POLICY & PROCEDURES

ACC-05: DISTRIBUTED EDUCATION

PREAMBLE

Developments in technology have created new options for student learning, particularly for those living in remote and/or rural locations. By using technology and other strategies students can participate in a formal education program and be separated from instructors and each other. One mechanism used by universities and colleges to provide enhanced educational opportunities is distributed education programs. It is one of the responsibilities of the accreditation process to ensure that students participating in distributed education learning opportunities are provided with an educational experience substantially equivalent to their peers participating in a more traditional learning environment.

Definition of Distributed Education:

PEAC, for accreditation purposes, defines Distributed Education as the delivery of a substantially equivalent physiotherapy education program in its entirety, at a different geographical location. This group of students at the distributed education site would be considered part of the cohort of the parent program.

Assumptions:

A program shall be considered a distributed education site of an existing program if and only if it meets the conditions below. Should the program not meet the conditions below, it will be considered, for accreditation purposes, a stand-alone education program.

1.0   POLICY

    1.1.   PEAC defines the conditions which must be met for an education program to be deemed to be a distributed education site of an existing program with accreditation status.

    1.2.   An education program with accreditation status (full or partial) must submit a Report of Substantive change (see Policy ACC-04 Substantive Change) to identify an associated distributed education site for consideration by PEAC.

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1.3. The following conditions are used by PEAC as guidelines in order to determine eligibility as a distributed education site.

Conditions	Relevant PEAC Standard
The education program must hold Accreditation Status, Fully or Partially Compliant. Education programs holding Probationary Accreditation Status will not be eligible to add distributed education site(s) to their accreditation status.	
The established education program must submit a Report of Substantive Change to PEAC for approval at least 12 months prior to a formal announcement of the implementation of a distributed education site.	
In order for the first cohort of students to be considered graduates of an accredited program, the accreditation process at the distributed education site must be completed before any students graduate from the program. (ACC-01). This may occur either as part of the established program's regularly scheduled review or as an additional review. All costs of an additional review will be the responsibility of the established program.	
The distributed program should: • be within the same provincial or territorial jurisdiction as the established program • demonstrate a single governance structure • award a degree from a single educational institution • provide instruction in the same language as the established program • demonstrate that administrative and operational responsibility lie with the director of the established program • consider faculty members at the distributed education site as faculty of the established program • demonstrate that faculty members, students, and prospective students are subject to the same policies and procedures as those of the established program • demonstrate that faculty members report to the director of the program • be under the budgetary control of the director of the program or designate • have a designated program faculty member at the distributed education site to serve as the official contact person and to provide leadership. • be guided by the same mission, philosophy, program objectives, curriculum design, and learning objectives as the established program • demonstrate substantially equivalent education for students at the distributed education site (eg. comparable educational experiences and human/site resources, equivalent methods of assessment and determination of grades, etc.) as at the established program.	1.1 (Core) 1.2 (Core) 1.1 (Core) Standard 3, Standard 4, 5.2 1.2 (Core) 1.3 (Core) 2.1, 2.2, 4.2, 1.5, Standard 4, Standard 6

1.4. If, upon review of the Report of Substantive Change, PEAC deems the distributed education site to be <u>ineligible</u> to be added to the established program's accreditation status, the distributed education site will be considered a stand-alone program. To pursue accreditation status, the distributed education site must apply to PEAC as an independent program.

1.5. If, upon review of the Report of Substantive Change. PEAC deems the distributed education site to be <u>eligible</u> to be added to the established program's accreditation status, a Self-Study Report will be required, and an onsite visit will be scheduled.

1.6. An onsite accreditation review of the program at the distributed education site must be conducted prior to the distributed education site being added to the established program's accreditation status. This may occur either as part of the established program's regularly scheduled review or as an additional review. The education program will be responsible for submission of a $2500 administrative fee and all expenses incurred to conduct the accreditation review of the new site.

1.7. Students at the distributed education site will not be considered graduates of an accredited program until a decision has been made to allow the established program to add the distributed education site to its accreditation status, the onsite review is complete, AND a decision regarding accreditation status has been made by PEAC.

1.8. Once a distributed education site has been added to the established program's accreditation status, and has completed an onsite accreditation review, any accreditation decisions made by PEAC regarding the accreditation status of the established program will apply to the program and any associated distributed education sites. Conversely, any accreditation decisions made by PEAC regarding a distributed education site will apply to the established program and any other associated distributed education sites. The established program and all of its distributed education sites will be considered a single program for accreditation purposes.

1.9. In the calendar year following addition of the distributed education site to the established program's accreditation status, the established program's annual accreditation fee will increase by an additional 15% per each distributed education site per year (see GUIDE-10 Fee Schedule).

2.0   PROCEDURES

An established accredited education program developing a new distributed education site must complete the following steps in order for students at the new site to be considered graduates of an accredited program:

   i.   Submission for review by PEAC of a Report of Substantive Change twelve (12) months prior to the formal announcement of implementation of the new distributed education site.
   ii.   Decision by PEAC regarding the eligibility of the new distributed education site to be added to the established education program for accreditation purposes.
   iii. Assuming eligibility, completion of an onsite accreditation review and accreditation award decision prior to graduation of the first cohort of students.

2.1   Twelve (12) months prior to a formal announcement regarding implementation of a distributed education site, the existing education program with accreditation status (full or partial) must complete a Report of Substantive Change (see Policy ACC-04) to describe the distributed education site. In the Report, evidence must be provided to demonstrate that the distributed education site meets the conditions required (see table above) to be eligible to be added to the established education program's accreditation status.

2.2   Upon submission and receipt of a Report of Substantive Change, it will be considered by PEAC at the next accreditation committee meeting following the submission. PEAC will subsequently advise the program that:

   i.   the report provides the necessary information regarding the distributed education site and the distributed education site is <u>not eligible</u> to be added to the program's accreditation status,

OR

   ii.   the report provides the necessary information regarding the distributed education site and the distributed education site is <u>eligible</u> to be added to the program's accreditation status, following an onsite accreditation review,

OR

   iii. <u>further information</u> is required within a specified period,

2.3   If eligibility has been established for the distributed education site to be added to the program's accreditation status, a Self Study Report will be required to provide evidence of compliance of the distributed education site with PEAC accreditation standards and criteria. The program will be advised of the due date for submission of the Self Study Report.

2.4 PEAC, in consultation with the program, will make arrangements for an onsite accreditation visit and will recruit Peer Review Team members to conduct the review.

2.5 Upon completion of the review, PEAC will invoice the program for all expenses incurred to conduct the accreditation review of the new site, and a $2500 administrative fee.

2.6 In the following calendar year, the program will be invoiced according to the Fee Schedule for programs with distributed education sites (see GUIDE-10).

Policy Number: ACC-05	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
2009 *March 2011* *June 2013* *Sept 2013*	ACC-04 Substantive Change
	FORM-05 Report of Substantive Change
	GUIDE-10 Fee Schedule