



817 283 2835

Call for Comments on Proposed Revisions to Accreditation Standard 1.01

At its September 9, 2021 Board meeting, the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) proposed revisions to Standard 1.01 of the *Accreditation Standards for Entry into Respiratory Care Professional Practice*.

The CoARC is now conducting a Call for Comments to encourage broader participation in the Standards revision process and requests that any member of the community of interest please provide their feedback.

The Call for Comments [survey](#), the [proposed revisions to Standard 1.01 and Interpretive Guideline](#), the [revision timeline](#), and a [revised CoARC Position Statement on Respiratory Care Education](#) are available by clicking the hyperlinks provided above. This Call for Comments will remain open until **October 15, 2021**.

Additionally, a virtual Open Hearing is scheduled for **Friday, December 10**. More details will follow in a later announcement.

If you have any questions regarding this Call for Comments, don't hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,

-Tom

**Thomas R. Smalling, Ph.D., RRT, RRT-SDS, RPFT, RPSGT,
FAARC Chief Executive Officer**

O: 817-283-2835

M: 631-912-7920

F: 817-510-1063

E: tom@coarc.com

W: www.coarc.com

264 Precision Blvd.

Telford, TN 37690

Latest News

[Call for Comments on Proposed Revisions to Accreditation Standard 1.01](#)

September 21, 2021

[Read More »](#)

[The CHEA Third-Party Comment Announcement](#)

September 16, 2021

[Read More »](#)

Corporate Sponsors

First Draft Revision to Standard 1.01 and Interpretive Guideline

Current Standard 1.01:

Except as provided in the following paragraph, an educational sponsor must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and must award program graduates a baccalaureate or graduate degree.

Associate degree programs that were accredited prior to January 1, 2018, or that applied for accreditation prior to January 1, 2018 and have subsequently received accreditation, may continue to award program graduates an associate degree as long as they remain accredited by the CoARC. Sponsors of these programs must be post-secondary academic institutions accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the USDE and must award program graduates an associate degree.

First Draft Revision for 1.01:

The educational sponsor of an entry into practice program must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), and must award program graduates an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree upon successful completion of their professional coursework and degree requirements.

Interpretive Guideline:

Academic progression within the profession of respiratory care is of significant benefit both to members of the profession and to patients. Accordingly, the CoARC strongly encourages innovative efforts by accredited programs, especially at the associate degree level, to provide a smooth and simple process for program graduates to attain higher academic degrees, such as by working with institutions that offer degree advancement. Examples of academic progression partnerships include, but are not limited to, articulation and/or transfer agreements, dual or co-admission/enrollment, and accelerated advancement (associate to graduate) models.

Should the program sponsor not support the program's development of relationships with institutions offering higher levels of education, the program should strongly encourage its graduates to use other methods of achieving this goal, such as on-line DA options.

A copy of an institutional accreditation certificate or a letter, denoting the sponsor's current accreditation status, must be submitted with the program's Self Study or Letter of Intent Application. There are additional questions in the Application for Accreditation Services related to the sponsor's institutional accreditation status and its authority under applicable state laws to provide postsecondary education. As noted in the CoARC Accreditation Policies and Procedures, the sponsor is responsible for notifying the CoARC of any adverse change in its accreditation status.



CoARC STANDARD 1.01 REVISIONS TIMELINE

September 2021:

1. Blast email all accredited programs and place an announcement on the CoARC web site announcing the first draft of the revised Standard 1.01. Disseminate a call for comment (with an **October 15, 2021** deadline) to all communities of interest* and outline the procedure for those wishing to provide input to the CoARC.

**Communities of interest include all the bodies within the CoARC organizational structure; related bodies or organizations (the American Association for Respiratory Care, the American College of Chest Physicians, the American Society of Anesthesiologists, the American Thoracic Society, the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions, the National Network of Two-Year Community Colleges, the Society for Critical Care Medicine, and the National Board for Respiratory Care; RT educational program representatives (CEOs, deans, program directors, medical directors, site visitors, and advisory committee members); respiratory therapy educators; practitioners; consumers; employers; regulators (licensure boards, state higher education commissions); recognition bodies (Council for Higher Education Accreditation); accreditors (regional, national, and specialized accreditors); Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors; students; and the public at large.*

2. Use the CoARC web site and Survey Monkey to collect data and feedback from CoARC's communities of interest.
3. At a Special CoARC Board meeting (November 3, 2021):
 - Review the data collected from the survey, and from any correspondence regarding the proposed change in the Standards.
 - Review, discuss, and approve any proposed changes to the draft of Standard 1.01.

Following Special CoARC Board meeting:

4. Blast email all accredited programs and place an announcement on the CoARC web site announcing the draft of revised Standard 1.01. Disseminate a call for comment (with a **December 1, 2021** deadline) to all communities of interest* and outline the procedure for those wishing to provide input to the CoARC.
5. Use the CoARC web site and Survey Monkey to collect data and feedback from the communities of interest.
6. At its December CoARC Board meeting:
 - Hold a virtual Standards Open Hearing on December 10, 2021;
 - Review, discuss, and approve any proposed changes to the draft of Standard 1.01.

Following the December 2021 CoARC Board meeting:

7. Send the final version of the Standards to the CoARC's collaborating organizations (AARC, ATS, ASA, and ACCP) for statements of support as per CoARC Bylaw 2.05.01.
8. The revised Standards' revision will be posted on the CoARC web site and will go into effect December 10, 2021. An email announcement will be distributed to all communities of interest.



CoARC Position Statement on Respiratory Care Education

Revised 09/09/2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented growth in Respiratory Care, both in terms of awareness of the profession and workforce demand. Meeting the increased workforce demand will require a multi-pronged approach. As the leader in advancing respiratory care education and the quality of Respiratory Care educational programs, the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) strives to ensure that its Accreditation Standards and Policies reflect both the current and future state of the profession. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, in an effort to facilitate the continued availability of new graduates to meet workforce needs, the CoARC has allowed accredited programs to make adjustments to their curricula that maintained the health, safety and security of students, faculty and patients while ensuring that programs continued to meet CoARC's mandated outcomes.

Several years ago, the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) established a goal for the Respiratory Care profession, namely that by 2030 all accredited entry into practice programs would need to award program graduates a baccalaureate degree.¹ There are many valid reasons for this goal, and the CoARC recognizes the importance of progress in education for advancement of the profession. However, the number of accredited entry into practice programs at the baccalaureate level has decreased since 2018. In addition, the total numbers of applications, enrollments, and graduates from CoARC accredited programs have declined for several years, as has the total number of accredited programs (443 in 2017 to 416 in 2020).²

The CoARC wants to boost growth in the numbers of both accredited entry into practice programs and graduates to address local and national workforce needs, and to encourage the educational advancement of the Respiratory Care profession. To that end, CoARC has amended Standard 1.01 and will accredit new and existing programs at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree levels, as long as they meet the Accreditation Standards for Entry into Practice. In addition, to facilitate educational advancement and professional development, CoARC strongly encourages entry into practice programs at the associate degree level to develop pathways, agreements, and/or contracts with degree advancement programs. The CoARC believes these actions will address both the market workforce requirements and the AARC's vision for the future of the Respiratory Care profession.

For questions regarding this communication, please contact Tom Smalling, Chief Executive Officer of the CoARC, at 817-283-2835 or by email at tom@coarc.com.

1. <https://www.aarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/issue-paper-entry-to-respiratory-therapy-practice-2030.pdf>
2. <https://coarc.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2020-CoARC-Report-on-Accreditation-4.29.21.pdf>