

Writing to the PTAP Criteria

A narrative description of how the program operationalizes each criterion is required for the sections on Program Leadership, Organizational Enculturation, Development and Design, Practice-Based Learning, Nursing Professional Development, and Quality Outcomes.

Narrative documentation is an opportunity to tell how the program is adhering to the accreditation criteria and requires both a *description* (“describe”) and an *example* (“demonstrate”) for each criterion.

How to write a description (“describe”)

- The description should be a general overview of the process used by the applicant program to meet the criterion requirement.
- Tell the who, what, where, when, why, and how (as applicable)
 - Who is involved or responsible? When does it happen and how does it happen? Why do you do that?
 - What do you do, or expect to do, every time, with every cohort, in relation to this criterion?
- Close your eyes and listen to a colleague read your description out loud. Is this capturing the entire process asked about in the criteria? Does your response answer the whole question? Can an outsider understand what it is that you do?

In the end, your descriptions could act as part of your instruction guide for how to run your program.

How to write an example (“demonstrate”)

- Tell a story that substantiates the process you described
- Examples should be specific and detailed descriptions demonstrating how the applicant program operationalized the process in a real-life incident.
 - Examples can include details such as names, dates, locations/units.
 - Talk about real people and real events. Think of someone who went through an experience that demonstrates the component of the criteria you are addressing.
- Examples should not just continue to expand on the description. You should include the whole process in the description part of your response, and move on to specific examples in the example part of your response.
- Do not just attach a document as an example.
 - If using a document to show something that happened, expand on how it relates to the process described and the events surrounding how it was used.
 - If including documents to support the story in the example, they do not have to have been included in the PO section.

Examples should bring your processes and policies to life.

Some General Tips for Writing a Self-Study

- Pause and reflect on the intent of the question.
 - Determine what the question is asking, and remember to answer all parts of the criterion requirement in each response.
- Answer the question directly and completely.
- If an individual's name is used in the narrative, indicate their position/title to ensure the reader can follow your response.
- Give enough background/context for the reader to understand the response – you do not want the appraisers to assume anything. Spell it out.
- Ask several colleagues to read your responses and tell you if they make sense.