



National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) Guidance Document: Material Program Changes

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Version 1.1



NCCA Guidance: Material Changes

Public Comments received during the revision process for the [2021 NCCA Standards](#) specifically requested that the NCCA clarify what is considered a “material change”.

This document provides some generalized categories of possible material changes. Per Standard 23, Essential Element C, the Commission should be notified in writing prior to implementing these types of changes because of the potential for these types of changes to affect a program’s accredited status. Prior to submission, programs should consult their psychometrician or other program advisors regarding a proposed change, as they have comprehensive knowledge of the program and can identify potential impacts of the proposed change.

This document is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not present an exhaustive list of all possible categories or examples of material changes.

Examination Design and Development

Related Standards: 1 Purpose, 13 Panel Composition, 14 Job Analysis, 15 Examination Specifications, 16 Examination Development, 17 Standard Setting, 19 Scoring and Score Reporting, 20 Reliability, 21 Examination Score Equating

- Change to designation/program name (to ensure continued consistency with scope and purpose of the credential)
- Changes to exam design (e.g. addition or removal of performance component, implementation of CAT)
- Exam translation/adaptation (initiating, or making a major change in methodology)
- If utilizing a third party assessment, deciding to use a different exam or vendor

Governance

Related Standards: 2 Governance and Autonomy, 3 Education, Training, and Certification, 10 Confidentiality, 11 Conflict of Interest, 12 Security

- Changes to governing board/council structures

Administration/Operations

Related Standards: 4 Financial Resources, 5 Human Resources, 9 Records Retention and Management Policies, 18 Examination Administration, 23 Quality Assurance, 24 Maintaining Accreditation



- Change in Program ownership
 - Acquired by another credentialing organization
 - Acquired by investment firm
- Changes to exam delivery and/or proctoring modality (not related to changing vendor or supplier)
- Sunsetting a program

Candidate Facing

Related Standards: 6 Information for Candidates, 7 Program Policies, 8 Awarding of Certification, 22 Maintaining Certification

- Changes to eligibility (e.g. adding or removing an eligibility or recertification pathway)
- Changes to recertification model
- Reciprocity

In general, the NCCA considers the following to be examples of operational changes that can be recorded on the Annual Report:

- Change from linear to LOFT
- Minor changes to recertification requirements (e.g., addition of content topics to be included in continuing education)
- Changes to Confidentiality and/or Conflict of Interest documents
- Change from testing windows to continuous testing

Note that you may be required to provide additional information regarding operational changes during the Annual Report Process.