



## Does your program meet CAAHEP's definition of a program?

### Purpose & Goal

CAAHEP has updated its records to ensure educational programs listed as accredited accurately reflect institutional program structure and CAAHEP policy.

**Goals:** Clear identification of accredited programs and accurate public verification

**Educational Program Definition:** A legally authorized postsecondary program of organized instruction or study that leads to an academic, professional, vocational degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential.

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### What CAAHEP Accredits

Does Accredited:

- Individual educational programs
- Complete programs as defined by the program sponsor
- Programs evaluated under CAAHEP Standards

Does NOT Accredited:

- Departments, institutions
  - Curriculum content
  - Tracks within programs
  - Program portions
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**The Litmus Test:** If a graduate contacts CAAHEP to verify their program's accreditation, the program listed must clearly match the educational program the student actually completed and graduated from.

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### Common Red Flags

- Calling tracks "programs" when they are really pathways
- Unclear completion/graduation points

### Key Questions to Ask

1. How does your institution define the program? (Catalog listing – separate programs or different tracks within the same program/leading to the same award?)
  2. What credentials are awarded? (Certificate, Technical Diploma, Associate Degree, Baccalaureate Degree?)
  3. What are the completion points? (Can students graduate with a certificate or must they continue?)
  4. How are students enrolled? (Apply to specific programs separately?)
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### Common Scenarios

#### Scenario 1: Certificate + Separate Degree

- Students apply to certificate OR degree separately
- Different admission processes
- Listed as separate programs

**Likely:** *Two separate CAAHEP-accredited programs*

#### Scenario 2: Certificate + Degree Completion Track

- All students complete certificate first
- Certificate is embedded in the degree program (e.g., 1+1 structure)
- All students are awarded the certificate from the institution on their transcript
- Certificate graduates can stop and work
- Degree completion is an additional coursework option

**Likely:** *Certificate program needs CAAHEP accreditation (Degree builds on accredited program)*

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### Important Clarifications

**Shared Curriculum ≠ Same Program:** Students can take identical courses but be enrolled in different educational programs

**CAAHEP policies do NOT:** Change how institutions define/name programs or restrict program structure

**They DO:** Ensure records accurately identify what educational programs are accredited

**Final Takeaway:** CAAHEP accreditation records must clearly reflect the educational program that prepares students to enter the profession and was evaluated under the Standards – as defined and authorized by the program sponsor (institution).