Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Ensuring Educator Excellence

Program Assessment
Document Preparation Quick Guide

Green Cohort Edition

2014

This Program Assessment Handbook outlines the purpose and process of Program Assessment as well as provides valuable best practices for preparing your documents. Faculty preparing Program Assessment documents should refer to the dedicated Program Assessment webpage in addition to reviewing this quick guide.

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Purpose and Description of Program Assessment

Program Assessment, which takes place in Year 4 of the 7-year accreditation cycle, is the feature of the accreditation system that asks program sponsors to demonstrate how each program is aligned with the adopted program standards. Program Assessment examines each program and standard individually, provides feedback to the program sponsor and informs the team that will conduct the Site Visit in Year 6 of the accreditation cycle.

A separate Program Assessment document is submitted electronically for each approved preparation program offered by the program sponsor. There are three parts to Program Assessment documents:

Part I – Response to Program Standards: Part I is the response to the current Program Standards. The narrative should describe *how* the program is meeting each component of the adopted program standards, including *where* and *when* these activities occur. This should be demonstrated by hyperlinking within the narrative to the specific example within the documentation provided in Part II. The response may include charts or diagrams to help the readers understand the program. In Part I it is important to make sure that the response is precise and clear enough that a reader who has no knowledge of your institution or the program can understand how your program aligns with each part of each program standard. In addition, you will want to ensure that each response meets the level indicated in the standard. For example, if a standard calls for "multiple, systematic opportunities to…," the narrative must specify how candidates are provided more than one opportunity. If the standard indicates that "candidates are required to demonstrate…," then the response will need to explain how that demonstration occurs, including a link to the appropriate place in the document in Part II.

Part II – Syllabi/Course of Study: Part II is comprised of current course syllabi/course of study, including course assignments and clinical practice opportunities, for the most recent year. The course syllabi/course of study provides the documentation to support Part I. For example, if a program indicates that the standard is covered by a lecture or reading in a certain course, the readers will click on the hyperlink embedded in the narrative that will take them **directly to the specific location in the syllabus** that references the relevant lecture or reading. If there is no reference in that syllabus, or the readers are unable to find the syllabus due to a lack of clear linkages, readers will indicate that *More Information is Needed*. To ensure each component of the standard is discernible (or evident), link each component to the specific part(s) of the syllabi that demonstrate how that component is addressed. Otherwise, readers are likely to indicate that *More Information is Needed*.

Part III – Additional Documentation: Part III is the documentation that supports the program's Biennial Reports. Part III describes assessments that are used to determine candidate competence, including rubrics, training information, and calibration activities that ensure the assessments are being administered and scored in a uniform and objective way. Do not include additional assessments in this section; only blank copies of the 4-6 assessments reported in the Biennial Report should be included and discussed. If assessments have changed since the last Biennial Report indicate the changes and provide a short rationale for the change along with a blank copy of the assessment.

For programs other than those with required TPAs, it will be necessary to provide detailed information about the assessments used including the background on the development and implementation of the assessments. Include blank copies of the assessment instruments and the scoring rubric/procedures used to evaluate the information. Reviewers will be reading to answer these kinds of questions: If observation forms are used to measure candidate competence, upon what standards or rationale are these based? How does the program ensure that all assessors are using the rubrics in the same way? What types of training and practice are provided to ensure a common scoring technique?

Special Notes on Documentation:

TPA Users: *There is no need to give the background on the development of any form of the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA). However, it will be important to note how assessors are trained in the particular area, how often the scoring is calibrated and the information particular to the program for how the assessment is administered.*

FACT or FAS Users: *There is no need to provide **general** information on your formative assessment system if your program uses FACT or FAS. However, it will be important to note how the formative assessment system is implemented in your program.*

It is not necessary to embed links to the TPA, FACT, or FAS as readers will have these available to them at each review session.

Program Summary*:* The Program Summary serves as an executive summary of the full program narrative and provides readers with an overview of the program prior to reading the document. The Site Visit team will also use the Program Summary to understand the basics of the program and to assist them in beginning to draft the report for the Committee on Accreditation (COA). **Each** program (including transitioning, and IPR exempt programs) must develop a Program Summary, no longer than four pages in length. The Program Summary should provide a brief overview of the structure, courses, and sequence of the credential program and summarize the candidate assessments used by the program. The Program Summary must be submitted as a **separate Word document** at the time the Program Assessment documents are submitted.

Please do not submit Common Standards, Preconditions or faculty vitae during Program Assessment. All three will be reviewed closer to or at the Site Visit.

Submission and Review of Program Assessment Documents

Required Green Cohort Contact Information Request Questionnaire

The dean/director of each institution in the Green Cohort has received a list of the approved programs for which a Program Assessment document will be required. At this time, each institution must complete the online questionnaire to fill out the coordinator contact information for each program by **June 1, 2014.** This serves as an acknowledgement from the institution that they understand the responsibility to submit Program Assessment documents as a part of the accreditation process, as well as to provide CTC with the current program coordinator contact information.

Reader Participation from Each Institution

Because the review process depends entirely on the participation of experts from the field, the Commission asks that each institution identify one faculty member from each program to participate in a Program Assessment reading session. This information is to be provided when completing the Green Cohort Contact Information Request Questionnaire. It is strongly encouraged to have participants attend a reading session prior to submission.

Program directors responsible for developing Program Assessment documents have found it highly beneficial to attend a Program Assessment reading session prior to submitting their own documents. Participating in a reading session provides the opportunity to receive calibration training to review another document and provide feedback, as well as to gain a better understanding of what a program assessment document should contain and how it can be formatted for ease of reading and understanding.

Reading sessions are open to members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers, or deans, associate deans, program directors, and highly qualified faculty with experience responding to program standards (document writers) and implementing programs. If you have questions about the required participation in a Program Assessment reading session or questions on other topics, please do not hesitate to email staff at ProgramAssessment@ctc.ca.gov. For additional information on attending a Program Assessment reading session, please read the Professional Development Opportunities page of the Commission's website. Reading dates are listed at the bottom of the page. Be sure to sign up for Program Assessment and not Initial Program Review (IPR).

Submission of Documents

Program documents are due on the **December 31, 2014** but may be submitted earlier. Documents are read in the order they are received pending reader availability. It can take several months for your document to rise to the top of the queue and the resubmission and additional feedback sessions can take additional time beyond the initial read. The process can be lengthy from initial submission to having all standards preliminarily aligned and it is beneficial to have as much time as possible to complete the process prior to the Site Visit.

Late Submission Fee

Documents arriving after 5pm on December 31, 2014, will be charged a late fee of $500 per program. For more information on late fees and the recently adopted Cost Recovery Fee Schedule please see Program Sponsor Alert 13-11.

When to Submit Documents for Recently Approved, Transitioning, and Inactive Programs

Recently Approved

Option 1: Programs at institutions in the Green Cohort that have been approved through Initial Program Review between December 31, 2013 and December 31, 2014 will not go through a traditional Program Assessment Review.

Option 2: Programs approved prior to December 1, 2013 that have not undergone any substantial changes may request to be exempt from Program Assessment by submitting the Request to Use IPR Document in Lieu of Submitting a PA Document for the Site Visit form. This form must be submitted by October 1, 2014 for the Green Cohort and decisions will be made by October 15, 2014. If the request is rejected the institution will be responsible for submitting their documents on time. Late documents will be subject to a fee.

Programs that fall under Option 1 above and programs with granted requests from Option 2 must submit updated narrative response and a program summary to programassessment@ctc.ca.gov by July 31, 2015 for all programs including IPR submissions. These recently approved program documents must have an updated narrative discussing the way the program is presently operating (using the guidelines set forth in PSA 10-12) and must include all current course syllabi and assessments, three months prior to the Site Visit date for team members to have available for review. Program documents will *not* go through traditional Program Assessment cycles.

Transitioning

The following program areas have been recently revised and programs have transitioned, are currently transitioning, or are preparing to transition to the newly adopted standards:

- Administrative Services Credential Programs (Preliminary and Clear)
- Standards Relating to Preparation to Teach English Learners

Please note that the date that your programs have chosen to transition to the standards will be taken into account when determining what needs to be submitted to the Commission for both Program Assessment and Site Visits. It is advised that you contact the appropriate consultant in the credential area for guidance on when to submit a Program Assessment document for a recently transitioned program.

Administrative Services Credential Programs

Preliminary: All Preliminary Administrative Services credential programs may begin transitioning to the new standards (adopted December 2013) as soon as a transition plan is submitted, but must transition to the new standards no later than September 1, 2015. Program Assessment documents will be due no later than September 1, 2016 but should ideally be submitted earlier for Green Cohort members due to the timing of the site visit. Programs should submit a Program Assessment document after running a program with the new standards for approximately 12 months. It is important to keep in mind that site visits for the Green Cohort will take place in the Fall of 2016 and Spring of 2017 (Fall visits are typically NCATE/CAEP), and it is ideal to have finished the Program Assessment process at least 3 months prior to the site visit. It is recommended that Preliminary Administrative Services credential programs in the Green Cohort transition to the new standards as soon as possible in order to have time to run the program and prepare a Program Assessment document in enough time to be reviewed prior to the site visit.

Guidelines-based Clear: All Guidelines-based Clear Administrative Services credential programs may begin transitioning to the new Administrative Services Credential Clear Induction standards (adopted February 2014) as soon as a transition plan is submitted. All programs must transition to the new standards no later than July 1, 2015. Program Assessment documents will be due no later than July 1, 2016, but should ideally be submitted earlier for Green Cohort Members due to the timing of the site visit. Programs should submit a Program Assessment document after running a program with the new standards for approximately 12 months. It is important to keep in mind that site visits for the Green Cohort will take place in the Fall of 2016 and Spring of 2017 (Fall visits are typically NCATE/CAEP), and it is ideal to have finished the Program Assessment process at least 3 months prior to the site visit. It is recommended that Clear Induction Administrative Services credential programs in the Green Cohort transition to the new standards as soon as possible in order to have time to run the program and prepare a Program Assessment document in enough time to be reviewed prior to the site visit.

Standards-based Clear: All Standards-based Clear Administrative services credential programs are required to go through Initial Program Review (IPR) and are not able to go through the transition process for the Clear Induction Administrative Services Credential program standards. Programs that go through the IPR process will not be required to submit a Program Assessment document; however, a program summary must be received three months prior to the site visit. Institutions are encouraged to begin the IPR process as soon as possible in order to have enough time to have the document reviewed (the process can take 6-12 months) and implemented prior to the site visit.

More information on the new Administrative Services program standards can be found here: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/ASC.html

Standards Relating to Preparation to Teach English Learners

On January 31, 2013 the Commission adopted revisions to the following programs with standards relating to the preparation to teach English learners:

General Education (Multiple and Single Subject): Preliminary, Clear, and Induction
Education Specialist: Preliminary and Clear Induction

Although the last date to transition (January 31, 2015) is one month after the Green Cohort Program Assessment document due date, submitted documents must respond to the 2013 standards. Programs written to the 2009 standards will be returned for revision.

All transitioning programs must submit a Program Summary when they submit their Program Assessment Document.

Inactive:
Programs that are currently inactive do not need participate in Program Assessment. Programs that have not participated in the Program Assessment process due to inactive status may be required to complete a full Program Assessment review prior to reactivating the program. This process can take up to one year. Inactive programs participate in accreditation in a modified manner. Each case will be considered individually. Site visit review depends on numerous factors and institutions should discuss inactive programs with their site visit consultant.

Technical Assistance and Document Reading

Technical Assistance Webcast*:* As you prepare your document, please know that CTC staff is available to answer questions. A technical assistance webcast was recorded on March 2, 2012. The webcast and all supporting materials can be found on the Program Assessment Webpage.

Approved Programs Webcast*:* An additional webcast, recorded March 7, 2012, on how to read the Credential Information Guide (CIG) Approved Programs webpage can be viewed from the Webcast Page.

Please keep in mind when reviewing the CTC website that the Accreditation Handbook is periodically revised (typically on a yearly basis) and the Program Assessment Webpage is the best and most current source of information for technical assistance.

Document Formatting and Transmission

Program Assessment is a 100% electronic submission. Submit all documents in PDF format (with the exception of program summaries) with a hyperlinked table of contents as well as hyperlinks to supporting documentation. The Commission recommends preparing a Program Assessment document as a Microsoft Word file and then converting it into PDF format for submission. Please link as closely as possible to the applicable section of the documentation that relates to the standard being discussed. Linking to the first page of the syllabus is the minimum requirement, however linking directly to the location on the specific page or paragraph so readers will be able to review the proper documentation, paragraph in the syllabus, or assignment, as quickly as possible will allow for greater success as readers review documentation. **If programs decide not to provide a direct link to the specific location within the syllabus then a page number must be included in the narrative when the link only leads to the first page of the syllabus.** The goal behind the specific link request is to ensure that readers are able to locate all the documentation successfully. We have provided detailed support for programs to read and follow in the Document Formatting and Transmission Requirements which contains comprehensive guidance regarding formatting and submission.

Documents with inadequate electronic organization will be returned to the program for further editing and resubmission. Documents returned will be considered to have had one review. Keep in mind documents requiring more than three reviews will incur a fee of $1,000 per program.

Narrative Response Templates

CTC recommends the use of narrative templates (when they are available for a program) which can be found on the standards webpage. Programs should use these templates to organize the program narrative and supporting documentation.

Resubmissions must follow the guidelines set out in PSA 10-12. For resubmissions, additional information must be embedded within the program narrative and indicated with a new color font or highlighted to indicate what information has been added. *Resubmissions that do not follow these guidelines will be returned to the program for further editing and resubmission.*

Procedures and Timelines for Reviewing and Providing Feedback of Program Assessment Documents

Documents are reviewed on a first-submitted first-read basis pending availability of readers with appropriate expertise at Program Assessment reading sessions. It can take from 6 months to one year after document arrival for an institution to receive feedback. The timeline is dependent on the number and availability of volunteer readers.

The Program Assessment document will be reviewed by qualified volunteers who have expertise in the program area. The reviewers will also have access to the Biennial Reports that have been submitted as well as CTC feedback on those reports. Reviewers will be looking for the following:

- Does the document clearly and comprehensively describe how the program is aligned with each program standard?
- Does the response align with the standard? For example, if the standard states that candidates will have multiple, ongoing opportunities to demonstrate skills in a particular area, does the response describe multiple, ongoing opportunities or just one?
- Does the documentation and candidate assessment information provide support for the document? For example, if the program states that a standard is met by having candidates complete an assignment in a particular course, is that assignment noted in the course syllabus?

At the end of the first reading of the document, readers will determine one of two things. Either the standard is determined to be preliminarily aligned, or more information is needed. If more information is needed, readers will provide detailed information that describes what is needed to bring the standard response to preliminary alignment. Once the readers are finished, Commission Program Assessment staff will send a copy of the feedback form to the institution/program sponsor for its response. Resubmissions must be sent in within one month of receipt of the readers' feedback. Timely resubmission is important for keeping information fresh in the readers' minds.

The professional dialogue will then take place between program sponsors and reviewers (facilitated through the Commission staff as readers and programs will not talk directly) in order to get the most complete sense of whether the program is aligned to standards. This dialogue will help provide clarity and assist the reviewers in coming to preliminary findings. The dialogue does not go on without end. The Preliminary Report of Findings will be finalized no later than a few months prior to the Site Visit. The format of the feedback will provide information regarding each program standard, using this form.

The finalized Preliminary Report of Findings impacts the implementation and structure of the Site Visit. For example, it will help in answering these kinds of questions: Does this program require an additional reviewer as part of the Site Visit team? What kinds of documentation will support or disprove claims made in the Program Assessment narrative? How might the Site Visit team gather that documentation to use as evidence?

A final version of your program narrative document is a required component for the site visit and must be submitted a minimum of 60 days prior to the site visit. The Site Visit team will refer to this finalized copy if necessary.

Biennial Reports

Please be aware that the Year 3 Biennial Report is due near the time that Year 4 Program Assessment documents are due. This happens only one time in the 7-year cycle and it is important that program sponsors know this in advance so that they can prepare and plan accordingly. Please consult the Green Cohort map for additional information.

Resources

Required Action and Important Dates

- Green Cohort Contact Information Request Questionnaire – Must be filled out line by June 1, 2014
- Deadline to submit a Request to Use IPR Document in Lieu of Submitting a PA Document – October 1, 2014
- Submission Check List – Include with each document submission due by December 31, 2014.

Important Webpages

- Program Assessment Webpage – This page includes program summary templates, examples, and much of the information needed to prepare documents. *(Please make sure to review all of the links on this webpage.)*
- Program Standards – This page includes current program standards as well as the recommended narrative templates (when available).
- Professional Service Opportunities – This page includes a description of the reading process, who qualifies to read a document, as well as a list of upcoming readings and information on signing up.

Contact Information

programassessment@ctc.ca.gov or
psdgreen@ctc.ca.gov