July 1, 2020**. However, the Commission also recognizes there may be programs that are not be able to comply with the academic requirement of this standard. In these instances, the institution or program must submit a letter to request an exemption and provide a detailed explanation by January 31, 2019. All requests should be addressed to Ms. Mary Margaret Coughlin and emailed to [ST@abhes.org](mailto:ST@abhes.org).

Institutions and programs are reminded that all program-related modifications must be reviewed and approved prior to implementation. As such, institutions and programs should review Chapter III.B.4., of the *Accreditation Manual* or visit [www.abhes.org/forms/applications](http://www.abhes.org/forms/applications) for further information with this regard.

Contact Mary Margaret Coughlin, Manager of Programs and Staff-Liaison to the PAC-ST at [mcoughlin@abhes.org](mailto:mcoughlin@abhes.org) or 571-282-0057 with any questions you may have regarding this bulletin.