



Guidelines for Review of an Off-Campus Instructional Site and Branch Campus

Per USDOE definition, an off-campus instructional site is any location that is physically apart from the main campus of the institution where a nursing program is offered, in whole or part.

Per USDOE definition, a branch campus is a location of an institution that is geographically separate and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location meets all of the following criteria:

1. is permanent in nature;
2. offers courses in educational nursing programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
3. has its own budgetary and hiring authority; and
4. has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization.

Although an institution calls a location “a campus”, per USDOE definition the majority of the locations are off-campus instructional sites, not branch campuses. Please ensure your report accurately reflects whether a location is truly an off-campus instructional sites or a branch campus.

ACEN peer evaluators must visit (1) 25% to 33% of all off-campus instructional sites that offer nursing courses and (2) all branch campuses that offer nursing courses as part of the site visit. The purpose of the visit is to determine if the nursing program(s) is in compliance with the ACEN Standards and Criteria regarding (1) administrative capacity and mission; (2) faculty and staff; (3) students; (4) curriculum; (5) resources; (6) and program outcomes.

Process

Peer evaluators will:

1. tour the facilities
2. talk with students, faculty and staff
3. review the nursing program(s) offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
4. review support activities relative to the nursing program(s) offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus

During the visit, evaluate comparability to the nursing programs (or similar nursing program(s)) on the main campus and adequacy of and access to appropriate support services and physical resources at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus relative to the nursing program. Narrative regarding compliance and noncompliance is needed in all applicable Criteria.

Guiding Questions

Consider the questions below as a guide to the areas applicable to the off-campus instructional site or branch campus. Additional questions may be appropriate depending on the off-campus instructional site or branch campus.

1. Does the institution have adequate personnel, facilities, and resources to operate the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
2. What support activities/services relative to the nursing programs offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus are available to nursing students? Are the resources supporting student success and the nursing program(s) adequate?
3. Is the number of full-time faculty adequate to ensure the quality and integrity of the nursing program(s) offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
4. Does the institution and/or the off-campus instructional site or branch campus provide nursing student and nursing faculty access to and user privileges to adequate library collections and services and to other learning/information resources consistent with the nursing program(s) offered?
5. Does the off-campus instructional site or branch campus provide student support programs, services, and activities that promote student learning and enhance the development of nursing students?
6. Are the physical facilities and services offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus adequate to support the scope of the nursing program(s)?
7. Does the off-campus instructional site or branch campus have qualified administrative and academic officers with the experience, competence, and capacity to provide the nursing program(s) and services offered?
8. Are there expected student learning outcomes and program outcomes for the nursing program(s) at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus? Have these outcomes been assessed on the extent to which they are achieved at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus? Is there evidence of improvement based on analysis of assessment results at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
9. Are appropriate academic support services provided at the off-campus instructional site? What academic support services are available to nursing students enrolled in the nursing program(s) at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
10. Do students enrolled at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus have access to and training in the use of technology? What forms of technology are available at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
11. Is the effectiveness of all nursing faculty members who teach at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus evaluated in accord with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status?
12. Are the facilities at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus appropriate to support the nursing program(s) and services?
13. Do students at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus have access to regular and timely instruction in the use of the library and other learning/information resources?
14. Are there a sufficient number of qualified library staff to serve the nursing students enrolled at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?

15. Are reasonable steps taken to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all members of the campus community at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
16. Do the physical facilities at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus appropriately serve the needs of the nursing program(s), support services, and other mission related activities?
17. Does the institution make available to nursing students at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies?
18. Is the program length appropriate for the nursing program(s) offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?
19. Are there adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus? What evidence is there that the institution follows its procedures to resolve student complaints at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus?

Completion of the Tables in Section II of the SVR

Section II of the SVR:

1. Record the name and address (number, street, city, state, zip code) of the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
2. Location Classification – Off-Campus Instructional Site or Branch Campus
3. Percentage of credit hours for the entire nursing program taught at location
4. Program options offered

Based on the questions above and other questions you ask, summarize your findings for each location in the Standards and Criteria throughout the SVR:

1. Mission and Administrative Capacity – Describe the organizational structure of the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
2. Personnel – brief description of faculty, staff, and administrators at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
3. Physical Facilities – brief description of facilities that support nursing program(s) and services offered at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus and scope of safety/health measures taken at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
4. Library resources – brief description of library services and personnel that support nursing program(s) offered at off-campus instructional site or branch campus
5. Technology – brief description of technology resources, services, and personnel that support nursing program(s) offered at off-campus instructional site or branch campus
6. Financial – annual operating budget (adequacy of budget) for the off-campus instructional site or branch campus
7. Access to student support programs, services, and activities that promote student learning and enhance the development of students at the off-campus instructional site or branch campus