



GUIDE TO THE PROCESS FOR ISMA INITIAL ACCREDITATION AN OVERVIEW AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE NOVEMBER 2018 AND MARCH 2019 COHORTS

Overview and Background Information

Conducting Your Self-Study for Initial Accreditation

The self-study process provides an opportunity for an initial applicant to reflect on its program of CME. This process can help your organization assess its commitment to and role in providing continuing medical education and determine its future direction.

As an initial applicant, your organization is expected to provide narrative and evidence for Criteria 1-3 and 7-12, and all applicable ISMA/ACCME accreditation policies. Your organization may also choose to submit narrative and evidence for Criteria 5, 6, 13, and for 16-22 or 23-38. The ISMA will give a compliance finding and feedback for evidence submitted for these criteria, but these findings will not affect your organization's accreditation status.

The process of conducting a self-study is unique to your organization. Depending on the size and scope of your CME program, you may involve many or just a few individuals in the process.

Data Sources Used in the Initial Accreditation Process

Your organization will demonstrate that your practice of CME is in compliance with the ISMA/ACCME's accreditation requirements through three primary sources of data:

- 1) the self-study report
- 2) evidence of performance-in-practice, and
- 3) the accreditation interview.

Expectations about Materials

Information and materials submitted to the ISMA must not contain any untrue statements, must not omit any necessary material facts, must not be misleading, must fairly present the organization, and are the property of the organization.

Information and materials submitted for initial accreditation (self-study report, evidence of performance-in-practice, other materials) must not include individually identifiable health information, in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Missing or Incomplete Information

Initial applicants that meet the deadlines and submission requirements of the initial accreditation review process will receive an accreditation decision from the ISMA. Please note, if the ISMA is unable to render a decision due to missing or incomplete information, the ISMA reserves the right to request additional information, the expenses for which will be borne by the initial applicant.

Decision-Making

Your organization's compliance findings and the outcome of the accreditation review are determined by the ISMA based on the data and information collected in the accreditation process. The data and information are analyzed by the ISMA Commission on Medical Education (Commission) who determines all findings and decisions. All accreditation decisions are ratified by the ISMA Board of Trustees. The fairness and accuracy of ISMA decisions are enhanced by the ISMA's use of ACCME's criterion-referenced decision-making system.

The ISMA's initial accreditation decision will be based on your organization's demonstration of compliance with Criteria 1-3 and 7-12, and all applicable ISMA/ACCME Accreditation Policies. Compliance with these criteria and policies will lead to an accreditation outcome of Provisional Accreditation with a two-year accreditation term. However, if any of these criteria are found to be in noncompliance, the accreditation outcome will be Non-accreditation. At the end of the two-year term of Provisional Accreditation, your organization would be eligible for reaccreditation. If successful in reaccreditation, your organization would be eligible for a status of either Accreditation (with a four-year term) or Accreditation with Commendation (with a six-year term).

Submitting Self-Study Materials to the ISMA

All materials will be submitted to the ISMA in two formats – one electronic copy saved as a PDF or scanned and submitted on a USB flash drive, and three hard copies in binder format.

1. The cover of each Self Study Report binder should clearly identify your organization by name and ISMA provider number
2. Include a table of contents
3. Each page, including attachments, should be consecutively numbered
4. The report must be organized using divider tabs
5. The Self Study Report must be typed with at least 1" margins, using 11 point type or larger
6. Pertinent excerpts (ie, brochures, handouts, etc.) must be photocopies on standard paper for inclusion in the binder (do not use plastic sleeves)
7. The Self Study Report must be submitted in a three-ring binder

Self-Study Report

The Self Study Report is where you will provide narrative descriptions, documents, and examples to present the CME practice(s) you utilized to ensure compliance with the ISMA/ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies.

Evidence of Performance-in-Practice

You will verify that your CME activities are in compliance with the ISMA/ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies through the performance-in-practice review process. This process will require the following actions:

1. You will select at least two CME activities, completed within the last 24 months, for performance-in-practice review;
2. You will enter data in PARS for the activities you have selected for performance-in-practice review;
3. You will submit evidence of performance-in-practice for the selected activities in PARS.

Selecting Activities for Performance-in-Practice Review

You will select at least two educational activities, completed within the last 24 months, for performance-in-practice review. These activities may be conducted in joint-providership with an accredited ISMA provider or may be offered by the initial applicant without CME credit. In all cases, the evidence of performance-in-practice presented from these activities will be an important data source upon which your initial accreditation findings and decision will be based.

Preparing Evidence of Performance-in-Practice

You will submit evidence of performance-in-practice for the activities you select using the **Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstract** form. You will complete one form for each activity. In each form, you will provide the information requested with narrative explanations and statements, in tables, and via supporting documents and evidence to verify that the activity meets the ISMA/ACCME's requirements.

Accreditation Interview

Your organization will have the opportunity to further describe the practices you present in the self-study report and in evidence of performance-in-practice, and provide clarification as needed, in conversation with ISMA volunteer surveyors. ISMA volunteer surveyors are your colleagues from the accredited CME community who are trained by the ISMA. A team of surveyors will be assigned by the ISMA to review your self-study materials, meet with representatives of your CME program, and engage in a dialogue about your organization's policies and practices that ensure compliance with the ISMA/ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies.

During the interview, the surveyors will seek clarification about any questions they may have regarding the self-study materials you submitted to the ISMA. You can expect ISMA surveyors to:

- 1) conduct their interactions in a professional manner,
- 2) be familiar with your materials and the ISMA/ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies,
- 3) and communicate clearly and effectively without offering consultative advice or feedback regarding compliance or the expected outcome of the accreditation review.

The ISMA utilizes the conference call as its standard accreditation interview format; Interviews typically average 90 minutes in length. To ensure the validity of the process and based on circumstances and available resources, the ISMA reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding the interview and/or composition of the survey team. The ISMA will provide information about the process of scheduling the accreditation interview and will confirm the interview date and time and assigned surveyors in advance via email. Your organization will be asked to confirm receipt of this communication.