



3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850 | Atlanta, GA 30326 | P. 404.975.5000 | F. 404.975.5020 | www.acenursing.org

Guidelines: Preparation of the Focused Visit Report **2017 Standards and Criteria**

Purpose:

The Focused Visit Report provides information related to the program's compliance with a selected number of ACEN Standards and Criteria. The Standards and Criteria to be reviewed are based on the reason for the focused visit, such as the addition of a new teaching location or implementation of distance education.

The Focused Visit Report differs from the Substantive Change Prospectus. While the Substantive Change Prospectus outlines a proposed substantive change or describes a substantive change that occurred (e.g., decline in program outcomes), the purpose of the Focused Visit Report is to demonstrate a nursing program's continuing compliance with the Accreditation Standards approximately six (6) months **after implementation** of the substantive change.

Review Process:

The Focused Visit Report will be reviewed by one (1) or more peer evaluators prior to the focused visit and is used as the foundation for review of the program's compliance. Following the visit, the peer evaluator(s) will write a Focused Site Visit Report summarizing the findings and providing a recommendation for the Board of Commissioners. The program's Focused Visit Report as well as the Focused Site Visit Report is reviewed by the Evaluation Review Panel (ERP) that will make its own independent recommendation. Based on the Focused Site Visit Report recommendation as well as a recommendation from the ERP, the decision regarding the accreditation status of the nursing program will be made by the Board of Commissioners at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Board of Commissioners may take the following actions:

- 1) Affirm the program's accreditation status and re-affirm the date of the next scheduled visit; no further information is requested.
- 2) Change the date of the program's next scheduled visit to a date earlier than previously scheduled. This is not an appealable action.
- 3) Change the program's accreditation status to one (1) of the following statuses:
 - a. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Conditions when the program is found to be in non-compliance with one (1) or two (2) Accreditation Standards; a Follow-Up Report is required; site visit may or may not be required. This is not an appealable action.
 - b. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Warning when the program is found to be in non-compliance with three (3) or more Accreditation Standards; a Follow-Up Report is required; and a Follow-Up Visit is required. This is not an appealable action.
 - c. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause when a program is found to be in non-compliance with any Accreditation Standards, is at the conclusion of its maximum monitoring period, and the program can make its case for good cause; a Follow-Up Report is required; and a Follow-Up Visit is required. This is not an appealable action. See ACEN Policy #4 Types of Commission Actions on Applications for Accreditation.
- 4) Deny continuing accreditation and remove the program from the listing of accredited programs. This is an appealable action. See ACEN Policy #10 Appeal Process and Submission and Review of New Financial Information Subsequent to Adverse Action.

For more details regarding Commission actions, See ACEN Policy #4 Types of Commission Actions on Applications for Accreditation.

Preparing the Focused Visit Report:

Organization of the Focused Visit Report:

The report is to be presented in three (3) sections: the introduction, site visit information, and the presentation of the identified ACEN Standards and Criteria relevant to the purpose of the focused visit. Please refer to the following table for a list of required Standards and Criteria to be addressed in the Focused Visit Report. If the reason for the program's focused visit is not included in this table or there are multiple reasons for the focused visit, a member of the ACEN professional staff will contact the nurse administrator with a list of Standards and Criteria that should be addressed in the Report.

Table I

Increase in Enrollment	Change in Ownership of the Governing Organization	Change in State Regulatory Agency for Nursing Status/ Decline in Program Outcomes
Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.4 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: 5.2	Standard 1: 1.1, 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, Standard 2: 2.5, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.2, 3.4, 3.6 (if applicable) Standard 5: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4	Standard 1: 1.7, 1.8 Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 Standard 3: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 Standard 4: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: 5.3 Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4
Implementation of Distance Education	New Curriculum/ New Program Option	New Off-Campus Instructional Site or Branch Campus
Standard 1: 1.11 Standard 2: 2.10 Standard 3: 3.4, 3.8, 3.9 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10, 4.11 Standard 5: 5.4	Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10 Standard 4: All Criteria Standard 5: 5.3 For APRN Options – See Note 3 below	Standard 1: 1.2, 1.7, 1.8 Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.4, 3.8 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: All Criteria

Note 1: The Standards and Criteria listed above will be reviewed. The ACEN may determine that an approved substantive change warrants the review of additional Standards and Criteria. The program will be notified if the review of additional Standards and Criteria is warranted.

Note 2: The Standards and Criteria listed above (including any additions as determined by the ACEN) will be reviewed by the peer evaluator(s). The peer evaluator(s) will not intentionally review other Standards and Criteria. However, if evidence of non-compliance with any additional Standards and/or Criteria is identified onsite, the peer evaluator(s) must include these findings in the Focused Site Visit Report.

Note 3: In addition to the Criteria listed in Table I for a *New Curriculum and/or New Program Option*, new APRN options should include the following Criteria to ensure compliance with the current NTF Guidelines. The link to the *Crosswalk of Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (2016) and ACEN Standards and Criteria (2017)* is below along with the Criteria that should be included in the Focused Visit Report for new APRN options.

Standard 1: 1.7
Standard 2: 2.5, 2.9
Standard 3: 3.1, 3.4, 3.5
Standard 5: 5.1

Content of the Focused Visit Report:

Section 1 Introduction:

- Name and address of the governing organization, including physical address and zip code
- Name, credentials, and title of the chief executive officer of the governing organization and local CEO (if applicable); see ACEN Glossary for definition of chief executive officer
- Name of institutional accrediting body, including the date of the last review and the action taken by the accrediting body at that time
- Name and address of the nursing education unit/program
- Name, credentials, title, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the administrator of the nursing education unit/program
- Date of the last review by the state regulatory agency and the action taken by the regulatory agency at that time
- Date of the last review by the institutional accreditation agency and the action taken by the agency at that time
- Date of the most recent ACEN accreditation visit and the action taken by the Board of Commissioners at that time

Section 2 Site Visit Information:

- Year in which the nursing program was established
- Total number of full- and part-time nursing faculty teaching in the specified nursing program, including faculty shared across programs; faculty should be delineated as exclusive to the program or shared by multiple programs. See ACEN Glossary for definition of exclusive and shared faculty and program coordinators. Use the Table 2 as a guide.

Table 2

Nursing Faculty Academic Credentials – (Highest Degree Only) – [Add Program Type] – Full-time								
Number of Faculty	Doctoral		Master’s		Baccalaureate		Associate	
	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing
FT Exclusive								
FT Shared								

Nursing Faculty Academic Credentials – (Highest Degree Only) [Add Program Type] – Part-Time								
Number of Faculty	Doctoral		Master’s		Baccalaureate		Associate	
	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing
PT Exclusive								
PT Shared								

- Total number of full- and part-time students currently enrolled in the specified nursing program identified by program option/track/location. Use Table 3 as a guide.

Table 3

Total nursing student enrollment:	
<i>Ex. Prelicensure/West Campus:</i>	50

[Name of Option/Location]:	
[Name of Option/Location]:	

- A list of **all** program options/tracks available (**including teach-out options/curricula**) for completion of the specified program; delivery method(s) for each option – online, hybrid, or face-to-face; if online or hybrid, provide percentage of the program offered in the online environment; see ACEN Glossary for definition of distance education. Length of the program in semester or quarter credits, clock hours for each program option; number of academic terms (semester/trimester/quarter) and number of weeks in academic term for each program option; delineate the number of credits for non-nursing courses and nursing courses, as well as credits for prior learning, when applicable; see ACEN Glossary for definition of nursing program length. This is equally important for graduate programs. Graduate programs should complete a table for each specialty option as well as post-master’s certificates and doctorate in nursing practice specialty certificates. Use the Table 4 as a guide for each program option.

Table 4

Name of Program Option:	
Method of Program Delivery:	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-Face <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Education
Percentage of Nursing Credits Delivered by Distance Education:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0% <input type="checkbox"/> 1–24% <input type="checkbox"/> 25–49% <input type="checkbox"/> 50–100%
Official Published Program of Study:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Both
Academic Term Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Semesters <input type="checkbox"/> Trimesters <input type="checkbox"/> Quarters
Length of Academic Term (in weeks):	
Length of Time/Required Number of Academic Terms (including any prerequisite terms prior to entry into the program):	
Total Number of Credits for Entire Program Option:	
Total Number of Nursing Credits:	
Total number of Non-Nursing/General Education/Elective/Prerequisite Credits (do not count credits twice)	
Transfer Credits (included in the credits above) based on the governing organization or state policies:	Up to ___ non-nursing/general education/elective/prerequisite credits can be transferred into the program option. Up to ___ nursing credits can be transferred into the program option.

- The name and number of the locations at which the nursing program is offered; please include the street address of **all** nursing program locations; include information regarding the percentage of the program offered at each location; delineate the program option(s) offered at each location; see ACEN Glossary for definition of branch campus and off-campus instructional site. Use Table 4 as a guide for each program location.

Table 5

Name of Location:	
Address (Number, Street, City, Zip Code):	

ACEN

Location Classification:	<input type="checkbox"/> Branch Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Campus Instructional Site
Percentage of Credit Hours for Entire Program of Study Taught at Location:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1–24% <input type="checkbox"/> 25–49% <input type="checkbox"/> 50–100%
Program Options Offered:	
Visited By Site Visit Team:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section 3 Presentation of the ACEN Standards and Criteria:

- Narrative addressing each identified Criterion, with an emphasis on how the program has/will maintain compliance following the implemented change or other matter.

If Criteria 2.1 and 2.2 are to be presented (Table 1), provide the following:

- A completed Faculty Profile Table that includes all faculty teaching in the specified nursing program(s) including non-nurse faculty); full- and part-time nursing faculty qualifications as required by the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency; see ACEN Glossary for definition of faculty and non-nurse faculty; see the ACEN website for required template and instructions on how to complete the Faculty Profile Table.

If Criterion 2.7 is to be presented (Table 1), provide the following:

- A completed Laboratory Personnel Profile Table that includes all laboratory personnel with assigned laboratory responsibilities in the specified nursing program(s); see ACEN Glossary for definition of Laboratory Personnel; see the ACEN website for the required Laboratory Personnel Profile Table template and instructions on how to complete it.

If Criteria 4.1-4.7 are to be presented (Table 1), include abbreviated syllabi (approximately two [2] pages) for all nursing courses. Also include the clinical evaluation tool(s) with an explanation of the student evaluation process. Each abbreviated syllabus should include:

- Course name and number
- Credit hours/Contact hours related to didactic, skills/laboratory, and clinical
- Pre-requisites/co-requisites
- Course description
- Course objectives/outcomes
- Methods of evaluation, including information regarding how each contributes to the overall course grade
- A topical outline for course content

If Criterion 4.8 is to be presented (Table 1), provide the following:

- The required program length of study as determined by the policies of the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency.
- The program must also provide evidence that the institution/nursing program has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for nursing courses, the policies and procedures conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education, and they are made available to current and prospective students.
- Program of Study by academic terms.

If Standard 6 is to be presented (Table 1), include the complete systematic plan of evaluation (a) with data for each end-of-program student learning outcome and (b) with data for each program outcome for the most recent three (3) years. Provide clear, substantial evidence that the evaluation plan is being used by the faculty to inform their decision-making processes and that the faculty have taken or are taking specific strategies and/or actions

ACEN

based on their analysis of the data, when warranted. Further, peer evaluator(s) will evaluate a nursing program's rationale for the expected levels of achievement (ELA) related to (1) program completion rate(s) and (2) job placement rate(s). The nurse administrator or faculty must be able to explain the reason for the ELA for program completion and job placement. Data for licensure pass rates should be disaggregated by program option, date of completion, and location as well aggregated as a whole. Data for program completion rates data should be disaggregated by program option, location, and date of completion or entering cohort. Data for job placement should be aggregated.

Format for the Focused Visit Report:

The Focused Visit Report must be securely bound, but the program may decide the format of the binding. Accepted binding types include, but are not limited to, comb binding, spiral binding, and perfect binding.

- Length:
 - The number of text pages should not exceed 50 pages (if printed front only total = 50 pages and if printed front/back total = 25 pages). The total number of pages with appendices should not exceed 200 text pages, exclusive of the systematic plan of evaluation and the Faculty Profile Table and Laboratory Personnel Profile Table and Qualification and Professional Development Forms (if required).
 - Please note that many Focused Visit Reports will be shorter in length; it is not necessary to submit the maximum number of pages if the requested information can be provided in fewer pages.
 - Confidential records (e.g., faculty transcripts, student records) should *not* be included.
- Margins:
 - Margins should be at least one (1) inch on all sides; the method of binding may require more.
- Pagination:
 - The pages of the report must be numbered consecutively, starting with the Introduction through the last page of the appendix.
- Page Set-Up:
 - Front-to-back or one-sided
 - Minimum 11 point sans serif font

Submitting the Focused Visit Report:

The program will submit copies of its Focused Visit Report (Word or PDF format) to each member of the focused visit team, including any ACEN professional staff member assigned to the team, no later than six (6) weeks before the first day of the scheduled focused visit. Please submit the following:

To the ACEN:

- Two (2) USB storage devices ("flash drives") containing the Focused Visit Report (Word or PDF format)

Note: PDFs must be searchable PDFs saved from a Word document. Please do not create a PDF from a scanned document.

All USB storage devices for the ACEN are to be sent to:

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing
3343 Peachtree Road Northeast, Suite 850
Atlanta, GA 30326

ACEN

*The **materials must be received in the ACEN office in Atlanta no less than six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled date of the focused visit.** The Focused Visit Report becomes the property of the ACEN.*

To Each Member of the Focused Visit Team:

- One (1) paper copy of the Focused Visit Report
- One (1) USB storage device containing the Focused Visit Report (Word or PDF format)

Note: PDFs must be searchable PDFs saved from a Word document. Please do not create a PDF from a scanned document.

*The materials should be shipped/mailed to each member of the focused visit team, including an ACEN professional staff member when applicable; **items must be received by the team members no less than six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled date of the focused visit.***

The ACEN professional staff are available to answer questions. It may be helpful to you to also review the Guidelines for Preparation of the Self-Study Report to ensure that you have included the necessary supporting documentation for the Standards and Criteria addressed in the Focused Visit Report and appropriately addressed compliance with the selected Standards and Criteria.

Document History
Updated May 2018