

Occupational Therapist Assistant & Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program

Expression of Interest (EOI) to Lead Updating the
Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant
Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) Accreditation Standards

Issue Date: June 12, 2020

Due Date: July 10, 2020

Introduction

The current Standards of the Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) were published in 2012. The Standards Framework is based on the “5 + 1” model.¹ This model uses five standards considered common to accreditation of professional education programs. The additional standard, the “+1” allows accreditation programs to develop standards specific to the discipline(s). In 2018 revisions to the Standards were published. Substantive changes included the addition of key indicators for all criteria, criterion 3.4 became a core criterion (if this criterion is deemed not met, programs are awarded probationary accreditation), required evidence, and explanatory notes related to distributed education and distance learning.

Overview of OTA & PTA EAP

The OTA & PTA EAP is collaboratively governed by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC). CAOT and PEAC are independently incorporated under federal law. The mission of the CAOT is to advance excellence in occupational therapy and it is the sole accrediting agency in Canada with the mandate for accreditation of occupational therapist educational programs. The mission of PEAC is to ensure the quality of physiotherapy education in Canada through accreditation.

In most provinces and territories graduating from an accredited education program is one of the requirements for registration as a regulated health professional. However, with the exception of Quebec where Physical Rehabilitation Therapists (PRTs) are regulated by the Ordre professionnel de la physiothérapie du Québec, OTAs and PTAs are not required to register with an occupational therapist, physiotherapist or other regulatory body. OTAs and PTAs are required to work under the supervision of a registered occupational therapist or physiotherapist who is ultimately responsible for the delivery of safe, ethical and effective services. Although it’s a voluntary or optional process, accreditation of OTA and PTA education programs can provide the public, employers and students with assurance of quality which was one of the reasons the Canadian Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant Educators Council (COPEC) approached CAOT and PEAC to develop an independent and objective accreditation process. The first education programs to pilot the accreditation process were accredited in 2012.

The Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC) comprises individuals nominated from these three organizations as well as an educator in a privately funded institution, a recent OTA/PTA graduate, and a public member. The JAC implements and evaluates the policies and procedures of the OTA & PTA EAP and informs revisions to the accreditation standards and policies.

Guiding documents for the accreditation development and maintenance may include:

- Accreditation Standards for Physiotherapy Education Programs in Canada (PEAC, 2012)²

¹ Gelmon, S., O’Neil, E., Kimmey, J., and the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education. (1999). *Strategies for Change and Improvement: The Report of the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education*. San Francisco: Center for the Health Professions, University of California at San Francisco.

² Available on the [PEAC](#) website

- CAOT Academic Accreditation Standards (CAOT, 2011)³
- Essential Competency Profile for Physiotherapist Assistants in Canada (*NPAG, 2012*) and
- Practice Profile for Occupational Therapist Assistants (*CAOT, 2018*)

For What Purpose(s) are the Standards Used?

The Standards are used to determine the accreditation status of OTA and PTA entry-level education programs. The Standards document provides additional information and aims to provide a shared and full understanding of the accreditation standards and evaluative criteria of the OTA & PTA EAP. Intended users include:

- Education programs working on self-study documents, program development, and evaluation;
- OTA & PTA EAP Peer Review Team members and Joint Accreditation Committee members who interpret and apply the accreditation standards; and
- Consumers of education programs (e.g., students) and other stakeholders in accreditation (e.g., regulators, government, the public) who want to better understand the educational standards for occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs.

Aim of the Standards Revision

To review and streamline Standards 1-5 to reflect current education and professional practice environments.

Key Responsibilities for Standards Revision

CAOT and PEAC Boards of Directors

Approve Terms of Reference for Standards Revision Sub-Committee

Approve final accreditation standards

PEAC Board of Directors

Project funding approval

Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC)

Approves appointments to the Standards Revisions Sub-committee

Provides guidance and input to the Project Team (consultant and program staff)

Reviews draft and final revised accreditation standards

Recommends approval of the revised accreditation standards to the CAOT and PEAC Boards of Directors

³ Available on the [CAOT](#) website

Standards Revision Sub-Committee (SR Sub-Committee)

Revises current accreditation standards based on evaluation data and analysis, current/future educational and regulatory contexts including the *Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) of Canada: Calls to Action* and other documents aimed at redressing the effects of structural and systemic racism. The SR Sub-Committee Chair works with the consultant and the OTA & PTA EAP Program Manager to set meeting agendas and liaises with the Joint Accreditation Committee chair as part of the sub-committee’s responsibilities. The sub-committee’s terms of reference are in development.

Standards Revision Project Team (Consultant and Program Staff)

Consultant: leads process providing an expert, objective and impartial lens

Program Manager: manages the project providing oversight with respect to project milestones, budget, communication/reports to all parties, sets agenda for SRS meetings in consultation with consultant and SRS chair, etc.

Accreditation Coordinator: provides administrative support such as meeting coordination, survey setup, technology support, gathering evaluation data for analysis, monitoring revisions, arranging translation.

Project Deliverables

- Summary of evaluation data currently available such as data from Accreditation Review documents.
- Review of the *TRC of Canada: Calls to Action*, and other documents aimed at redressing the effects of structural and systemic racism to guide Standards revision.
- Videoconference and in person meetings with the SR Sub-Committee and JAC as required
- Final revised Accreditation Standards (2021)
- Final report describing the Standards Revision process

Proposed Milestones

Specific methodology to be adjusted/confirmed with consultant’s input

Gathering of internal historical documents, evaluation data currently available such as data from accreditation review documents (post-review surveys, compliance patterns, meeting minutes, etc.) Assembling of <i>TRC of Canada: Calls to Action</i> and other documents aimed at redressing structural and systematic racism (Program Staff)	Begins mid-July 2020
Approval of budget and draft process (PEAC Board)	Mid-July 2020
Project Consultant hired (Program Staff & JAC Chair)	August/September 2020

Confirmation of process/methodology and timelines (Project Team)	August/September 2020
Approval of SR Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference (JAC/CAOT & PEAC Boards)	August/September 2020
Appointment of SR Sub-Committee (JAC) SR Sub-Committee Meeting #1 by Videoconference	October 2020
Data gathering (stakeholder survey, focus groups to be decided) (Project Team)	October - November 2020
Data analysis (Project Team)	November 2020
SR Sub-Committee Meeting #2 by Videoconference to review analysis	December 2020
Begin development of policy/handbook updates, and communication plan for roll out of new Standards in late Fall 2021 (Program Staff)	January 2021
Draft Revised Accreditation Standards prepared for SR Sub-Committee review (Project Team)	January 2021
SR Sub-Committee Meeting #3 by Videoconference or in person, if possible Adjustments made to Draft Revised Accreditation Standards	February 2021
Review of Draft Accreditation Standards and roll-out plan by Joint Accreditation Committee	March 1-2, 2021
Validation of Draft Accreditation Standards with stakeholder groups (Project Team)	April – May 2021
SR Sub-Committee Meeting #4 by Videoconference to review validation survey data	
Final revised Accreditation Standards to SR Sub-Committee and JAC for review	October 2021
Report of Accreditation Standard Revision completed (Project Team)	November 2021
Final report and revised Standards to CAOT and PEAC Boards	Late November 2021
Roll out of new Standards (Program Staff)	Late 2021

Eligibility

The OTA & PTA EAP is seeking a consultant to conduct a systematic review of Standards 1-5. This consultant is asked to submit an Expression of Interest to include the following:

1. An outline of their knowledge, skills and experience with:
 - Standards development
 - Accreditation of entry-to-practice education programs for health care providers
 - Education program development and evaluation

- Knowledge of, and experience with applying the *TRC of Canada: Calls to Action* and advancing the process of Canadian reconciliation.
- Competence-based learning and assessment
- Contexts of OTA & PTA education and practice
- Regulatory context of OTA and PTA practice
- Contribution of assistants to occupational therapy and physiotherapy practice
- A variety of online technology for communication, collaboration, and document development

Fluency in both written and oral English and French is considered an asset.

2. Proposed time commitment with hourly rate or range per services delivered, based on draft milestones and timelines. Consultant is required to attend all meetings of the SR Sub-Committee (approximately four, 2-hour videoconferences) and two, JAC meetings (one-hour presentation/discussion). One in person SR Sub-Committee may be possible depending on the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.
3. Submit to OTA & PTA Program Manager Mary Clark.

Selection Timeline

Expression of Interest (EOI) issued: June 12, 2020

EOI closes: July 10, 2020

EOI reviewed by the Selection Panel: July 13 – July 15, 2020

Successful candidate informed (interviews may be conducted): July 20, 2020

Contract begins: August 4, 2020

Questions

Please contact Program Manager Mary Clark

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