

**Certification Board for Radiology Practitioner Assistants**

**Recognition Educational Standards and Criteria  
for  
Academic Programs  
for the  
Profession of Radiology Practitioner Assistants (RPA)**

**Adopted by the:  
Certification Board of Radiology Practitioner Assistants (2000)**

**Endorsed by the:  
National Society of Radiology Practitioner Assistants (2000)  
Radiology Practitioner Assistant Society (2011)  
Academy of Radiology Physician Extenders (2011)**

The Recognition Educational Standards and Criteria (Standards and Criteria) are the minimum measures of quality to be used in granting recognition of educational programs that enable graduates to sit for the Certification Board for Radiology Practitioner Assistants (CBRPA) examination. The extent to which a program complies with the CBRPA Criteria and Standards determines its status of public recognition; therefore, CBRPA Criteria and Standards constitute the minimum requirements to which an educational program shall be held accountable.

The **Standards** are printed in regular bold typeface in outline form. The **Criteria** are printed in *italic typeface* narrative form.

**Goals and Objectives**

The goals of CBRPA is to establish, maintain and promote appropriate measures of quality for academic programs in the Radiology Practitioner Assistant profession and to provide recognition of programs that meet the minimum criteria of quality as outlined in the Standards and Criteria. The objectives of the CBRPA is to provide guidance in the development, implementation, evaluation and self analysis of academic programs to help assure high quality programs are achieved. A list of recognized programs will be listed on the CBRPA web site for information to students, employers, educational institutions, state and federal agencies and the public.

**Recognition Status Levels**

1. Probationary – the initial status provided to programs for the first two (2) years or a status of a program that must undergo significant changes to maintain recognition with the status granted for two (2) years.

2. Three Year Recognition – The program is in provisional compliance with the Criteria and Standards but requires additional development time in specific areas.
3. Five Year Recognition – The program is in substantial compliance with the Criteria and Standards.

The recognition of a program is a cycle within which continuing assessments of curriculum and structure are conducted frequently.

### **Requirements for Recognition**

#### **I Sponsorship**

##### **A. Sponsoring Institution**

1. A sponsoring institution must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U. S. Department of Education.
2. A sponsoring institution must be authorized under applicable law or other acceptable authority to provide a post-secondary educational program which awards a minimum of a baccalaureate degree. The degree may not be awarded until the entire RPA program of study is completed.

*The intent of this requirement is to assure that the RPA program exists as a formal, integrated degree curricular offering leading to a minimum of a baccalaureate degree. Graduate programs at the master's degree level or post-graduate course offerings at the 5000 course level are preferred to reflect the appropriate professional level.*

*Evidence of the institution's accreditation status by the regional agency must be submitted; also, evidence must be provided that the RPA program has been approved by the institution and/or appropriate state agency describing the degree awarded.*

##### **B. Responsibilities of the Sponsor**

1. The sponsor is responsible for curriculum planning, selection of course content, coordination of classroom and laboratory instruction, documentation of supervision of clinical preceptorship, appointment of faculty, establishing admissions criteria, receiving and processing applications for admission and granting of the degree upon successful completion of the program requirements.
2. The sponsor must assist program faculty to fulfill their job responsibilities by supporting such opportunities for their continuing professional growth as is necessary to meet the program's desired outcomes.

*The sponsor is responsible for program administration to meet the Criteria and Standards.*

*Program faculty and professional staff should utilize continuing education and other opportunities to maintain and upgrade their professional, instructional and administrative abilities.*

**C. Personnel**

**1. Administrative Personnel**

The sponsor must appoint an Educational Director for the RPA program who must be qualified to perform the functions required to achieve the program's stated goals and desired outcomes.

**2. Qualifications**

The Educational Director must be a registered technologist (ARRT) and possess the academic degree appropriate for the degree level being awarded. Experience in organization, administration, continuous review, planning, development and overall general effectiveness of program administration are necessary.

*The administrative personnel must be qualified and have demonstrated effectiveness in conducting baccalaureate degree programs, at a minimum. The acceptable degree level of personnel should be a degree higher than the degree that graduates will receive.*

*Provide a chart outlining the administrative personnell's professional credentials, highest academic degree attained, and experience in the areas of program development and administrative experience.*

**D. Faculty and/or Instructional Staff**

**1. Responsibilities**

The faculty and instructional staff are responsible for the course content, delivery method and classroom activities of the program. Experience in teaching methodologies and pedagogy are essential to student learning.

**2. Qualifications**

Instructors must possess the appropriate credentials and be knowledgeable in the subject matter by virtue of education or experience and effective in teaching their assigned subjects. Sufficient faculty must be assigned to facilitate achievement of the programs goals and outcomes.

*Provide a profile listing the faculty, professional credentials, highest degree attained, experience, teaching responsibilities and percent of effort in the program.*

**E. Clinical Preceptorship**

**1. Preceptors**

Each student enrolled in the program must have a clinical preceptor, a radiologist, who is willing to provide guidance and supervision. The preceptor is responsible for continuous review of the student's progress and for evaluation of clinical skills and competency.

*The program will provide documentation that each student has secured a clinical preceptor (radiologist) willing to oversee their clinical preceptorship.*

**2. Sponsor Responsibility**

The sponsor is responsible for monitoring the student's clinical progress and determining clinical grades based upon the evaluations received from the preceptor.

*The sponsor is responsible for submitting the clinical preceptorship grades for the students.*

**II Resources**

*The program is to submit an institutional catalog which includes the following items under this heading. Additional information is not required, unless the material is lacking in the catalog.*

**A. Facilities**

Classrooms, laboratories, administrative offices and ancillary student facilities must be adequate to fulfill the needs of the program.

*"Adequate" in this context implies that the facilities should meet the standards of an accredited educational institution with classrooms and laboratories that can accommodate the assigned number of students, with proper ventilation, lighting, furnishings, and equipment commensurate with the needs of the program and its students.*

**B. Learning Resources**

Computer resources, current books, periodicals and pertinent reference materials must be readily accessible to the students.

*Learning resources within the sponsoring institution and/or within the students' clinical setting must be made available for student use. Instructional plans should promote student utilization of these resources.*

**C. Financial Resources**

Financial resources must be sufficient to enable achievement of the program's goals and outcomes.

**D. Clinical Resources**

Clinical facilities must provide each student with learning opportunities commensurate with national practice standards, sufficient in quantity, quality and scope to ensure achievement of the required clinical competencies.

*The program sponsor must evaluate the students' clinical progress on a regular basis to assure learning opportunities are available and that the students' are performing competently.*

**III Students**

**A. Admission Policies and Procedures**

1. The RPA program is open only to certified and registered radiographers with sufficient experience to meet the institution/program admission policies.
- 2.. Policies and procedures regarding admission of students must be made in

accordance with fair practices and disclosure as clearly defined, published and readily accessible to the students.

3. Any specific academic standards required for admission to the program must be clearly defined and published and readily accessible to prospective students and the public.
4. Policies and procedures regarding advanced placement, transfer of credit and credit for experiential learning must be readily accessible to prospective students. Requirements for previous education or work experience must also be published and readily accessible.

*The RPA program is an advanced practice level of the registered radiographer; therefore, only RTs may be admitted. Credit may be granted where appropriate for prior course work, e.g., general education courses, advanced certification content, mathematics, computer literacy, or the biosciences.*

#### **IV Educational Requirements**

*Preamble: The program curriculum must demonstrate sufficient depth and breadth of content to meet the criteria contained within the scope of practice and the standards of practice and must be based upon a structured curriculum.*

##### **A. CBRPA Requirement**

By 2007, all candidates for the CB RPA certification examination must complete the requirements for a baccalaureate degree prior to sitting for the CBRPA examination

##### **B. General Education Requirements**

Completion of the general education requirements acceptable to the degree-granting institution.

##### **C. Core Curriculum**

The first year of the program provides the student with a broad educational comprehension of medical principles with a focus on their clinical applicability in medical imaging. The instructional plan must be designed to enable achievement of the program goals and must include instruction in the following areas.

- pathophysiology
- pharmacology
- advanced cardiac life support (ACLS)
- radiology
- patient assessment
- patient education
- medical ethics and law
- psychosocial medicine/cultural diversity
- sectional anatomy
- computerized imaging
- principles of fluoroscopy/clinical fluoroscopy experience

- radiobiology and health physics
- risk management

Competencies must exist for the clinical component of the fluoroscopy course and include the performance of fluoroscopy procedures.

**D. Advanced Practice Curriculum**

The advanced practice curriculum prepares the student to perform as a physician extender in radiology and combines didactic and clinical experience central to medical imaging practices and procedures that assure appropriate patient management. The curriculum and competencies must be consistent with an advanced level practitioner preparation.

- evaluation of the osseous system
- evaluation of the chest/thorax
- evaluation of the gastrointestinal tract
- evaluation of genitourinary systems
- evaluation of the CNS system and facial structures
- determination of clinical pathways
- invasive vascular and non-vascular invasive imaging procedures
- patient management
- clinical preceptorship/experience
- professional communication
- risk management

*A formalized method of validating clinical competency must be in effect to meet the clinical competency requirements for the CBRPA certification examination.*

*Provide a chart outlining the subject, content and instructor for each content area listed above. Describe the clinical competency validation system used in the program.*

**V Program Evaluation**

The program must annually perform resource assessment and outcomes assessment to assure a quality educational program at the minimum of every three years. The results of these assessments must be reflected in an appropriate and timely revision of the program and be included in the required CBRPA annual report.

**A. Resource Assessment**

The program must annually assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the program resources, to include, personnel resources, financial resources, physical resources, clinical resources and radiologist/preceptor input.

When requested, the program must submit a report to the CBRPA of its goals, objectives, evaluation systems, outcomes, analysis of outcomes and the appropriate action taken based upon the analysis.

**B. Curriculum Assessment**

The program must annually assess the effectiveness of the program curriculum, to include, student assessment and comments, preceptors' assessment, examination scores and certification examination scores.

*Program evaluation should be a continuing systematic process with input from employers, faculty, preceptors, students and graduates, involving internal and external curriculum validation. Follow-up studies of graduates should evaluate their employment and national certification examination performance.*

## **VI Acquiring and Maintaining CBRPA Recognition Status**

### **A. Application for Recognition**

1. Program recognition may be initiated at the written request of the chief executive officer of the institution or by an officially designated representative of the sponsoring institution, or by the CBRPA Board of Directors following review of the program and at the request of graduates..

The request must be written to:  
CBRPA Board of Directors  
225 Dupont Drive  
Lander, WY 82520

2. Included in the written request must be the date of implementation of the RPA program.
3. If requested by the institution, the program must submit a self-study addressing the items listed in the Standards and Criteria by the due date established by the CBRPA Board of Directors.
4. Program graduates are qualified to apply for the CBRPA certification examination after the program has received CBRPA recognition.

### **B. Requirements for Maintaining Recognition**

1. The program must submit a report when requested and must demonstrate external and internal outcomes assessments.
2. The program must continually meet the CBRPA curriculum and structure Standards.
3. The program must promptly inform CBRPA of any adverse actions or decisions affecting the institutional accreditation status or of any adverse actions or decisions of any state agencies that would affect the program.

Failure to meet these administrative and program requirements for achieving and maintaining CBRPA recognition may lead to being placed on probation and ultimately having recognition withdrawn.

**C. Withholding or Withdrawing Recognition**

1. Prior to program recognition being withheld or withdrawn, the CBRPA will provide the institution and program a clear statement of each deficiency. The institution or program may request an opportunity to postpone action while the deficiencies are being addressed. The decision of withholding or withdrawing recognition may be appealed to the CBRPA with documentation demonstration compliance to the Criteria and Standards.
2. Students enrolled in a program that has undergone a change of recognition status are regarded as graduates of a recognized program and may sit for the certification examination.
3. If CBRPA becomes aware of an inactive status if students are not enrolled for two consecutive years. Recognition may be withdrawn.
4. If the program has be inactive for five years and not reactivated, it will be considered discontinued and recognition will be withdrawn.

**D. Review Process**

The review process is outlined in the following chart.

**Program Application Submitted to CBRPA by an Institution**

Within 3 months the Review Committee evaluates the application for completeness

Review Committee determines the application is complete	Review Committee determines the application is incomplete
Review Committee makes a recommendation to the CBRPA Board	Educational Program informed of deficiencies in the application; deadline set for resubmission of application
CBRPA Board determines recognition status of the program; i.e., probation, three-year (3) recognition, or five-year (5) recognition	Revised application resubmitted to the Review Committee for review
	Review Committee makes a recommendation to the CBRPA Board
	CBRPA Board determines recognition status of the program; i.e., probation, three-year (3) recognition, or five-year (5) recognition

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