



ACCREDITING BUREAU OF HEALTH EDUCATION SCHOOLS
7777 Leesburg Pike Suite 314 N · Falls Church, Virginia 22043
Tel. 703/917.9503 · Fax 703/917.4109 · E-Mail info@abhес.org

ABHES BULLETIN

To: ABHES-Accredited Institutions and Programs
From: Carol Money maker, Executive Director
Date: May 23, 2012
Subject: Urgent Reminder:
Student Outcomes and Maximum Timeframe for Compliance

The Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES or the Commission) concluded its Commission Policy Meeting on Sunday. ABHES-accredited institutions or programs are reminded to consider carefully the maximum timeframe available to comply with ABHES accreditation standards. This compliance requirement includes meeting ABHES benchmarks of 70% for student outcomes (e.g., retention, required credentialing, and placement), and is stated in the *Accreditation Manual* as follows:

CHAPTER III, SECTION C – Commission Actions

The Commission takes final action to grant accreditation, deny accreditation, or withdraw accreditation based upon a review of evidence relevant to compliance with the Commission's policies and standards, including but not limited to:

- *Self-Evaluation Report;*
- *Team Visitation Report(s);*
- *Institution's Response to Team Visitation Report(s); and*
- *Program Outcomes.*

Accreditation is granted based on a finding that the institution or program is in compliance. Continuous compliance thereafter is a requirement to maintain accreditation. The Commission can withdraw accreditation at any time if it determines that an institution or program is not complying with its policies or standards or determines that the retention, licensing, or employment rates fall below 70 percent, or below the reported average on an institution's annual report. Alternatively, the Commission may at its discretion provide an opportunity for the institution or program to bring itself into compliance within a time period specified by the Commission. That time period will not exceed:

- *Twelve months, if the longest program is less than one year in length.*
- *Eighteen months, if the longest program is at least one year, but less than two years in length.*
- *Two years, if the longest program is at least two years in length.*

The Commission may, for good cause, extend the period for achieving compliance.

At the recent policy meeting, the Commission considered information from the Annual Report Committee's review of reports submitted for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. The number of institutions with one or more programs not meeting the minimum expectations of ABHES relative to student outcomes, particularly in the area of placement, has drastically increased. Please be advised that should an institution have even one program that does not meet the benchmark rate within the maximum timeframe this may be grounds for a loss of accreditation

Institutions and programs must make graduate placement a priority. An adhoc Committee comprised of commissioners and staff has been appointed to determine the appropriate policies and procedures.

For those with placement rates below the benchmark, a program validity study should be conducted to include such things as:

1. Should the program limit or cease enrollment? Clearly if students continue to enroll in a program for which the institution is not able to place its graduates at the expected level, continued enrollment could be detrimental.
2. Does the institution have the necessary staff focused on graduate placement?
3. Are program staff, advisory committees, and externship supervisors involved with local employers and promoting the program graduates?

Students and their success are paramount to ABHES and to its accredited institutions and programs. The state of the economy has brought many more individuals to postsecondary education in need of occupational training. As a result, consideration of student outcomes moves to a new level.

Institutions and programs identified by the Commission as in need of improvement regarding student outcomes requirements will receive correspondence from ABHES regarding reporting or other requirements.

Thank you.