



Accreditation Standards

Standard A - Administration:

1. Administration of the program must be consistent with the goals of the program and scope of activities.
2. The program must be under the continuous guidance of an administrative authority and/or individual responsible for its quality, content, and ongoing content.

Standard B - Needs Assessment:

1. Program providers must utilize identifiable mechanisms to determine objectively the current professional needs and interests of the intended audience, and the content of the program must be based upon these needs.

Standard C - Objectives:

1. Specific written educational objectives identifying the expected learner outcomes must be developed for each activity and published in advance for the intended audience.

Standard D - Admissions:

1. In general, the program must be made available to the entire public.
2. If activities require previous training or preparation, the necessary level of knowledge, skill, or experience must be specified in course announcements.

Standard E - Instructors:

1. Instructors chosen to teach courses must be qualified by education and/or experience to provide instruction in the relevant subject matter.
2. The number of instructors employed for a course activity must be adequate to ensure effective educational results.



3. Program providers must have a policy that demonstrates instructors are not discriminated against based on gender identity, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, socioeconomic status and/or sexual orientation.

Standard F - Publicity:

1. Publicity must be informative and not misleading. It must include:
 - a. Course title
 - b. A description of the course content
 - c. The educational objectives
 - d. A description of teaching methods to be used
 - e. Costs
 - f. The name of the program provider, joint-providers and contract source
 - g. Course instructor(s) and their qualifications
 - h. Refund and cancellation policies
 - i. Location
 - j. Dates
 - k. Specify number of hours awarded by educational methods used (lecture, clinical participation, self-instruction, etc.)
 - l. Time and period of availability for self-instruction courses
 - m. The names of any entities providing commercial support
2. For effective presentation and assimilation of course content, the prior level of skill, knowledge, or experience required (or suggested) of participants must be clearly specified in publicity materials.

Standard G - Evaluation:

1. Program providers must develop and utilize activity evaluation mechanisms that:
 - a. Are appropriate to the objectives and educational methods;
 - b. Measure the extent to which course objectives have been accomplished
 - c. Assess course content, instructor effectiveness, and overall administration

Standard H - Self-Instruction and Electronically Mediated Programs:

1. Self-instruction activities that are primarily audio or audiovisual must include supplemental information that further explains the audio or audiovisual material.
2. Electronically mediated programs must include a documented technology plan that includes electronic security measures to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information (e.g., password protection, encryption, back-up systems, and firewalls).
3. Participant interaction with faculty or individuals having expertise in the subject area and/or other participants is an essential characteristic and can be facilitated in a timely manner through a variety of methods such as voicemail, email, or chat rooms.
4. Participants who complete self-paced self-instructional programs should receive credit based on an educator's estimate of the time required to complete the program segment, with the minimum being one half an hour (30 minutes) of credit.
5. For self-instructional or electronically-mediated activities, a provision must be made for a mechanism by which the learner can assess his/her mastery of the material.
6. Participants must be informed of specific requirements for hardware and software and must have access to technical assistance throughout the duration of the course and the design of the course should support easy navigation to even novice users.
7. Courses must include resources, references, and information to aid participants in securing relevant supportive material.
8. Embedded advertising and direct commercial links are inappropriate with the educational content and must be avoided.
9. Program providers who plan self-instructional activities must ensure the input of individuals having technical expertise in both media and self-directed learning techniques and the application of these techniques to adult learning.
10. For live electronically mediated events, a provision must be made to ensure periodic interchange between the instructor(s) such as, but not limited to, polling, direct questions and surveys.
11. Providers that offer self-instructional activities must review the activities at least once every three years, or more frequently if indicated by new scientific developments, to ensure that content is current and accurate.

- Recommendations
 - I. For self-instructional activities, use of audiovisual materials may offer valuable learning experiences when their usefulness as a means rather than an end, is appreciated.
 - II. Course program providers should direct course participants to where appropriate software needed to utilize the electronic media used in the course can be obtained or downloaded.
 - III. If providing electronically mediated distance learning, security measures should be in place to ensure both quality standards and the integrity and validity of information (e.g., password protection, encryption, back-up systems, firewalls, secure servers).
 - IV. Feedback to participants about assignments and questions should be constructive and provided in a timely manner.
 - V. Courses should provide participants with the flexibility to access and review course materials on demand during the period of announced availability.
 - VI. Questions directed to course personnel should be answered quickly and accurately. A structured system to address participant complaints should be in place.