

ERO Accreditation Guideline for Continuing Dental Education Program Providers

Dental profession, like many other professions with a practical undergraduate education, is maintained by the continuity of the professional development after graduation with a lifelong learning. Professional associations, dental organizations, societies, universities or relevant private bodies usually provide continuing education and post-graduate training.

Regardless of the educational provider resources and apart from the undergraduate education, continuing professional development is of vital importance as it has principles and the ultimate goals to deliver best quality services to the profession and thus for a better patient health care. For this reason, the quality standards and accreditation systematics are required and already present for the educational activities.

The worldwide continuing professional development and education systems, besides varying in practice, contain a lot in common. A Continuing education program provider is required to have structural functioning. Demanding on those basics, carrying out the detailed conditions of targeted accreditation system would be more effective and meaningful.

Another important issue is that the creation of a quality approach in the continuing education organization and the adoption of the related staff is extremely important for the continuity and effectiveness of the system. Thus primary reintegration of the fundamentals mentioned in this guideline may be strong and useful to start to the accreditation process.

Among the accreditation and recognition standards accepted worldwide are analysed** (ACCME, ADA CERP, IDA...), the essential fundamental requirements should indicate the following categories:

- The CE program provider must have a Quality Management System.
- The CE program provider must carry out the Education Planning Activities in the framework of specified policies and procedures.
- The CE program provider must have an "Assessment and Evaluation System" to assess both the institutional functioning and the education performance.

The primary but essential domains constitute the preliminary basis for the accreditation procedure. The requirements mentioned above can also be evaluated as the leading guide to follow through the application processes, which include further details of various quality definition aspects (attached criteria).

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A. Quality Management System

In order to receive any continuing education accreditation, the requirements that a program provider is required to meet are as follows:

- ✓ to define the objectives of organization mission
- ✓ to determine the basic values and principles to be used for the process to reach its vision
- ✓ to describe and manage the activities carried out within the institution and define how efficient the activities are
- ✓ to describe and manage the services provided by the institution and define effectiveness
- ✓ to set the targets both for administrative and educational processes
- ✓ to follow the quality of service and ensure the continuous development

Carrying out the above requirements, can easily be accomplished by the help of a Quality Management System

B. Education Planning

Below are the vital criteria for an institution and should be taken into consideration;

- ✓ Defining education planning process
- ✓ Determining the basis of the decision of making in education needs assessment.
- ✓ Identifying the training purposes. For each training, it is also required to define the knowledge obtained, the skills and behavioral achievements of the participants at the end of training.
- ✓ Defining the teaching methods.
- ✓ Determining the criteria for the instructors' eligibility.
- ✓ Measurement and assessment of the educational performance.
- ✓ Defining the scope and continuity of the certification.
- ✓ The scientific validity and up-to-date knowledge must be guaranteed.
- ✓ Ethical principles must be determined for the implementation and certification of the educational activity.

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C. Assessment and Evaluation

In order to guarantee the continuous development of the institution, it is required to follow the rate of achievement of objectives and to make the necessary adjustments and improvements. These conditions evaluate the Quality Management System carried out in the institution.

In order to form the mentioned quality cycle, it is required to establish an effective assessment study. Assessment and Evaluation areas can be defined in the following main headings:

- ✓ The success in carrying out the administrative processes of the institution,
- ✓ Success rate of achieving corporate goals,
- ✓ The implementation rate of the education plan,
- ✓ Success rate of achieving gains of participants,
- ✓ Satisfaction of the participants,
- ✓ The performance of the trainer.

When the CE providers fulfil the basic domains summarized above, they are in conditions to proceed the crucial parts of an accreditation system.

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