

Accreditation Process

Assumed Starting Point

The Independent Board (IB) or Neurological Subspecialty Area (NSA) has been approved as a member organization of the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties (UCNS) and therefore has a well-developed definition of the specialty. (See membership criteria)

Development of the Program Requirements

The first step in the accreditation process is the development of training requirements for programs training fellows in the subspecialty. These program requirements become the basis for the accreditation decisions by the Accreditation Council (AC) of the UCNS.

During the membership application process, a subspecialty will present proposed training requirements to the UCNS Board for review. Once approved, the program requirements will be transferred to the AC for refinement. Two subspecialty experts shall be appointed by the subspecialty and charged with the development of program requirements in collaboration with the AC. This development period should include a process for soliciting comment from program directors of current and/or prospective training programs within the subspecialty. Once approved by the AC, the program requirements will be brought before the UCNS Board for final approval.

After approval by the UCNS Board, the UCNS staff will develop a program application and announce it is available on-line via the UCNS web site.

Programs may then complete the form and submit it to the UCNS Executive Office with the applicable fees approved by the UCNS Board by the deadlines established by the AC.

UCNS AC

The UCNS Chair shall appoint, from nominations submitted by the Parent Organizations, at least a seven-member AC. This council will function as the accreditation review committee for all subspecialties that are members of the UCNS. The AC will meet on a regular basis, normally twice a year, and at each meeting will review programs that have met the application deadlines assigned to that meeting.

Program Review Process

Applications submitted to the UCNS Executive Office will be reviewed by staff for completeness.

If the application is complete, the program will be scheduled for a site review or a paper review depending on the procedural decisions made by the UCNS Board. The program will also be scheduled for review at an assigned AC meeting.

If a site review is required, the application will be forwarded to the reviewer and an appointment will be scheduled with the program. Selection of the site reviewer will be made from a list developed by the AC and approved by the UCNS Board. The site reviewer will complete the review and submit a written report to the UCNS Executive Office.

The application and the site review where applicable, will be sent to a primary and secondary reviewer from the AC. Staff, in consultation with the AC Chair, will make the assignments.

Each reviewer will complete a checklist of requirements with references for those requirements not met. The checklists for both reviewers will be sent to the UCNS Executive Office where they will be amalgamated into a checklist provided to all council members.

AC Meeting Process

All AC members will receive an agenda with the names of the programs to be reviewed. Prior to the meeting, the primary and secondary reviewers will receive copies of both checklists. At the meeting, all members of the council will receive a copy of the amalgamated checklist for each program.

As each program is reviewed, the primary reviewer will lead the discussion by introducing the program and giving an overview of the program, a list of the suggested deficiencies, and a recommended accreditation decision. The discussion will then proceed using the amalgamated checklist and will focus on the requirements where there is disagreement between the two reviewers. The council members will discuss the areas of deficiency and arrive at a consensus that will be documented and confirmed by staff.

Using the amalgamated list of deficiencies, the council will make a final recommendation on accreditation status. The recommendation will be submitted to UCNS Board for final approval.

Post-AC Meeting Process

Once approved by the UCNS Board, each program reviewed at that meeting will receive a letter outlining the accreditation decision and any deficiencies that need to be addressed.

After receiving the letter, the program may appeal the decision using the appeal process developed by the AC and adopted by the UCNS Board.

Primary Responsibilities

UCNS Board

1. *Approval of AC policies including fees*
2. *Approval of program requirements*
3. *Appointment of AC regular members*
4. *Approval of decisions for program accreditation of specific programs*
5. *Approval of site reviewer list*
6. *Approval of Appeal Committee list*

UCNS AC

1. *Review of specific programs with recommendation to the UCNS Board*
2. *Recommend to the UCNS Board*
 - *Site visitor list*
 - *AC policies*
3. *Approval of Program Information Forms*

Approved by UCNS Board of Directors: July 2003, September 2003