

# Acupuncture Education Program Review Procedure

## 1. Introduction

The College of Acupuncturists of Alberta (College) is responsible for regulating the Acupuncture Profession under the *Health Professions Act* (Act). In accordance with s.3(1)(f), of the Act, the College may approve programs of study and education courses for the purposes of registration requirements. The College establishes a review process to evaluate both new and established acupuncture education programs for approval. Acupuncture education program review supports the College's mandate of public protection, ensuring that individuals who enter the acupuncture profession have the knowledge, skills, and judgment to practice safely, ethically, and competently.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the actions required by the College in the management of acupuncture education program review.

## 3. Definitions

**Acupuncture Education Program (AEP):** Programs offered as qualifying their graduates to meet the education requirements established by the College.

**Council:** The Council of the College established under section 5 of the Act.

**Notice of Intent:** A request submitted by an institution that is proposing to offer a new **AEP**. It allows the College to assess the program's readiness before further evaluation.

**Program Review Standard:** The minimum requirements that **AEPs** must meet to gain approval by the College, as approved by the **Council**.

## 4. Procedure

### New Program Approval

4.1 The process of establishing a new **AEP** occurs in two stages:

4.1.1 **Notice of Intent** Stage

4.1.2 New Program Review Stage

### Notice of Intent Stage

- 4.2 An institution proposing a new **AEP** must submit a **Notice of Intent** in a form that is satisfactory to the College.
- 4.3 The College will consult with and/or advise the Government of Alberta in accordance with s.132.1 of the *Health Professions Act (Act)*. The College will consider all feedback received from the Minister(s).
- 4.4 The institution must obtain the College's acknowledgement of the **Notice of Intent** before progressing to the next stage.

### New Program Review Stage

- 4.5 An institution proposing a new **AEP** must submit a self-assessment to the College explaining how they will comply with the **Program Review Standard** as set out in Appendix 1 of the Acupuncture Education Program Review (AEPR) Policy.
- 4.6 The institution must submit a self-assessment within 12 months of receiving the acknowledgement from the College. Institutions that exceed this timeframe may be required to restart the process by submitting a new **Notice of Intent**.
- 4.7 A review team, typically consisting of one College representative and two Acupuncture Education Program Review Committee (AEPRC) members, will evaluate the submission. Their findings will subsequently be reviewed by the full committee.
- 4.8 The AEPRC will make a recommendation regarding program approval to the **Council**.
- 4.9 The **Council**, after considering the recommendations from the AEPRC, may grant the following approval status to a new **AEP**:
  - 4.9.1 Preliminary Approval – An institution proposing to offer a new **AEP** must obtain Preliminary Approval prior to admitting students.
  - 4.9.2 Denial – When a program is denied, the institution may not submit another **Notice of Intent** until at least one year after the date of the **Council's** decision.
- 4.10 If an institution admits students to a new program before it is reviewed by the College and approved by the **Council**, the graduates of the program will not be eligible for registration with the College.
- 4.11 The institution has 24 months to implement the new **AEP** after receiving preliminary approval. Institutions that exceed this timeframe are required to restart the process by submitting a new **Notice of Intent**.
- 4.12 A new **AEP** with preliminary approval must undergo annual site visits after admitting the first cohort of students.
- 4.13 A new **AEP** must demonstrate progress towards meeting the **Program Review Standard**. If progress is not demonstrated, the **Council** may impose conditions on the program approval status.
- 4.14 Failure of the new **AEP** to comply with imposed conditions may result in the withdrawal of approval by the **Council**.

- 4.15 A new **AEP** will transition to the established program approval when a site visit with full assessment of the **Program Review Standard** is completed. This typically occurs when the first cohort has graduated from the program.

#### Established Program Re-Approval

- 4.16 An established **AEP** must be re-approved through the completion of a site visit in accordance with their approval term pursuant to the Acupuncture Education Program Review Policy.
- 4.17 A site visit team, typically consisting of one College representative and two reviewers, will assess program compliance against the **Program Review Standard**. Their findings will subsequently be reviewed by the AEPRC.
- 4.18 The AEPRC will make a recommendation regarding program approval to the **Council**.
- 4.19 The **Council**, after considering the recommendations from the AEPRC, may grant an approval as set out in the AEPR Policy.
- 4.20 The College will provide a written program review report, including the status, approval term, and terms and conditions to the **AEPs** after considering the recommendations from the AEPRC.
- 4.21 In cases where a provisional approval or withdrawal of approval is given, the **AEPs** must communicate their approval status including the terms and conditions to its current and prospective students.

#### Site Visit

- 4.22 The College will send representatives of the **AEPs** a written notification 60 days in advance of the intention to conduct a site visit.
- 4.23 A College representative will coordinate a visit schedule with representatives of the **AEP**.
- 4.24 The site visit team will assess compliance by reviewing documents, observing operations and speaking with stakeholders.
- 4.25 Site visits typically last for two days. The length of a site visit is contingent on a site visit team being able to complete their evaluation. If the site visit team is unable to complete the necessary review due to circumstances or non-compliance attributable to the **AEP** or the institution administering it, the institution will be responsible for any costs incurred for a return visit.

#### Annual Compliance Report

- 4.26 All new and established **AEPs** must submit a compliance report annually, in a form satisfactory to the College, confirming ongoing compliance with the **Program Review Standard**. This compliance report must include:
- 4.26.1 An organizational chart
  - 4.26.2 Position descriptions for all staff
  - 4.26.3 A list of clinical instructors, faculties, and supervisors
  - 4.26.4 A program brochure and other advertising and marketing material
  - 4.26.5 Admission policies and procedures, including English language proficiency requirements

- 4.26.6 A map of the education program curriculum compared against CARB-TCMPA competencies, performance indicators, and domains of learning
- 4.26.7 Course syllabi
- 4.26.8 Education program overview and curriculum
- 4.26.9 Documentation of safety issues and incidents arising out of program, curriculum, and course evaluations, and action plans showing responses to identified issues
- 4.26.10 A class schedule
- 4.26.11 An infection prevention and control policy manual
- 4.26.12 An occupational health and safety manual and/or other equivalent documents
- 4.27 All new and established **AEPs** must submit additional documents for information purposes in a form satisfactory to the College, including:
  - 4.27.1 Enrollment and attrition data
  - 4.27.2 Graduate practice success rate

#### Withdrawal of Program Approval

- 4.28 If a recommendation to withdraw program approval is to be considered by the **Council**, the institution must be provided with:
  - 4.28.1 A copy of the program review report that is to be presented to the **Council** in support of the recommendation to withdraw approval, and
  - 4.28.2 A reasonable opportunity to deliver a written response for the **Council's** consideration before the **Council** decides whether to withdraw program approval.
- 4.29 If requested by the institution, representatives of the **AEP** must be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make a supplementary oral presentation at a **Council** meeting before the **Council** decides whether to withdraw program approval.
- 4.30 In accordance with s.132.1 of the Act, the **Council** must consult with the Minister of Health and the Minister of Advanced Education before the **Council** removes the approval from a program of study and must consider the comments received from those Ministers.

## 5. Authority

This procedure is established under the authority of Corporate Governance Policy G.1.2, which delegates the authority for the Executive Director to establish policies and procedures for the management and operation of the College for regulatory program policies and Policy G.1.5, which delegates responsibility for the Executive Director to design, develop, administer and deliver College programs and services in accordance with the established goals and targets set out in the strategic and business plans.

## 6. Scope

This policy applies to new and established **AEPs** seeking approval or re-approval in Alberta.

## 7. Related Policies and Procedures

- R.1.3 Acupuncture Education Program Review Policy

## 8. Version History

Date	Notes
December 18, 2024	New procedure
July 4, 2025	Minor changes to strengthen the site visit process