

GUIDELINES AND POLICY STATEMENTS

IV.E.6. CERTIFICATION EXAM PASS RATE REQUIREMENTS

CERTIFICATION EXAM PASS RATE STANDARD

The following are requirements of the *Accreditation Standards for a Doctoral-Degree-Level Educational Program* and the *Accreditation Standards for a Master's-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapist*, and *Accreditation Standards for a Baccalaureate-Degree-Level Educational Program and the Associate-Degree-Level Educational Program for the Occupational Therapy Assistant* related to national certification exam pass rates:

The average pass rate over the 3 most recent calendar years for graduates attempting the national certification exam within 12 months of graduation from the program must be 80% or higher (regardless of the number of attempts). If a program has fewer than 25 test takers in the 3 most recent calendar years, the program may include test takers from additional years until it reaches 25 or until the 5 most recent calendar years are included in the total. Programs that did not have candidates who sat for the exam in each of the 3 most recent calendar years must meet the required 80% pass rate each year until data for 3 calendar years are available.

MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EXTENSION FOR GOOD CAUSE

ACOTE may request additional information related to pass rates based on certification exam data reported by National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) if a program falls below the 80% pass rate in any given year even if the average pass rate is 80% or higher.

PROCEDURES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE REGARDING CERTIFICATION EXAM PASS RATES

1. If the program is not in compliance with the certification pass rate Standard, ACOTE will cite an area of noncompliance. The program will be required to submit a Plan of Correction and an amended program evaluation plan that includes, but not limited to:
 - a) Analysis of factors contributing to low pass rates to include admissions processes, a curriculum review, current staffing evaluation, teaching effectiveness, student performance (including NBCOT exam) and advisement,
 - b) Plan to address targeted factors, which must be included in the program's strategic plan.
 - c) Annual improvement targets, which must be included in the program's evaluation plan.
 - d) Plan to correct the area of noncompliance within 2 years ([ACOTE Policy IV.E.1. Plans of Correction](#)).
2. If the program remains in noncompliance at the end of 2 years, the program may request an **extension for good cause for a maximum of two additional years** to allow additional time to correct the area of noncompliance. Multiples extensions for good cause may be allowed. ACOTE assesses the below criteria for granting an extension for good cause regarding certification exam pass rates:
 - a) The program has implemented the plan of correction and, if necessary, has modified the plan based on evaluation data.
 - b) The program has maintained or demonstrated an upward trend in the pass rate during the correction period.
3. ACOTE may conduct a fact-finding visit to gain additional information.
4. ACOTE may change the program's status to Probationary Accreditation if compliance is not met after two years. If the program is unable to meet the criteria for extension for good cause, procedures may be implemented to withdraw accreditation.

ACOTE may remove an area of noncompliance related to certification exam pass rates when a program's 3-year pass rate has reached 80% as reported by NBCOT.

PROCEDURE FOR CALCULATION

Annually, ACOTE receives a report on certification exam pass rates of all programs directly from the NBCOT and calculates the 3-year pass rate percentage for the total number of test takers and total number of test takers who passed the certification exam. The pass rate percentage is **NOT** calculated by averaging annual pass rate percentages together.