Committee for Accreditation of
Healthcare Simulation Programs

Teaching/Education Accreditation Standards Companion Document

2021 Standards Revisions

This Companion Document has been designed to help you with becoming accredited. Primarily it serves these purposes:

1. Provide insight and information for applicant programs.
2. Explain and describe the types of evidence expected to meet each of the Standards.
3. Ensure clarity for what is provided prior to the site visit as part of the accreditation packet.

IMPORTANT: the descriptions and evidence provided are NOT prescriptive. The SSH Accreditation Standards are designed to allow Simulation Programs in any setting to apply. It is recognized that there are many ways to achieve outcomes as well. As such, any evidence listed is representative of the types of information that has been acceptable. This companion document should not be considered a prescriptive list of items all Programs must complete, but rather a tool to help each Program identify how to best meet each standard. Should you have any questions about any of the Standards or criteria, or feel that they do not fit your Program for any reason (e.g., cultural), please contact the SSH Accreditation Program at accreditation@ssih.org.

DOCUMENT ELEMENTS

The standards for each area of Accreditation are broken into different elements:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">▪ Standard Area Description (in the dark blue area)
– High-level description of the overall content in the area of accreditation (Core-ARTSF)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">1. Section header (boldfaced type with a number in the light blue area)
– The title for the section that groups items together, each area of accreditation has its number of sections.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">a. Standard statement (italicized with a lower-case letter in the light blue area)
– This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.</td></tr>
<tr><td>i. Criterion (items listed in the white area in the left column of the table)
– These are the items that must be provided to demonstrate meeting the standard.</td><td>▪ The column (in the white area) to the right side of the Criterion in the companion document is where the Program can find information about the intent of specific criteria; and examples, clarifications, and descriptive information that will help the Program respond to each standard and criterion.</td></tr>
</table>

TERMINOLOGY

- **DEMONSTRATE**: This term is consistently used for overall Standards statements. “Demonstrate” means the Program must show how the standard is met (through the criterion). There are often many ways to demonstrate meeting individual criterion.
- **DESCRIBE**: This term is used to indicate that a narrative is sufficient as evidence to meet a particular criterion. If documentation is requested in addition to the description, the criterion will specify with the following phrase: “*Describe and provide supporting documentation*.”
- **DOCUMENT**: This term is used to indicate that some form of documentation must be provided as evidence to meet a particular criterion. Examples of this could include providing a list of items such as equipment, a policy, and procedure, a floorplan, simulation design forms, etc. If a description is required in addition to the documentation requested, the criterion will specify the following phrase: *“Describe and provide supporting documentation.”*
- **PROGRAM:** The term “Program” refers to the simulation center or organization that is applying for accreditation. The Program could refer to a stand-alone facility, a collaborative simulation consortium, or the Program could be part of an overarching organization.
- **PROGRAM DIRECTOR***:* All SSH Standards and Criteria use the term “Program Director” to describe the person with primary authority for the

Simulation Program. The person in this role, however, does not need to have the official title of "Program Director."

TEACHING/EDUCATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Accreditation in the area of Teaching/Education will be available to Programs that demonstrate regular, recurring simulation educational activities with clearly stated objectives (knowledge, psychomotor skills, and behaviors) and provides evidence of ongoing improvement of educational activities. The four sections of the Teaching/Education Standards are:

(1) Educational Activities, (2) Educational Activity Design, (3) Qualified Educators and (4) Evaluation and Improvement.

1. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES *a. The Simulation Program is committed to providing high-quality simulation educational activities.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe the process and provide supporting documentation that links the educational activities to the Program's mission, vision, and/or strategic planning.	▪ A highly functioning, effective, and sustainable Simulation Program ensures all educational activities are linked to its mission and goals. ▪ The response to this criterion should demonstrate how the Simulation Program ensures educational activities are in line with the Program's mission and goals. ▪ SAMPLE: The Assistant Director of Simulation Program ABC completes a review of educational activities quarterly to ensure that all educational activities are consistent with the mission of Simulation Program ABC. A quarterly report is created and shared with the Director and Advisory Committee of Simulation Program ABC. The previous four quarterly reports are attached as Appendix x.
ii. Describe the qualifications of the individual(s) that oversee simulation educational activities.	▪ The qualifications provided here should indicate the person overseeing these activities should have expertise in simulation-based education. In many cases, the simulation expert is the same person as the Program Director identified in the Core Standards. Please reference that in your submission. ▪ Examples of simulation expertise/qualifications may include – Post Graduate work in simulation education training. – Evidence of accumulated experience using simulation in healthcare education for at least 2 years. – Continuing education courses in simulation – Simulation certification – Simulation Fellowship

iii. Document: Provide documentation of up to three (3) simulation educational activities delivered or conducted by the Program.	▪ This criterion intends to determine if the Program has evidence of educational activities utilizing a standardized design process. ▪ Documentation should include typical forms and material which are a part of a simulation-based educational activity. The typical items to include are: – Needs analysis documentation – Goals and objectives – Scenarios – Schedule of activities – Prebriefing documents – Debriefing documents – Evaluation and other forms – Other items as appropriate ▪ Videos are also often a part of the documentation of the activities. These need **not** be submitted as part of the initial accreditation submission, but the documentation **should** indicate their presence and include a brief description. ▪ For virtual site reviews, further information and guidelines will be provided by the SSH Accreditation Coordinator.
iv. During the site review process, the SSH reviewers will view up to three (3) simulation educational activities (either live or through recorded video).	▪ This should not be submitted with the accreditation packet. Reviewers will select up to 3 videos / or watch up to 3 live activities onsite that are representative of the Program's simulation-based activities. ▪ The intent of this criterion is to provide a realistic portrayal of ongoing simulation educational activities at the Program. ▪ Please do not create a promotional video to demonstrate this criterion. ▪ The videos provided (when requested) should be representative of the Program's primary activities The videos may cover multiple settings (SP encounters, manikin-based simulations, virtual learning, etc.) ▪ Prebriefing/orientation and debriefing should be demonstrated in the videos provided to the Review Team. However, if prebriefing/orientation and/or debriefing are not typically part of the video recording process, then the Program should be prepared to describe to the Review Team these components of the simulation event process. ▪ Some Programs do not retain video recordings. In this case, it is requested that the Program seek permission from learners and educators to capture and save video for accreditation submission and review only. Upon request, the video can be destroyed after the site visit. ▪ For virtual site visits, the Reviewers will request recorded videos to review prior to the date of the site review.

2. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY DESIGN *a. The Simulation Program designs simulation educational activities that are evidence-based, engaging, and effective.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe how the Program assesses the need for simulation educational activities.	▪ This criterion intends to ensure that the Program bases its educational content on a known need or gap. ▪ The response to this criterion should demonstrate a process by which Programs utilize various sources to determine the needs of the learners and develop curriculum from those needs. This could include (but not limited to): – Needs assessment – Gap analysis – Expert assessment – Learner request – Regulatory requirements ▪ Regulatory requirements may include topics required by credentialing or accrediting bodies.
ii. Describe how the Program designs simulation educational activities.	▪ This criterion intends to determine whether the Program uses an intentional educational design process based on simulation best practice standards, instructional design, and educational theories in the development of simulation courses. ▪ Educational principles used in the development of simulation courses should stem from theories of adult learning, experiential learning, active learning, etc. Specific learning theories should be identified. ▪ All individuals involved in the simulation design should be familiar with the process provided in response to this criterion.

iii. Document: Provide tools used in the design of simulation educational activities.	▪ This criterion intends to determine the tools used for the design of educational activities. ▪ Documentation and tools that will be useful for demonstrating this criterion include: – A process map on how assessed needs translate to the design of the course curriculum. – Policy and procedure related to simulation curriculum design. – Meeting minutes of groups involved in simulation curriculum design. – Needs assessment tool utilized in the simulation curriculum design process. – Checklist/tool to ensure each step of the design process is completed. ▪ All tools used in the design process should be submitted (e.g., needs/gap analysis questionnaire; acceptable objectives, terminology, etc.).
iv. Document: Provide a list of simulation educational activities that follow the design process. (Maximum of 10).	▪ This criterion intends to demonstrate that Programs utilize a standard design process when developing educational activities. Programs should select a maximum of ten activities that reflect this standard design process. ▪ Activities selected by the Program for this criterion should be present in the list provided in Core Standards criteria 3.c.i. ▪ Select activities that are most reflective of the variety of simulation educational activities provided by your Program. ▪ Reviewers will select three educational activities from the list provided and will then review all the supportive documents for these activities prior to the date of the site review.

b. *The Simulation Program demonstrates that selected simulation modalities, environments, and the level of realism meets the learning objectives of educational activities.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe how simulation modalities, locales, and/or the level of realism are determined when designing simulation educational activities.	▪ The fundamental premise of this criterion is that not all simulation modalities are appropriate for all learning objectives. Additionally, different locales may be utilized, and differing levels of realism chosen to meet specified goals and objectives. Examples could include (but not limited to): – Simulators that do not feature chest tube insertion would not be appropriate when the learning objective includes the procedural skill of chest tube insertion. – The utilization of a simulation lab setting may not provide the appropriate locale or realism needed that an in-situ setting can provide. ▪ The response to this criterion should demonstrate how the Program ensures that for a given educational activity, the modality of simulation, locales, and/or realism chosen are appropriate ▪ Programs often meet this criterion by describing and documenting their educational review and/or approval process, especially when that process has a specific step to ensure that the simulation modality is appropriate for the learning objective.

c. *The Simulation Program has personnel with expertise designing simulation educational activities.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe the process to ensure that competent simulationists are included in the design of simulation educational activities.	▪ This criterion intends to demonstrate that simulation experts should be involved in the development of simulation-based education. Provide details of the specific roles and responsibilities of simulation experts in the simulation scenario case design and/or curricular process.

ii. Document: Provide SSH accreditation biosketches for competent simulationists that are involved in the design of simulation educational activities. (Max of 5)	▪ The Accreditation Biosketch should be used to highlight simulation competency. ▪ Programs should **not** submit curricula vitae for these individuals in response to this criterion. ▪ The response to this criterion should demonstrate that the people most involved in simulation course development have competency in simulation-based education. ▪ For some Programs, the people involved in developing courses are also educators. In this case, the response to Teaching/Education 3.a.*i* may be sufficient to meet this criterion if the biosketches include specific competency in simulation design and development. ▪ Examples of methods to achieved competency in simulation education methods could include (but are not limited to): – Formal academic course work in simulation – Certification in Healthcare Simulation (CHSE and CHSOS) Minimum of two years of experience in simulation education (in alignment with SSH certification criteria).

3. QUALIFIED EDUCATORS *a. The Simulation Program has access to qualified educators.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe the type of individuals who provide educational activities in your simulation program.	▪ This criterion intends for the Program to delineate who develops and/or facilitates educational activities within the Program. ▪ The term ”educator” is defined in a variety of ways by Programs. For Some, the term “educator” is substituted with designations including (but not limited to): – Facilitator – Faculty – Instructor – Teacher – Clinical Educator – Clinical Lead ▪ In some situations, simulation experts, subject matter experts, and qualified educators can all be the same person. For other Programs, these three designations are separated. Therefore, it is important to demonstrate through your description how educators correlate with your Program’s simulation activities, and how they work with other members of the Program Staff. ▪ Describe how qualified educators are involved in simulation-based educational design within the Program.
ii. Document: Provide accreditation biosketches for the most active educators (maximum of 5).	▪ This criterion intends to determine the quality, experience, and training of the Program’s most active educators. This would include anyone who is regularly involved with simulation education within the Program. ▪ The SSH Accreditation Biosketch should be used. The biosketch should highlight simulation education experience/expertise. ▪ Curricula vitae for key educators should not be included. ▪ Though 5 (max) biosketches should be included in this application, biosketches for all key educators should be available for onsite review.

b. *The Simulation Program selects educators to match the learner group's level of study.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe the process to match the qualifications of the educator to the characteristics of the educational activity.	▪ This criterion intends to have the Program demonstrate that educators are matched to facilitate educational activities for which they are qualified. ▪ Examples of this could include: – A radiologist with no experience/education in securing airways should probably not be educating anesthesia students in airway management. – A Social Work faculty member would not be facilitating a simulation geared toward physical assessment for Nursing students. ▪ The Program should describe the process in place to ensure educators are appropriate for assigned educational activities. ▪ While educators may not have received formal training in educational theory, they should be trained, at least internally, to the simulation educational activity they are conducting.

c. The Simulation Program has a process to assure ongoing development and competence of its simulation educators, annually at a minimum. – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe the evaluation and feedback processes for simulation educators.	▪ This criterion intends to have the Program demonstrate how all educators are evaluated at least annually and what that process entails. ▪ The evaluation should be specific to simulation education implementation. ▪ General performance reviews are not sufficient to meet this criterion unless it specifically addresses simulation education. – For example, an educator that is employed by the School of Nursing typically receives an annual performance review by the School of Nursing but unless this performance review specifically addresses simulation education, it would not be sufficient to meet this criterion. – Evaluations should also be specific to their role within the Program. ▪ The Program does not have to evaluate all educators by the same process, but all educators should be evaluated in some way. ▪ For example, "core" educators may have a more intensive evaluation than educators that only occasionally participate in simulation activities. Regardless, all simulation educators should be evaluated at least annually in some form. ▪ Sources of evaluation may include (but not limited to): – Self-evaluation – Evaluation by a designated competent Simulationist(s) – Evaluation by learners – Peer review – DASH rater tool ▪ Educator evaluations should be based on at least two sources (i.e., not limited to learner evaluation alone).

ii. Describe and provide supporting documentation for simulation-specific professional development opportunities provided to educators within the Program.	▪ This criterion intends to identify how educators engage in a continuous improvement process to develop and refine their simulation skills. ▪ Professional development for educators that are considered "core" simulation staff are submitted in Core criterion 4.c.*iii*. If this was done, please reference that here. ▪ Ongoing professional development of educators may include: – Educators attending organizational, regional, national, or other conferences or educational events relevant to simulation – Educators attending vendor or "in-service" training – Internal (local) training opportunities for educators. – Attendance records are helpful for professional development activities, especially internal activities. ▪ In some Programs, professional development opportunities for educators are the same as professional development opportunities for "core" simulation staff. The response to Core criterion 4.c.*iii* may be referenced here and may be sufficient.

d. The Simulation Program has a process to assure orientation and development of those who participate in the delivery of educational activities but are not simulation experts – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the orientation process for those that participate in the delivery of educational activities but are not competent simulationists.	▪ This criterion intends to determine how non-simulation experts involved in simulation education are oriented to the simulation environment. Commonly, non-simulation experts are subject matter experts (SMEs) or content experts. ▪ This can include orientation to the simulation environment; the simulation modalities used by the Program; simulation-specific elements such as prebriefing/orientation, debriefing, and feedback; educator assessment, and program evaluation process. ▪ Include who is doing the orientation (e.g., which Program staff and what expertise, use of external simulation experts, etc.).

ii. Describe the evaluation and feedback processes for those that participate in the delivery of educational activities but are not competent Simulationists.	▪ This criterion intends to describe how evaluation is performed, and feedback is given to subject matter experts who are not simulation experts, and how feedback is used to implement changes in the educational approach. ▪ The feedback referred to in this criterion differs from the annual evaluation in Teaching/Education 3.c.*i* in that this criterion refers to more immediate feedback for individuals who are not at the same level of expertise. ▪ For instance, if an issue is identified related to a specific educator (this could come from peer observation, participant evaluation, etc.), how is it then communicated with the educator and how is it followed up? ▪ The response to this criterion should be specific for feedback/changes in educators, not in educational content (curriculum). ▪ The feedback process referred to in this criterion may be formative in nature.

4. EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT a. *The Simulation Program has mechanisms in place to evaluate educational activities.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe and provide supporting documentation that simulation educational activities are evaluated systematically and routinely.	▪ This criterion intends to determine how educational activities are reviewed and updated by Programs regularly. ▪ Policies and/or procedures related to how educational materials are reviewed and updated should be included here. ▪ Reviews may be accomplished in multiple ways: expert review, peer review, internal feedback, or other appropriate processes. ▪ Documentation should demonstrate a process for how the curriculum is reviewed and updated - including the reviewer's qualifications. Examples may include (but not limited to): – An internal policy or process map on curriculum review. – Annual needs assessment – Program evaluation feedback, including information on and how it has been utilized for curricular improvement. – Review based on expert opinion or available evidence base documentation. – Use of Quality Improvement data/Risk Management data.

ii. Document that educational activity evaluations ensure educational objectives were met.	▪ This criterion intends to determine if the Program is meeting intended educational objectives for the educational activities. ▪ All learner evaluations should include a question related to the educational activity meeting the stated educational objectives. ▪ The process should be well-defined and familiar to those involved in simulation education (learners, educators, etc.,). ▪ It is understood that for any given Program, a variety of processes may be utilized to conduct and collect course evaluations. ▪ Not every course must be evaluated. In some cases, Programs may elect to have a rotating schedule of evaluating recurring courses. In this case, the parameters of the rotating schedule should be clearly documented.
iii. Document: Provide evaluations from educational activities (at least 3, maximum 5) over the past 24 months.	▪ This criterion may be met by simply including evaluations from 3-5 courses (offered within 24 months) as attachments to the accreditation packet.

b. *The Simulation Program's simulation educational activities are reviewed and updated at least annually.* – This is the standard. Evidence should be provided based on the criteria in the subsections below.	
i. Describe and provide supporting documentation for the Program's process to review and update simulation educational activities.	▪ The premise of this criterion is that there should be a process by which course evaluations are used to inform changes to simulation educational activities. ▪ This process sometimes involves reviewing literature or consulting other experts to get feedback on potential changes. ▪ The process should be reliable and reproducible. This may be accomplished by a checklist or tool, that is used when evaluations reveal changes that should be considered in simulation curricula. ▪ If there is a committee or body that reviews evaluations to prompt curricular changes, meeting minutes may be included as an appendix.
ii. Document: Provide examples (at least 3, maximum 5) of changes implemented based on the educational activity review process.	▪ This criterion intends to have the Program demonstrate how the changes identified in Teaching/Education 4.b.*i* have been implemented and served to improve educational activities. ▪ Documentation should indicate which educational activity was improved based on the evaluations and updates.