

6. Policy on Combination Distance Study-Resident Programs

This policy addresses the procedures that an institution must follow during its initial accreditation if it uses blended learning courses or programs that require students to complete both a distance study and an on-site or resident study component for successful course completion.

When the fulfillment of the objectives of a course/program calls for the learning of certain manual skills, familiarity with specialized equipment or the application of certain techniques under professional supervision, the Accrediting Commission may require the institution to provide such learning experiences as a mandatory part of the course/program.

The Accrediting Commission will accept an application from an institution offering combination distance study-resident training programs (blended learning) if the **predominant** component (i.e., 51% or more of the total program as measured by the time the “average student” takes to complete) of the course/program is offered by distance learning instruction and if the following conditions are met. These conditions do not apply to programs where resident training courses or sessions are offered as an option.

Accredited institutions adding new combination distance study-resident programs must use C.17. Policy on Approval of New Combination Distance Study-Resident Programs or Training Sites.

Action

When an institution requires resident training as part of a program, the institution must use the following questions to *supplement* the statements found in B.1. Guide to Self-Evaluation Report when preparing for the on-site visit:

II. Educational Program Objectives, Curricula, and Materials

1. Describe the provisions made to ensure that students understand that mandatory completion of a resident training phase is necessary for successful completion of a course/program. At what point in their studies do students report for resident training?
2. Describe how the distance study phase of the training constitutes the predominant part of the program. It normally precedes the resident phase and provides meaningful information, the learning of which is necessary for the accomplishment of the course/program objective. The student must be offered the opportunity to attend resident training within **60 days** after having completed the prerequisite distance study phase of the training, unless the date for the resident training is specified in the enrollment contract.
3. Describe how the distance study phase includes a course/program of instruction that constitutes a significant, valid, and structured portion of the overall training. At a minimum, written, printed, or recorded study units must be sent to the student, the student must complete examinations or assignments which are submitted to the institution for evaluation and comment, and the institution must return these to the student in time for him or her to benefit from the evaluation and comment as he or she pursues his or her studies.

4. Describe how the resident training phase is adjunctive or supplemental to the distance study training. It should not duplicate the distance study training but should make it necessary for the student to draw from the knowledge learned in the distance study phase if he or she is to complete successfully the program. Resident instructors should be familiar with the distance study program and present instruction in such a way as to make both phases an integrated unit.
5. Resident instructors should make effective use of the student's experiences in the distance study component. The resident instruction should not duplicate material covered in the distance study lessons.
6. Class lesson plans should be substantive and comprehensive enough to meet the objectives set forth in the program of instruction and actually used by the instructors.

III. Educational Services

1. Describe what provisions are made to familiarize resident instructors with distance study lesson coverage.
2. Describe how resident instructors and counselors use distance study records or materials. Are students permitted to complete distance study assignments during their resident training? Why, and under what circumstances?
3. Describe how the distance education portion of a student's record is available to resident faculty members and should be used as a teaching and counseling resource.
4. Study areas or reference libraries should be available to the students on-site.
5. Academic counseling should be available and appropriate for students in the resident portion of their combination program.
6. Provide data to complete this table: location of training site; names and qualifications of staff and faculty at each site; average number of students trained at site each year; length of training program; special equipment used at each site for training; and outline of the resident program of instruction at training site.

IV. Student Support Services

1. Describe how the institution's placement assistance program demonstrates a satisfactory placement rate. It should keep records, based on follow-up, of employment obtained.
2. Describe how the institution has housing arrangements for resident students that are safe, accessible to the institution, and appropriate for the kind of student enrolled. Food services should also be readily available. Other student services such as break areas, student lounges, and dining facilities should be clean and comfortable.
3. Explain how personal counseling is available and appropriate for students in the resident portion of the combination program.
4. Explain how records of the students' academic progress are maintained for both the distance study and resident phases of the program.
5. Describe any counseling or employment assistance provided to resident students.

VI. Qualifications and Duties of Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, Administrators, Instructors/Faculty, and Staff

1. Describe how the institution has educational standards and qualifications for the hiring of resident training instructors.
2. Provide evidence that site directors and resident instructors are qualified for their positions.

VII. Admission Practices and Enrollment Agreements

1. Describe the criteria (tuition payment, academic achievements, etc.) that must be fulfilled before students are permitted to attend resident training.
2. Describe how the tuition for distance study and resident training are separately stated on the enrollment contract.
3. Describe how the student must sign an agreement to enroll that includes both the distance study and resident training. Explain how the student is informed, prior to enrollment, of the nature, special costs, location, availability, and pertinent conditions for attendance of the resident training phase.

VIII. Advertising, Promotional Literature, and Recruitment Personnel

1. Explain how the institution's advertising and promotional activities makes clear to prospective students that the program is a combination course/program including both distance study and resident training and the completion of both phases is required for successful completion of the course/program.
2. Provide copies of all promotional material, catalogs, and contracts describing resident training to students.
3. The institution's policies and practices in the hiring, training, monitoring, evaluating, and managing of sales personnel must fully conform to the DETC Business Standard II.C.

XI. Financial Responsibility

Provide a copy of any state educational authority approval document.

X. Tuition Policies, Collection Procedures, and Refunds

1. Describe tuition policies, student fund disbursements, refund policies, and methods of compensating students for travel or lodging relating to residency. Explain how the division of tuition payments between distance study and residential components was derived.
2. Describe how tuition charges are fairly distributed for each portion of a combination distance study-resident course/program. "Front end loading" of tuition in which a disproportionately large share of tuition is allocated to the distance study component works to the disadvantage of the vast majority of students, who, without resident training, have little to show for the debt they incur. The Commission does not approve tuition rates for institutions, but it does look to see that tuition is allocated fairly between distance study and resident components.
3. Describe what happens when students fail to report to resident training, and how the refund is applied.

XI. Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Record Protection

1. Describe the facilities and provisions for student housing and explain what procedures are used for continuous monitoring, supervising and inspecting student housing. Explain any contracts for motels/housing facilities and student transportation to and from the training site.
2. Describe how the classrooms, buildings, and other physical facilities are in compliance with all local, city, and state fire codes. The state educational authority document must be available and current at the time of the visit.
3. Explain how the sanitary facilities of the institution are adequate for both male and female students and are in compliance with local, city, and state regulations.
4. Describe how the institution has adequate equipment and procedures to provide for safety actions with regard to fire, injury to students, and handling of hazardous products.
5. Document that first aid materials and supplies are sufficient and adequate. On-site staff must be trained in first aid and CPR procedures.
6. Describe and document how the institution maintains adequate levels of liability, accident, and other insurance for protection of its students in resident training.
7. Provide copies of proof of ownership documents (leases and/or deeds) for equipment and property. **All** of the necessary equipment for training should be available at the time of the examination visit.
8. Describe appropriate fire evacuation plans and where exit signs are posted conspicuously in classrooms and student areas.
9. Describe how educational records of all students are maintained and adequately protected.

#

Revised October 2011