



Society for Simulation in Healthcare
Council for Accreditation of Healthcare Simulation Programs
Informational Guide for the Accreditation Process

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND: ACCREDITATION IN HEALTHCARE SIMULATION	3
BENEFITS OF SSH ACCREDITATION	3
ELIGIBILITY & STANDARDS.....	4
ACCREDITATION CYCLE	6
ACCREDITATION SURVEY PROCESS	6
ACCREDITATION DECISIONS & IMMEDIATE POST-SURVEY PROCESS	6
MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION & RENEWAL APPLICATION PROCESS	7
APPEALS PROCESS.....	8
SSH ACCREDITATION PROGRAM REVIEWERS	9
COST OF ACCREDITATION	10
APPENDIX I: STEPS FOR SSH ACCREDITATION	12

Background: Accreditation in Healthcare Simulation

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) was established in January 2004 to represent the rapidly growing group of educators, research scientists and advocates who utilize a variety of simulation methodologies for education, testing and research in healthcare. The membership of the Society is united by its desire to improve performance and reduce errors in patient care using multi-modal simulation methodologies including task trainers, patient simulators, virtual reality, screen-based simulators and standardized patients.

Recognizing that simulation represents a paradigm shift in healthcare education, SSH promotes improvements in simulation technology, educational methods, practitioner assessment and patient safety that promote competent and excellent patient care, including continuous measurements and improvements in patient outcomes. Consistent with its mission to be a leading interprofessional society that advances the application of simulation in healthcare through global engagement, SSH has developed an accreditation process for Simulation Programs focused on healthcare.

For purposes of this accreditation process, a Simulation Program in healthcare (here forward known as “Program”) is defined as an organization or group with dedicated resources (personnel & equipment) whose mission is specifically targeted toward improving patient safety and outcomes through assessment, research, advocacy, and education using simulation technologies and methodologies. Programs seeking SSH Accreditation will demonstrate compliance with Core Standards and fulfillment of standards applied to in one or more of three areas of simulation use:

1. Assessment
2. Research
3. Teaching/Education

A Program may seek accreditation for its overall system efforts and/or simulation fellowship program in the following areas only if they are applying for accreditation in one of the above three areas. Neither Systems Integration nor Fellowship Program can be applied for as a “stand alone” area. A Program cannot be accredited only in Systems Integration or Fellowship Program. Programs can apply for both of the below if applicable to them as well as at least one of the ART above.

4. Systems Integration
5. Fellowship Program

Benefits of SSH Accreditation

The benefits of accreditation accrue value to the organization, the industry and the community. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Improves healthcare education through the identification of best practices and recognition of practice.
- Improves healthcare simulation by providing standardization and a pool of knowledge of best practices.
- Strengthens patient safety efforts through the support of simulation modalities.

- Supports education and consultation on good practices and benchmarks to improve business operations.
- Encourages the sharing of best practices through education and consultation.
- Provides external validation of individual Simulation Programs.
- Strengthens organizational, community and learner confidence in the quality of education and services.
- Garners local support, resources and commitment.
- Fosters a feedback loop between education and practice by participating in a continuous process of improvement.
- Encourages performance improvement within the Simulation Program.
- Provides a competitive edge in the community, program offerings and grant funding.
- Provides a customized, intensive process of review grounded in the unique mission and values of the organization.
- Enhances staff recruitment and development.
- Recognizes expertise in simulation above and beyond domain expertise.

Eligibility & Standards

A Program is eligible for SSH Accreditation when it is able to demonstrate compliance with the established core and area-specific standards. A Program must have **a minimum of two years' experience in the functional area** in which accreditation is sought.

All Programs must demonstrate compliance with the criteria associated with the following seven Core Standards:

CORE STANDARDS

1. Mission & Governance
2. Program Management
3. Resource Management
4. Human Resources
5. Program Improvement
6. Integrity
7. Expanding the Field

In addition, the Program must demonstrate compliance with the standards/criteria in **one or more** of the following functional areas:

ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

1. Assessment Activities
2. Assessment Activities Design
3. Qualified Assessors
4. Evaluation & Improvement

RESEARCH STANDARDS

1. Simulation Research Activities
2. Simulation Research Activity Design
3. Qualified Simulation Researchers
4. Evaluation & Improvement
5. Simulation Research Collaboration
6. Compliance
7. Ethics

TEACHING/EDUCATION STANDARDS

1. Educational Activities
2. Educational Activity design
3. Qualified Educators
4. Evaluation & Improvement

An additional option for Programs who have met the above requirements to be recognized in the functional area(s) of Assessment and/or Research and/or Teaching/Education is to seek accreditation in the area(s) of Systems Integration and/or Simulation Fellowship Program.

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION STANDARDS

1. Mission & Scope
2. Integration Activities

SIMULATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM STANDARDS

1. Program Infrastructure
2. Program Resources
3. Educational Activities
4. Scholarship
5. Program Evaluation & Improvement

***Further information on the required criteria needed for each of these standards can be found in the Accreditation Standards and corresponding Companion Documents posted online.

Accreditation Cycle

Application instructions are available online at <https://www.ssih.org/Credentialing/Accreditation/Full-Accreditation>.

The website provides instructions on completing and submitting the application and required documentation.

The Accreditation Cycle (common timeframes):

Annual Deadlines for Application	Reviewed & Initial Responses by SSH	Timeframe for Scheduled Visit	SSH Accreditation Board of Review
February 15 th	March	April – July	May – August
July 15 th	August	September - December	October - January

Accreditation Survey Process

Accreditation Application Review Process

The accreditation application review is the first step in the accreditation process. Once submitted, the SSH Accreditation staff will review the application. If the application is complete and all eligibility criteria are met, an on-site review will be scheduled.

Accreditation On-site Survey Process

The on-site survey process is a one-day* structured review where Reviewers will budget their focus under each criterion unique to each Program with the goal to support the Program’s efforts to improve their operations and overall outcomes. The SSH Accreditation Program Review Team will be assigned and announced at least one month prior to the scheduled visit.

*Site reviews for Programs applying for four or five areas may be required to extend into an additional day.

**Site reviews for multi-site or consortium Programs may be required to extend into an additional day.

Sample agendas are available online.

Accreditation Decisions & Immediate Post-Survey Process

Accreditation decisions are made by the Accreditation Board of Review based on evidence of compliance with established accreditation standards and criteria. Evidence of compliance is provided by the Program and verified by the Program Reviewers during site visits.

At the completion of the site visit, the survey team will prepare a summary of the survey findings. The accreditation decision will be made by the SSH Accreditation Board of Review following its review of the team’s Tentative

Feedback Report. The Accreditation Board of Review will make the decision regarding whether accreditation is granted or not granted.

When a Program is granted, or is not granted accreditation, a feedback report will be provided. A Program not granted accreditation must wait one full cycle before being eligible to reapply.

Maintaining Accreditation & Renewal Application Process

Full Accreditation is granted for a five-year period. Reports are required annually and any time a substantial change within the Program occurs. In order to maintain accreditation, the Program must submit an annual SSH Accreditation survey and an annual fee. The survey will be due 90 days after distribution. Failure to provide the annual survey and fee by the stated deadline could result in dismissal of the Program's accreditation status. The survey template will be provided to each Accredited Program by the Director of Accreditation.

For renewed accreditation, a Program must submit a renewal application to SSH Accreditation in the cycle 5 years following initial accreditation.

Appeals Process

The Society for Simulation in Healthcare seeks to implement a fair and transparent accreditation process. Appeals concerning accreditation decisions will be evaluated reasonably, carefully and promptly.

Simulation Programs seeking an appeal must formally communicate their concerns to the Director of Accreditation within two weeks of the accreditation decision.

Appeals must be in writing; the Director will confirm receipt of the appeal within two weeks, will inform the Accreditation Council of the appeal and assemble an Appeals Committee to review the Accreditation decision.

Appeals must specify the criteria under dispute and should include relevant documentation. The Appeals Committee may request additional information or clarification from the applicant Program.

The Appeals Committee will reply to the appeal in writing within eight weeks unless otherwise communicated by the Director of Accreditation.

Any questions or concerns about accreditation, standards, processes and/or SSH Accreditation services should be forwarded to:

Kristyn Gadlage
Director of Accreditation
Society for Simulation in Healthcare
kgadlage@ssih.org

SSH Accreditation Program Reviewers

The SSH Accreditation Program Review Team can include one or more reviewers who have senior level experience and have demonstrated simulation expertise in the SSH Standards of Accreditation. SSH reviewers are trained and certified and will receive continuing education on advances in quality-related performance evaluation. Review teams may consist of physicians, nurses, Simulation Program administrators or other qualified individuals.

All reviewers are volunteers; they will be compensated for their travel expenses and receive an honoraria from SSH.

Cost of Accreditation

Programs that apply for SSH Accreditation should anticipate a series of invoices throughout the process.

1. The first invoice will be the application submission fee. This fee varies based on areas of Accreditation sought. Please see table below.
2. The second invoice will be the Accreditation fee. This fee varies based on the areas of Accreditation sought. Please see table below.
3. The final invoice will be for site reviewer travel including airfare, hotel accommodations, meals, other transportation needed, and incidentals incurred in direct relation to an on-site accreditation review.
4. If a Program becomes Accredited, there will be a renewal fee. Please see table below.

*Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation**

Accreditation Fees for Core + 1 Applicants	Amount Due
Application Submission Fee (Core + 1)	\$1,100.00
Accreditation Fee (Core + 1)	\$5,975.00
International Frame Shipment Fee	\$100.00
Reviewer Travel (travel for reviewers paid by site). Invoice will be sent to program within 2 weeks post review	Variable
1Y, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y Renewal Fee	\$255.00 each

*Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation**

Accreditation Fees for Core + 2 Applicants	Amount Due
Application Submission Fee (Core + 2)	\$1,100.00
Accreditation Fee (Core + 2)	\$6,250.00
International Frame Shipment Fee	\$100.00
Reviewer Travel (travel for reviewers paid by site). Invoice will be sent to program within 2 weeks post review	Variable
1Y, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y Renewal Fee	\$255.00 each

*Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation**

Accreditation Fees for Core + 3 Applicants	Amount Due
Application Submission Fee (Core + 3)	\$1,600.00
Accreditation Fee (Core + 3)	\$6,499.00
International Frame Shipment Fee	\$100.00
Reviewer Travel (travel for reviewers paid by site). Invoice will be sent to program within 2 weeks post review	Variable
1Y, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y Renewal Fee	\$255.00 each

*Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation**

Accreditation Fees for Core + 4 Applicants	Amount Due
Application Submission Fee (Core + 4)	\$1,600.00
Accreditation Fee (Core + 4)	\$6,975.00
International Frame Shipment Fee	\$100.00
Reviewer Travel (travel for reviewers paid by site). Invoice will be sent to program within 2 weeks post review	Variable
1Y, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y Renewal Fee	\$255.00 each

*Fee Schedule for SSH Accreditation**

Accreditation Fees for Core + 5 Applicants	Amount Due
Application Submission Fee (Core + 5)	\$1,600.00
Accreditation Fee (Core + 5)	\$7,250.00
International Frame Shipment Fee	\$100.00
Reviewer Travel (travel for reviewers paid by site). Invoice will be sent to program within 2 weeks post review	Variable
1Y, 2Y, 3Y, 4Y Renewal Fee	\$255.00 each

*All fees must be paid in full to receive your final Accreditation decision.

**Fees subject to increase. Please contact Director of Accreditation for further information.

Appendix I: Steps for SSH Accreditation

Step 1:

Program reviews standards and companion documents and completes application readiness survey. If deemed ready, Program will be given access to submission portal.

Step 2:

Program submits application. Accreditation staff reviews application for content and eligibility.

Step 3:

Programs deemed eligible will be assigned to a review team and contacted regarding logistics of Program review.

Step 4:

The virtual or on-site review will be completed by the review team. The Program will receive a Tentative Feedback Report that summarizes the team's findings and recommendations. The team will share its report with the Board of Review (BoR), and the BoR will make the final accreditation decision.



NOTE: Per SSH Accreditation Policy, no contact will be made by the Program to the Accreditation Program Review Team or Council. All Questions may be directed to the Director of Accreditation, Kristyn Gadlage, at kgadlage@ssih.org.