



April 23, 2020 CAATE COVID-19 Update: 2020–2021 Self-Study Due Dates and On-Site Visits

The Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) continues to monitor the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on all levels of our accredited programs. Additionally, the CAATE is monitoring the responses from the Department of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the Association of Specialized and Programmatic Accreditors (ASPA), and those of our peer health care accreditors. The Commission recognizes the significant difficulties of operating athletic training programs during these challenging times. The CAATE is working diligently to afford programs appropriate flexibility to deal with these difficulties while at the same time being vigilant in enforcing the standards we have set forth to assure programmatic quality and protect students and the public.

We provide the following updates and clarifications regarding **self-study due dates** and **on-site visits** for the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 review cycles:

Self-Study Due Dates

- At this time, self-studies remain due July 1, 2020 for programs scheduled for comprehensive reviews and initial accreditation in the 2020-2021 academic year and July 1, 2021 for programs scheduled for comprehensive reviews and initial accreditation in the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Programs will be expected to submit complete documentation and all standards must be adequately addressed in the self-study report.
- Should certain information be unavailable or incomplete due to the temporary impact of the COVID-19 response at your institution or partner clinical sites, a detailed explanation describing the institutional actions and how those actions impeded the ability to document full compliance must be provided. For example, if certain documentation could not be obtained to upload due to on-campus restrictions or if particular clinical sites could not be visited because they were closed, this should be described in detail.
 - Note that as part of the normal submission process, these statements must be affirmed via electronic signature by the Department Chair, Dean of the School/College in which the program is housed, Provost, and President.
 - Simply stating 'Not available due to challenges from the COVID-19 response' will be deemed not adequate.

- Where data/information are not available at the time of the self-study submission due to the institution's or partner clinical sites COVID-19 response, programs must describe when they feel the data will be made available as part of the narrative response. Typically, this would not likely be later than December 1, 2020 unless closures extend well past the Fall. Program Directors can work closely with their site visit team chair to determine if specific standards adversely impacted by the institutions COVID-19 response need to be re-opened to allow for updates or completion.
 - Site visit team members will be instructed to work cooperatively with Programs to re-open specific standards where programs have provided valid rationale for how COVID-19 responses impacted their ability to demonstrate full compliance. As is usual practice, Programs will have the ability to demonstrate compliance prior to the on-site visit within the self-study, during the on-site visit, and during the rejoinder process. This inherently iterative process of review will afford Programs with ample opportunity to access and provide evidence for compliance, which may be unavailable or difficult to obtain prior to the July 1st self-study due date, prior to the Commission making accreditation decisions.
 - The Commission will be actively working with Program's impacted by COVID-19 to afford them these additional opportunities to provide the CAATE with previously unavailable information to demonstrate compliance as it becomes available to the Program as institutions and clinical partners ease/lift their pandemic related restrictions.
- As per the CAATE Policies and Procedures (IV.C.3): Failure to submit the required self-study documents within the designated time period will result in the program being placed on Administrative Probation. The program will be placed on Academic Probation at 30 days past the deadline. Failure to submit the self-study within 60 days of the deadline will result in the CAATE initiating Withdrawal of Accreditation for the program. Initial programs that miss the July 1st deadline for submission must wait until the following July 1st to resubmit materials.

On-Site Visits

- At this time, the Commission is continually monitoring the impact of COVID-19 related travel restrictions and has as our top priority the safety and well-being of our stakeholder programs and volunteer site visitors.
- Should travel restrictions extend through the fall, all of the scheduled 2020-2021 on-site visits will be distributed throughout the Spring semester, beginning in January of 2021, and extending as far into the year as is feasible based on campus calendars and site visitor availability.
- It is the Commission's goal at this time to complete all 2020-2021 on-site visits during the 2020-2021 academic year. However, if this is not possible given ongoing COVID-19 travel restrictions, the Commission asks that program's be prepared to be flexible in scheduling on-site visits as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

- If necessary, the Commission will prioritize site visits for initial programs seeking accreditation to assure that the students/graduates of programs who are successful in the accreditation process are eligible to sit for the BOC exam. Additionally, priority scheduling could be implemented for programs that are on Probation and/or programs with lower 3-year aggregate BOC pass rate outcomes.
- While the Commission has begun examining the potential for conducting virtual site visits, it is not our intention to implement them at this time. Should travel restrictions extend into the Spring semester of 2020-21, the Commission will reconsider the implementation of virtual site visits.

The Commission remains committed to the health, safety, and well-being of our stakeholders and volunteers and appreciates your ongoing commitment to student/resident learning and quality assurance. Additional information will be disseminated by the Commission as deemed appropriate. Should you have specific questions or additional concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the CAATE Office (512-733-9700). CAATE Coronavirus updates are posted on a dedicated **Coronavirus Updates and FAQs** landing page on the **CAATE website**.