

# SSH PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Society for Simulation in Healthcare  
Council for Accreditation of Healthcare Simulation Programs  
Informational Guide for the Provisional Accreditation Process from the SSH Council for Accreditation  
of Healthcare Simulation Programs

## Table of Contents

<b><u>BACKGROUND: ACCREDITATION IN HEALTHCARE SIMULATION</u></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><u>ELIGIBILITY &amp; STANDARDS</u></b>	<b>5</b>
<b><u>PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION CYCLE</u></b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION SURVEY PROCESS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION DECISIONS &amp; IMMEDIATE POST-SURVEY PROCESS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b><u>MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION STATUS</u></b>	<b>8</b>
<b><u>APPEALS PROCESS</u></b>	<b>9</b>
<b><u>SIMULATION PROGRAM REVIEWERS (SURVEYORS)</u></b>	<b>10</b>
<b><u>COST OF PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION</u></b>	<b>11</b>

## Background: Accreditation in Healthcare Simulation

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) was established in January 2004 to represent the rapidly growing group of educators, research scientists, and advocates who utilize a variety of simulation methodologies for education, testing, and research in healthcare. The membership of the Society is united by its desire to improve performance and reduce errors in patient care using multi-modal simulation methodologies including task trainers, patient simulators, virtual reality, screen-based simulators and standardized patients. Recognizing that simulation represents a paradigm shift in health care education, SSH promotes improvements in simulation technology, educational methods, practitioner assessment, and patient safety that promote competent and excellent patient care, including continuous measurements and improvements in patient outcomes. Consistent with its mission –to lead in facilitating excellence in interprofessional healthcare education, practice, advocacy, and research through simulation modalities- the Society has developed an accreditation process for simulation programs focused on healthcare.

A type of preliminary/provisional accreditation was brought forward for discussion at the SSH Accreditation meeting in Chicago, IL, August 20, 2012. A task force convened to discuss and make recommendations for a type of SSH accreditation that would allow programs to apply for provisional accreditation once they establish structure and processes, but have not achieved outcomes.

This issue aligns with SSH mission in that preparing for accreditation early in operations will facilitate excellence in health care education, practice and research through simulation and also aligns with SSH purpose to develop and foster standards for simulation education and applications that affect health care practices. It aligns with the accreditation committee’s purpose to develop and implement accreditation standards, policies, and processes for accreditation.

Current SSH accreditation standards require demonstrating outcomes as part of becoming accredited. Because of this standard, simulation centers typically need to be in operations for a minimum of two years prior to seeking accreditation. Creating an accreditation type for simulation centers that can demonstrate structure and processes without the outcomes requirement will allow simulation centers to seek accreditation earlier.

For purposes of this accreditation process, a Simulation Program in Healthcare (here forward known as “Program”) is defined as an organization or group with dedicated resources (personnel and equipment) whose mission is specifically targeted toward improving patient safety and outcomes through assessment, research, advocacy and education using simulation technologies and methodologies.

Programs seeking SSH provisional accreditation will demonstrate compliance with **Core Standards** and fulfillment of **Teaching/Education** standards.

## Benefits of SSH Accreditation

The benefits of accreditation accrue value to the organization, the industry and the community. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Improves healthcare education through the identification of best practices and recognition of practice
- Improves healthcare simulation through providing standardization and a pool of knowledge of best practices
- Strengthens patient safety efforts through support of simulation modalities
- Supports education and consultation on good practices and benchmarks to improve business operations
- Encourages the sharing of best practices through education and consultation
- Provides external validation of individual simulation programs
- Strengthens organizational, community, and learner confidence in the quality of education and services
- Garners local support, resources, and commitment
- Fosters a feedback loop between education and practice by participating in a continuous process of improvement
- Encourages performance improvement within the simulation program
- Provides a competitive edge in the community, program offerings, and grant funding
- Provides a customized, intensive process of review grounded in the unique mission and values of the organization
- Enhances staff recruitment and development
- Recognizes expertise in simulation above and beyond domain expertise

Benefits specific to SSH Provisional Accreditation include:

- Utilizes the standards for accreditation to establish the structure and processes to build a solid foundation for the simulation center
- Allows for the development of structure and processes to set the stage for achieving outcomes in the future
- Provides constructive feedback from simulation experts as part of the review process.

## **ELIGIBILITY & STANDARDS**

A Program is eligible for SSH Provisional Accreditation when it is able to demonstrate establishment of structure and processes consistent with the SSH Provisional Accreditation Standards. A program may apply if:

1. The program has established structure and processes but has not yet performed simulations
2. The program is engaged in simulation activity, has established structure and processes, but has not yet achieved 2 years in operation
3. The program has established structure and processes, is currently engaged in simulation activity for more than 2 years, but has not yet demonstrated outcomes within the simulation program

All programs must demonstrate compliance with the criteria associated with the following seven Core Standards:

### **CORE STANDARDS**

- 1.Mission & Governance
- 2.Program Management
- 3.Resource Management
- 4.Human Resources
- 5.Program Improvement
- 6.Integrity
- 7.Expanding the Field

In addition, the Program must demonstrate compliance with the Teaching/Education standards:

### **TEACHING/EDUCATION STANDARDS**

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

\*\*\*Further information on the required criteria needed for each of the standards can be found in the Provisional Accreditation Standards and Measurement Criteria. The most current version is posted on the website.

## PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION CYCLE

Application submission instructions are available by contacting the SSH Coordinator of Accreditation at [accreditation@ssih.org](mailto:accreditation@ssih.org).

The website provides instructions on completing and submitting the application and required documentation.

### The Provisional Accreditation Cycle (common timeframes)

Annual Deadlines for Application	Reviewed and initial responses by SSH	Timeframe for Virtual Visit	SSH Accreditation Board of Review
May 15	June	August – November	October - December
December 15	January	March – July	June – August

## PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION SURVEY PROCESS

### ***Provisional Accreditation Application Review Process***

The accreditation application review is the first step in the accreditation process. Once submitted, the Director of Accreditation will review the application. If the application is complete and all eligibility criteria met, a review team will be convened to review the application and make a formal recommendation to the Board of Review.

The accreditation review team will meet virtually to review and address the program application. During this process a virtual meeting between the program and the review team will be convened to review the application and interview program leadership. The review team will generate a formal report for the Accreditation Board of Review. The Board of Review will meet and finalize the accreditation status for the program.

### ***Accreditation Decisions & Immediate Post-Survey Process***

Accreditation decisions are made by the Accreditation Board of Review based on evidence of compliance with established accreditation standards and criteria. Evidence of compliance is provided by the program and verified by the review team through review of the application and virtual meetings.

At the completion of the review, the team will present a summary of the findings. The accreditation decision will be made by the SSH Accreditation Board of Review following review of the team's Evidence of Criteria for Standards Feedback Report. The Accreditation Board of Review will make the decision that accreditation is granted or not granted.

When a program is not granted accreditation, a feedback report will be provided. A Program not granted accreditation must wait one full cycle before being eligible to reapply.

## MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION STATUS

Provisional Accreditation is granted for a two (2) year period. Reports are required annually and any time a substantial change within the program occurs. In order to maintain provisional accreditation, the program must submit an annual SSH Accreditation Self-Study report and an annual fee. The report will be due on June 15 of each year, after the year the program was granted Accreditation. Failure to provide the annual report and fee by the stated deadline could result in dismissal of the program's accreditation status. The report template will be provided to each accredited program by the Director of Accreditation at least 3 months prior to the deadline for submission.

The program who has been granted provisional accreditation is encouraged to apply to become fully accredited in their second full year of provisional accreditation (when two years of outcomes data has been collected). However, the program may extend their Provisional Accreditation status for one (1) additional two (2) year provisional accreditation term. The provisional accreditation status may only be granted for two (2) terms or a total of four (4) years. Following two (2) terms of provisional accreditation, the program must apply for full SSH Accreditation to continue to be accredited by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare.



## APPEALS PROCESS

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare seeks to implement a fair and transparent accreditation process. Appeals concerning accreditation decisions will be evaluated in a reasonable, careful and timely manner.

Simulation programs seeking an appeal must formally communicate their concerns to the Executive Director of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare within 2 weeks of the accreditation decision.

Appeals must be in writing; the Executive Director will confirm receipt of the appeal within 2 weeks, will inform the Accreditation Council of the appeal, and forward the appeal to the Executive Committee of SSH (acting Appeals Committee).

Appeals must specify the criteria under dispute, and should include relevant documentation. The Appeals Committee may contact the applicant program to request additional information or clarification.

The Appeals Committee will reply to the Appeal in writing, within 8 weeks unless otherwise communicated by the Executive Director.

Any questions or concerns about Accreditation, Standards, Processes, and SSH Accreditation Services should be forwarded to:

Andrew Spain  
Director of Accreditation and Certification  
Society for Simulation in Healthcare  
Office Phone: 573.340.3735  
[aspain@ssih.org](mailto:aspain@ssih.org)

Kristyn Gadlage  
Accreditation and Certification Coordinator  
Society for Simulation in Healthcare  
Office Phone: 618.364.2957  
[kgadlage@ssih.org](mailto:kgadlage@ssih.org)

## **SIMULATION PROGRAM REVIEWERS (Surveyors)**

The review team can include one or more Reviewers who have senior level experience and have demonstrated simulation expertise in the SSH Standards of Accreditation. SSH Reviewers are trained and certified, and will receive continuing education on advances in quality-related performance evaluation. Review teams may consist of physicians, nurses, simulation program administrators, or other qualified individuals.

All Reviewers are volunteers; they will be compensated for their travel expenses, but will not receive salary from SSH.

## COST OF PROVISIONAL ACCREDITATION

The provisional accreditation fee is \$3495.00. The survey fee is paid within 30 days from SSH notification of eligibility and acceptance. Provisional accreditation does not require an on-site review therefore, no travel expenses or further expenses will be invoiced to the program.

### *Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation\**

Accreditation Service	Amount Due
Application Review	\$100.00
On-Site Survey	\$3,495.00
Annual Report	\$175.00 each
Provisional Accreditation renewal for two additional years	\$3,495.00

\*Fees subject to increase. Please contact Director of Accreditation for further information.