Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics

Frequently Asked Questions about Verification Statements

1. **What is the purpose of the verification statement?**
   - The signed verification statement documents that an individual has completed the **requirements** of a dietetics education program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). It is essential to the ACEND dietetics education, CDR registration eligibility, and Academy in Nutrition and Dietetics membership processes as follows:
     - To establish eligibility for a Dietetic Internship program
       - The completion of ACEND Didactic Program requirements and at least a bachelor’s degree are necessary for eligibility to enter an ACEND-accredited Dietetic Internship program. When the Director of a Didactic Program in Dietetics signs a verification statement, she/he also is verifying that the individual has completed at least a baccalaureate degree.
     - To establish eligibility to write the registration examination for dietitians and dietetic technicians
       - A verification statement is required for the Board of Registration and Certification of Dietitians exam. For Coordinated Program, Dietetic Internship, Dietetic Technician Program or Didactic Program in Dietetics with an Individualized Supervised Practice Pathway (ISPP) to indicate completion of academic or supervised practice requirements for eligibility to write the registration examination.
     - To establish eligibility for membership in the Academy
       - A verification statement is required when applying for Academy Active membership.

2. **Who can sign verification statements?**
   - Verification statements can be signed **only** by current program directors of ACEND-accredited dietetics education programs.

3. **When are verification statements signed and disseminated?**
   - **Didactic Programs – Baccalaureate Degree Level**
     - For students earning their baccalaureate degree, verification statements should be issued when the student has completed ACEND-accredited Didactic Program requirements and the registrar has cleared the student for graduation, which indicates that all degree requirements also have been completed.
     - For students who have previously completed a baccalaureate degree, a verification statement can be given upon completion of Didactic Program requirements.
     - For Didactic Programs offering an ISPP track, after the student has completed Didactic and ISPP requirements.
   - **Didactic Programs – Master’s Degree Level**
     - For students earning their master’s degree, verification statements should be issued when the student has completed ACEND-accredited Didactic Program requirements and the registrar has cleared the student for graduation, which indicates that all graduate degree requirements also have been completed.
     - For students who have previously completed a master’s degree, a verification statement can be given upon completion of Didactic Program requirements.
     - For Didactic Programs offering an ISPP track, after the student has completed Didactic and ISPP requirements.

Source: ACEND/January 2012
Dietetic Internship Programs
The verification statement is given at the completion of the Dietetic Internship when all ACEND-accredited program requirements have been met.

Coordinated Programs – Baccalaureate Degree Level
For students earning their baccalaureate degree, verification statements should be issued when the student has completed ACEND-accredited Coordinated Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice) and the registrar has \textit{cleared} the student for graduation, which indicates that all degree requirements also have been completed.

For students who have previously completed a baccalaureate degree, a verification statement can be given upon completion of Coordinated Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice).

Coordinated Programs – Master’s Degree Level
For students earning their master’s degree, verification statements should be issued when the student has completed ACEND-accredited Coordinated Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice) and the registrar has \textit{cleared} the student for graduation, which indicates that all graduate degree requirements also have been completed.

For students who have previously completed a master’s degree, a verification statement can be given upon completion of Coordinated Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice).

Dietetic Technician Programs
For students earning their associate degree, verification statements should be issued when the student has completed ACEND-accredited Dietetic Technician Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice) and the registrar has \textit{cleared} the student for graduation, which indicates that all degree requirements also have been completed.

For students who have previously completed an associate or higher degree, a verification statement can be given upon completion of Dietetic Technician Program requirements (didactic and supervised practice).

4. \textbf{Are there additional steps for issuing verification statements to individuals who have been educated outside the United States and its territories?}
Yes. Individuals who have earned college and/or university degrees outside the United States and its territories \textbf{also} must have their transcripts evaluated by a foreign transcript evaluation service to determine if their degree is equivalent to a degree granted by a regionally accredited college or university in the United States. Agencies that perform this service are listed in the fact sheet on the Academy’s Web site at \url{http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=5966}.

In addition to providing evidence that the individual has attained at least the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree, the foreign transcript evaluation may provide information for the program director concerning courses that will fulfill program requirements. Validation of a foreign degree does not eliminate the need for verification of completion of Didactic Program, Dietetic Internship, Coordinated Program, or Dietetic Technician Program requirements.

5. \textbf{Who determines the requirements for program completion?}
Program directors are responsible for evaluating transcripts or prior experience and determining coursework and/or supervised experiences students must complete to fulfill current curriculum requirements for their program. Because coursework and/or supervised practice experiences needed to complete program requirements may vary from program to program, students must complete the \textbf{current requirements} of the program from which they will receive the verification statement.

6. \textbf{Can verification statements be pre-dated?}
No. Verification statements that are signed and dated prior to program completion will be considered invalid. The date on which the verification statement is signed should correspond to, or follow, the date all program requirements were completed.

Source: ACEND/January 2012
7. **How many verification statements should be given to each graduate?**

Didactic Program directors are asked to furnish at least six verification statements to each graduate. Individuals may need these statements when applying to:
- Dietetic Internship programs
- Academy for membership
- States for licensure
- Potential employers

Dietetic Internship, Coordinated Program and Dietetic Technician Program directors should furnish at least five verification statements to each graduate. Statements are needed when applying to:
- Academy for membership
- States for licensure
- Potential employers

In addition to the above, each individual should keep an original signed verification statement in a secure place as a permanent record.

Program directors should keep a file with an original signed verification statement for each individual issued one. This is necessary to protect both the program and the program director from a possible grievance and the student from being denied access to credentialing if additional verification statements are needed by a student at a future date. In addition, verification statements are needed as documentation of program completion of graduates if the program is audited by CDR.

8. **How can fraudulent use of verification statements be prevented?**

To prevent the fraudulent use of the verification statements, please pay careful attention to the following:
- retain all verification statements in a secure, locked location
- sign all verification statements in a color ink other than black
- use an institutional stamp or school seal, when available
- do not provide blank verification statements to students
- do not post blank verification statements on a Web site

Source: ACEND/January 2012