

# ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

## IV. B. 1. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

Accredited entry-level occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational programs must report program additions or changes to ACOTE. Minor program changes will be reported on the Annual Report and do not require ACOTE approval before implementation. Significant program changes require ACOTE approval prior to implementation and a request for approval of a significant change must be submitted through the ACOTE eAccreditation Portal (<https://acote.aota.org>) using the “Substantive Change” tab.

If it is not clear whether the change is classified as a minor change or a significant change, the program must submit a letter to the ACOTE Chairperson, via the Accreditation Department at [accred@aota.org](mailto:accred@aota.org), that requests clarification. The letter must include information about the proposed addition or change and the requirements and status for institutional and state approval. After the information is reviewed by the ACOTE Executive Committee, the determination will be communicated to the program.

### PROGRAM OFFICIAL, INSTITUTIONAL NAME, AND OWNERSHIP CHANGES

**Program director:** Report as directed by [ACOTE Policy IV.E.4. Program Director Changes](#).

**Program officials** (CEO, Dean, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, or Doctoral Capstone Coordinator): Update the “Officials” tab of the ACOTE eAccreditation Portal (<https://acote.aota.org>). Instructions for adding a new user or changing an existing user in the ACOTE eAccreditation portal are available on the “[Resources](#)” page of the ACOTE website. (See *Adding New User or Changing Information*).

**Changes to Institutional Name:** Report in the “Substantive Change” tab in the ACOTE eAccreditation Portal (<https://acote.aota.org>) using the “Other” designation.

**Transfer of program sponsorship/ownership:** If the program is remaining within the current facility with no change in resources or delivery model the notification must be submitted within 30 days of the change. The program must report the change in the “Substantive Change” tab in the ACOTE eAccreditation Portal (<https://acote.aota.org>) using the “Other” designation. The narrative must include details of the change, the impact on the program, and the institutional accreditation status of the new sponsoring institution. If the new sponsoring institution plans to relocate the program to a different institution within the next 5 years, it must apply for separate accreditation through the initial accreditation process described in [ACOTE Manual Policy III.A. Overview of the Process](#).

### MINOR PROGRAM ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

Minor program additions or changes must be reported on the ACOTE Annual Report and **do not** require ACOTE approval before implementation. Information on how the minor change or addition affects compliance with the ACOTE Standards must be included. Minor program additions or changes include the following:

- admission requirements and selection criteria.
- reduction in frequency of student admissions (e.g., not admitting students for one admission cycle or reducing admissions from once a year to every other year).
- elimination of an approved cohort or track.
- changes in how the program is offered that do not change the degree level (e.g., move from a combined baccalaureate/master’s-degree-level program to a professional entry-level master’s program).
- changes to the curriculum content or delivery model for less than 25% of credits of the didactic courses excluding Level II fieldwork and OTD and OTA-B capstones (e.g., curricular adjustments, changes between quarter/semester systems, change from in-classroom to distance education delivery model).
- changing facilities on the same campus.

## SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

Significant program additions or changes require ACOTE review and approval prior to the admission of students into the changed program. Programs must submit a request for approval of a significant change through the ACOTE eAccreditation Portal (<https://acote.aota.org>) using the “Substantive Change” tab. Significant program additions or changes include the following:

- addition of a student cohort or track (e.g., weekend or evening cohort, extended or part-time cohort or a distance learning cohort).
- a planned headcount increase of 25% or more than what is approved by ACOTE (see “Profile” tab in the eAccreditation portal for the approved cohort size).
- changes to the curriculum content or delivery model for 25% or more of the didactic courses excluding Level II fieldwork and OTD and OTA-B capstone (e.g., change from in-classroom to distance education delivery model).
- addition or change of participating colleges in an accredited consortium.
- changing facilities to a different location off campus or to a different campus.

The significant change request must include:

- the details, to include the month and year of planned implementation, and the rationale of the proposed changes.
- the requirements for and status of institutional and state approval of the additions or changes.
- how the proposed changes reflect the mission of the institution, the philosophy of learning and the curriculum design.
- how other ACOTE Standards impacted by this change are addressed.
- the accommodations to support the changes including implications for 1) faculty, mentors, or other support staff composition, 2) resources and space, 3) budget, 4) curriculum design, 5) admission information and criteria, 6) course sequence, 7) course content, and 8) fieldwork.
- if the changes include an addition of a distance learning cohort or change to a distance education delivery model, the program must address the ACOTE Standards related to distance education.

The deadlines for submitting a significant program change to ACOTE:

- February 20th (for review at the April ACOTE meeting)
- June 20th (for review at the August ACOTE meeting)
- October 20th (for review at the December ACOTE meeting)

After review of the information by ACOTE, the program will be notified if the additions or changes are approved, if additional information is required or if the request was denied. The accreditation status of the existing program will not accrue to the additions or changes of the program until ACOTE approval. When considering significant change requests, ACOTE considers outstanding areas of noncompliance and may elect to conduct an abbreviated on-site evaluation to assess the significance of the addition or change and its impact on the program. ACOTE retains the right to deny the requested addition or change if upon review, ACOTE determines that the addition or change will adversely impact current and/or prospective students.

## ADDITIONS OR CHANGES REQUIRING SEPARATE ACCREDITATION ACTION

**New Program:** An institution with an accredited occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational program planning to add a new occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational program, regardless of the degree-level (doctoral, master's, baccalaureate, associates) must apply for separate accreditation through the initial accreditation process described in [ACOTE Manual Policy III.A. Overview of the Process](#).

**Additional Location:** Accredited occupational therapy or occupational therapy assistant educational programs that are planning to seek accreditation for an additional location must follow the initial accreditation process described in [ACOTE Manual Policy IV.B.2. Additional Locations](#).