



ACC.P.09: SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE(S) TO A CAOT ACCREDITED ENTRY-LEVEL OT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Activity Sphere: Accreditation

Last Revised: June 2017

Activity: Entry-level education

Subactivity/task: Academic Accreditation

POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to guide how the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) will receive, monitor and/or review substantive changes that Canadian universities make to any accredited occupational therapy education program.

Definition of Substantive change

Programs are subject to change over time in order to meet societal challenges and occupational therapy education requirements. Examples include changes to improve an education program's structure, to take into account new and changing realities in the workplace or in federal or provincial legislation, or to meet new international standards for occupational therapy education and practice.

For purposes of CAOT Academic Accreditation, a substantive change refers to four broad categories of change in an accredited Canadian entry-level occupational therapy education program ('The Client'): 1. organizational structure, 2. resources, 3. educational program, 4. satellite program. A substantive change is deemed to have an impact on the program's power and capacity to sustain relations, deliver the curriculum, pursue research, and/or control the social location of the program required for development of students' professional competence.

Substantive change differs from program modification that does not need to be reported to CAOT. Examples of program modification include changes in a course number, the number of credits attributed to a course, course sequencing, course assignments, the use of distance technologies or on-site learning methods in a course, modification to an admission requirement (e.g. letter of reference), or implementation of recommendations from a previous accreditation review.

Substantive Change Client's Obligations:

The Client, being an accredited occupational therapy education program, shall advise CAOT within 30 days of anticipated change in the Client's accredited occupational therapy program which may discredit, minimize or misrepresent the accreditation award to the public or students. The Client will inform CAOT at



each step as the proposed changes are addressed by the various levels of authority or beyond within the Client's educational institution. Substantive changes include but are not limited to the following:

1. Alterations in organizational structure, e.g.;
 - a. head of the occupational therapy program is replaced by a non-occupational therapist;
 - b. change that advances or limits the program's legal standing or autonomy;
 - c. change in the degree title and/or degree granting body;
 - d. changes in the status of the degree for admission to advanced post-professional/post-graduate masters or PhD studies;
 - e. change in the professional hierarchy and identity within the organizational structure;
2. Changes that significantly enhance, restrict or reduce resources, e.g.:
 - a. restrictions related to financial, human, learning or physical resources;
 - b. changes that reduce the proportion of discretionary funding
 - c. changes in financial authority, or authority for management of human, learning or physical resources by the head of occupational therapy
 - d. substantial increase in funding such as the appointment of an endowed chair when it impacts program content or delivery
3. Changes in the entry-level occupational therapy program, e.g.:
 - a. a fundamental shift in the conceptual framework
 - b. changes that contravene the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) Minimum Standards
4. Development of a Satellite Program in a different geographic site or using distributed education with the same university, resources, and curriculum structure as an existing, accredited program (see Policy ACC.P.08 Satellite Program).

If it is not clear whether the change is classified as a major change, the program must submit a letter to the Academic Credential Council chairperson, c/o the CAOT Accreditation Department, requesting clarification.

Procedures for Reporting a Substantive Change(s):

1. Accredited programs must submit the **Substantive Change Notification Form (SCNF) (see Appendix A)**. The SCNF shall be submitted with a cover letter to Academic Credential Council (ACC) Chairperson, c/o the CAOT Accreditation Department, explaining the rationale or logic behind the proposed change.
2. On review of the SCNF by CAOT, the ACC will list the documents and information required for CAOT to carry out an assessment of the impact of the change on the accredited program.



3. ACC will respond in as timely a manner as possible on the accreditation implications of the proposed change(s), and any additional documents, information or processes required to sustain or modify the existing academic accreditation.
4. When the Academic Credentialing Council is satisfied with the change(s) or change(s) that have already occurred, it will correspond with the educational program and recommend the proposal to the CAOT Board of Directors as a Progress Report on the existing accreditation award.



Appendix A

Substantive Change Notification Form

University/Program: _____

Director: _____

E-mail/ Telephone: _____

Change or Proposed Change and anticipated implications for students, faculty, staff, the public and others (please be as detailed as possible):

Please specify the indicators from the Academic Accreditation Standards that are affected by this change.

[See Self-Study Guide for a full list of indicators.](#)

Complete the following table:

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

Date:

Signature:

ACC.P.09: Substantive Change(s) to an Accredited Education Program		
Revised	Agenda item	Policy and/or Procedures
June 2017	B.17.06.C.08	Policy and procedures
Approved	B.14.11.8.8	Ref. to old policy: 8212

Related documents:

- Policy ACC.P.08 Satellite Program;
- CAOT Academic Accreditation Standards and Self-Study Guide.