



FAQS REGARDING CHANGES TO THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Why does the CoARC want to transition from Letter of Review to Provisional Accreditation?

This decision is based on CoARC's ongoing effort to evaluate its accreditation practices in order to maintain appropriate policies and procedures that ensure fair and consistent accreditation decisions. During CoARC's review of its accreditation policies, the term "Letter of Review" was found to be confusing to CoARC's communities of interest, including students and the public. A Letter of Review was not a status of accreditation. Further, the term "Letter of Review" was incongruent with eligibility requirements for the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) credentialing examinations as well as with many state respiratory therapy practice acts that only recognized graduates of "accredited" respiratory therapy programs in their eligibility criteria. The policy changes will take place as of the effective date of the close of the March 2012 Board meeting (March 24, 2012). All programs currently in the Letter of Intent application phase, the Approval of Intent phase, and Letter of Review phase must continue to follow current accreditation policies and procedures until such time as the CoARC provides formal notice of the policy changes.

How long is Provisional Accreditation (see Policy 1.051)?

This status signifies that a program that has been granted an Approval of Intent has demonstrated sufficient compliance to initiate a program in accordance with the *Standards* through the completion and submission of an acceptable Provisional Accreditation Self Study Report (PSSR), completion of an initial on-site visit, and other documentation required by the CoARC Board. The conferral of Provisional Accreditation denotes a new program that has made significant progress towards meeting the Standards of Accreditation. The program will remain on Provisional Accreditation until achieving Initial Accreditation. Programs with Provisional Accreditation classification may be placed on Probationary Accreditation or have accreditation withdrawn if the program does not provide continuing evidence of progress toward meeting all Standards. The conferral of Provisional Accreditation also authorizes the sponsor to admit its first class of students. It is recognized by the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) toward eligibility to the Respiratory Care Credentialing Examination(s). Once graduates have been produced and at least three (3) reporting years of outcomes have been collected and analyzed, a provisionally accredited program may apply for initial accreditation. Following the completion of the second on-site evaluation, the Board will confer Initial Accreditation or Withhold Initial Accreditation. Enrolled students completing the program under Provisional Accreditation are considered graduates of a CoARC accredited program. Provisional Accreditation does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status.

When will these policy changes occur?

The policy changes will take place as of the effective date of the close of the March 2012 Board meeting (March 24, 2012).

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A Letter of Intent Application has been submitted. How will these policy changes impact my application?

As of the effective date of the policy changes, all applicants that have submitted a Letter of Intent Application will remain on the same timeline. Applicants will be subject to a Referee review of their Letter of Intent Application. The Referee then submits a recommendation for action at the next Board meeting, which will vote to either grant or deny an Approval of Intent.

As of the effective date of the policy changes, all applicants receiving Approval of Intent will be required to submit a Provisional Self Study Report (PSSR), fee, and complete an on-site evaluation. The Approval of Intent will expire two (2) years from the date of issue (see Policy 2.023).

My program currently holds an Approval of Intent. How will these policy changes impact my program?

All programs holding AOI as of the effective date of the policy changes that have submitted a Letter of Review Self Study Report (LSSR) will not be required to resubmit a Provisional Accreditation Self Study Report (PSSR) or have an on-site evaluation.

All programs holding AOI as of the effective date of the policy changes that have not submitted a LSSR will be required to submit a PSSR and be subject to an on-site evaluation as part of the review process.

All programs holding AOI as of the effective date of the policy changes will be subject to a Referee review of their Self Study Report (either LSSR or PSSR). The Referee reviews the accreditation record and submits a recommendation for action at the next Board meeting, which will vote to either grant or withhold Provisional Accreditation.

As of the effective date of the policy changes, all programs subsequently **receiving** Approval of Intent will be required to submit a PSSR, fee, and complete an on-site evaluation. The Approval of Intent will expire two (2) years from the date of issue (see Policy 2.023).

My program currently holds a Letter of Review. How will these policy changes impact my program?

As of the effective date of the policy changes, **ALL** programs **currently holding** a Letter of Review will have their status changed to Provisional Accreditation.

Programs holding Provisional Accreditation as of the effective date of the policy changes that have submitted their Initial Accreditation Self Study Report (ISSR), or completed their initial on-site visit following submission of their ISSR will be eligible for Initial Accreditation.

Programs holding Provisional Accreditation as of the effective date of the policy changes that have not submitted their ISSR will be eligible for Initial Accreditation once their on-site visit has been completed and they achieve 3 reporting years of outcomes.



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My program currently holds Initial Accreditation. How will the change impact my program?

Initial Accreditation remains valid for a period of five (5) years. As of the effective date of the policy changes, all programs **currently holding** Initial Accreditation will remain on the same timeline and will not be subject to a Continuing Accreditation Self Study Report (CSSR), fee, and on-site evaluation upon expiration of Initial Accreditation. These programs will be subject to a Referee review of their accreditation record and subsequent Board action approximately one (1) year prior to the expiration of the Initial Accreditation period. At the end of the 5-year Initial Accreditation period, the Referee reviews the accreditation record and submits a recommendation for action at the next Board meeting, which will vote to either grant or withhold Continuing Accreditation.

As of the effective date of the policy changes, all programs subsequently **receiving** Initial Accreditation will be subject to a CSSR, fee, and on-site evaluation upon expiration of Initial Accreditation.

My program currently holds Continuing Accreditation. How will these policy changes impact my program?

This change will have no impact on your program. The accreditation process and timeline will stay the same for your program and other programs with the same accreditation status. If you are unsure as to when your next program evaluation is, please contact the CoARC Executive Office.