

**JOINT REVIEW COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
IN NUCLEAR MEDICINE TECHNOLOGY**
820 W. Danforth Road, #B1 / Edmond, OK 73003
Ph (405) 285-0546 / Fx (405) 285-0579
mail@jrcnmt.org

July 31, 2019

Dear Program Director,

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) is a national agency that recognizes (“accredits”) the Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology (JRCNMT) as a programmatic accrediting agency. In late 2018 CHEA released new recognition criteria for accreditors and gave them a deadline of January 1, 2020 for compliance. Major changes in the new criteria focus on strengthening consumer protections and include:

- greater transparency of accreditation actions taken by JRCNMT
- more rigorous expectations for the publication of program graduate achievement data
- shorter timelines and different accreditation actions for programs in noncompliance with one or more standards

At its meeting in late April, the JRCNMT met with legal counsel and approved changes to address the new criteria. In July all policy and standard revisions were adopted by the JRCNMT. This letter explains each. It is imperative that all programs read this letter and the enclosures carefully.

Transparency of Accreditation Actions

CHEA criteria:

11.A.1 “Inform the public of the reason(s) for the accrediting organization’s accreditation actions in a timely and readily accessible manner... (See 12D3. This information needs to be included in the directory.)”

12.D.3 “In a readily accessible directory, (identify) all currently accredited institutions or programs and the corresponding levels of accreditation and accreditation status, including any accreditation status conditions imposed by the accrediting organization.”

As an initial response to these criteria the JRCNMT expanded the information published about each program in the online program directory in March 2019. Over the next two months the JRCNMT will post each program’s most recent accreditation letter as a linked document in the online program directory. When a program successfully addresses deficiencies in a progress report the letter will be changed from the one listing the deficiencies to the newer letter stating deficiencies have been addressed. Only one letter – the most recent one – will be posted for each program. Please note that it is the accreditation letter, not the preliminary letter of site visit findings, that will be posted.

As a result of this change in practice, the JRCNMT revised policy *1.1100 Confidentiality* to clearly indicate that accreditation letters are now made public. The policy is provided with this letter and is annotated to indicate where the change was made.

Publication of Graduate Achievement Data

CHEA criterion:

11.B.1 “Provide timely, readily accessible, accurate and consistent aggregate information to the public about ... programmatic performance and student achievement...”

The JRCNMT has been publishing graduate achievement data for two years and reviews program web pages annually for compliance. The attached policy *3.300 Publication of Graduate Achievement Data* formally documents the practices in place and enumerates the timelines and sanctions when a program is not in compliance.

Earlier this year the JRCNMT was required to provide CHEA with links to all accredited program’s web pages so they could review whether student achievement information was in compliance with Standard E1.9. CHEA found that it was difficult to find the JRCNMT student achievement link on many program web pages. It is imperative that programs follow policy 3.300 and ensure that the JRCNMT statement with link is prominent on the program’s main web page or that there is a prominent link to graduate achievement data on the main program page which takes the user to another page where the JRCNMT statement and link are prominent. **Prominent means the JRCNMT statement must be above any additional data the program posts.**

In preparation for a final compliance report due to CHEA by January 1, 2020, the JRCNMT will be reviewing program web pages this October and contacting programs that do not meet the criteria in the standard and policy. **Please review your web page now and make the necessary changes to be in compliance prior to the website review.**

Accreditation Actions and Timelines

CHEA criteria:

6. “A CHEA-recognized accrediting organization requires that all accreditation standards be met for an institution or program to obtain and maintain accredited status.”

11.A.3 “Provide a procedure for the accrediting organization to take timely action to prevent substantially underperforming institutions or programs from achieving or maintaining accredited status.”

To address the first criterion listed above, the JRCNMT modified policy *2.150 Accreditation Actions*. Policy *1.600 Conducting Accreditation Reviews at Reasonable Intervals* was also modified to match the changes made in 2.150. Key changes:

- Continued accreditation is no longer awarded for a range of years, up to seven, depending on the number and type of deficiencies noted. Continued accreditation will only be given for seven years and only awarded when a program has no deficiencies in compliance with the standards.
- A new action titled Accreditation with Conditions may be used if an accredited program has one or more deficiencies. A program’s current accreditation will remain in place for six to twelve additional months while the program addresses the deficiencies and submits a progress report. Continued accreditation will be given when the program demonstrates compliance with all standards.
- A program seeking initial accreditation may receive accreditation for up to a period of three years (current policy) or, if there are deficiencies, the JRCNMT may Defer Action until the program submits a report demonstrating it has come into compliance with those standards.

To address the second criterion pertaining to timelines the JRNCMT reviewed and revised policy 3.110 *Procedure for Monitoring Certification Exam Pass Rate Deficiencies* and its correlating standard, D3.2. The timeline in the policy for programs to address deficiencies in meeting the 80% pass rate was long and did not result in timely action against underperforming programs. While examining historical data from programs the JRCNMT decided that multiple aspects of both the standard and policy should be revised due to the interrelated nature of various parameters. The changes are noted in the policy provided, with key changes noted below.

- The monitoring cycle has been reduced from five to four years in length so that action against underperforming programs occurs more quickly. The JRCNMT recognizes that many programs are small and the pass rate can only be modified with data from several graduate cohorts. Though shortened, the timeline still provides opportunity for a program to obtain more graduate data before negative action is taken.

A program that is currently in the heightened monitoring cycle for pass rates below 80% will be permitted to remain on the five-year cycle that was in place at the time its pass rate fell below 80%.

- The JRCNMT will move from the current five-year average to a three-year average pass rate for first-time examinees. The three-year period will allow older data to fall out of the computation more quickly.

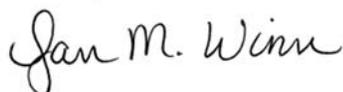
Data from 2016-2018 will be pulled from the annual reports submitted this summer to generate three-year pass rate averages for publication in the next version of the Graduate Achievement Data Report, which will be posted on the JRCNMT website in early September 2019. Programs currently in the pass rate monitoring cycle will be notified if the new computation process places their pass rate at or above 80%, removing them from monitoring.

- For each three-year period, the total number of examinees and the number of passing examinees on both national certification exams will be aggregated, then the pass rate will be computed. This will result in program's having a single three-year pass rate average for first-time examinees rather than one for each exam.

One final policy was updated during this process, though not in response to new CHEA criteria. Policy 2.700 *Letter of Site Visit Findings* was updated to reflect more current terminology and process followed by the JRCNMT. A copy of the updated policy has also been provided.

This letter highlights a significant number of changes that are effective immediately. Please review them carefully and contact the JRNCMT office if you have questions. In November the JRCNMT will conduct its first Virtual Town Hall webinar on these changes. More details about these quarterly webinars will be provided in a future email.

Sincerely,



Jan M. Winn, MEd, RT(N), CNMT
Executive Director

cc: JRCNMT Executive Officers