

GUIDELINES AND POLICY STATEMENTS

VI. A. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

In order to prevent problems related to misunderstanding and/or misinformation, it is the policy of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) that all communications regarding ACOTE actions related to the accreditation status shall be presented through official written correspondence. Such correspondence is sent electronically from the AOTA Accreditation Department or through ACOTE Online and is addressed and copied as follows:

- For all ACOTE action that involves or may involve areas of noncompliance with the [ACOTE Accreditation Standards](#), correspondence is forwarded to the CEO, dean, and program director, and copied to reviewers.
- For ACOTE actions that do not directly affect accreditation status, letters are generally addressed to the program director and may be copied to the CEO, dean, and reviewers.

Additional written communication related to procedures and scheduling of the accreditation process is sent directly to the program director from Accreditation Department staff.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

To facilitate the accreditation process, regular communication with Accreditation Department staff is encouraged. Questions related to the self-study process, interpretation of the accreditation standards, preparation of required reports, arrangements for the on-site evaluation, or other procedural issues may be directed at any time to the staff. In addition, questions regarding clarification of an action or a request from ACOTE may be directed to the Director or Assistant Director of Accreditation, AOTA. They will contact the ACOTE reviewers and subsequently provide a response to the program representative.

Although Accreditation Department staff and ACOTE will clarify statements in regard to areas of noncompliance or acceptability of reports, it is not their role to provide consultation regarding program development.

Direct communication between members of ACOTE and members of educational program faculty and staff *prior to an on-site evaluation visit* is appropriate when it is related to specific arrangements for travel or housing for the visit or discussion of the on-site schedule. It shall not be appropriate for there to be direct communication between reviewers and the program director or faculty in those instances where the communication relates to the substance or appropriateness of a decision of ACOTE. Communication at that time should occur with the Accreditation Department staff who, in turn, will relate concerns to ACOTE.

Telephone conversations are documented by the Accreditation Department staff and copies sent to program reviewers as appropriate.