



# NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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## NEBHE's Regional Student Program (RSP) Tuition Break

### Program Qualification Procedure (effective April 2018)

*This document is intended for RSP participating institutions as an outline of the steps involved in the approval of degree programs through the RSP.*

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### Annual RSP Program Review and Proposal of New Programs

The annual RSP program review begins in April and culminates in late August with the announcement of approved programs for the following academic year. (Example: The 2018 review determines approved programs for the 2019-20 academic year.)

### Direct Participants

NEBHE RSP Director and Coordinators.

RSP Campus Representatives: Every participating college and university has at least one campus representative. Every graduate school has a representative.

### Definitions

**Specialized program of study:** A specialized program is distinguished by its content, courses and credits and is a major, specialized concentration or option that approximates a major in its requirements. A specialized program is voluntarily offered by at least one participating institution in one or more of the New England states.

**Comparable program:** A program offered by another institution is considered comparable to an RSP program when it is comprised of the same courses and equivalent number of credits. A comparable program may be a major, option or concentration.

**Eligibility for a specialized program:** Residents of a particular state may be eligible for a specialized RSP program, when it has been determined that a comparable program is not offered by any home-state public college or university. (Policy 3B1)

**Eligibility for a flexible program:** Institutions may choose to allow eligibility for certain degree programs, certificates or diplomas, or on the basis of proximity for residents of one or more states. (Policy 3B2)

### [2019 Annual Review information and reference documents](#)

## Steps in the Annual Review Process

### Phase I.

NEBHE initiates the annual review with an email notification in April to all RSP campus representatives, asking them to confirm how they will participate in the RSP in the coming year and which programs they would like to offer.

### Phase II.

Institutions conduct reviews of Specialized Programs (see below) and report their results and any additional revisions to NEBHE.

### Outcome:

At the completion of the review process, NEBHE informs campus representatives of the status of the new programs, which institutions are offering them, and which states' residents are RSP-eligible. NEBHE announces the final list of programs and updates by early September.

## Review of Specialized Programs of Study (Policy 3B1)

1. Institutions notify NEBHE that they would like to offer additional specialized programs through the RSP and provide a detailed description for each program, including a list of required courses, number of credits and course descriptions.
2. NEBHE RSP Director conducts a preliminary review of a proposed new program to determine one of the following:
  - a) The program *matches a program already offered* through the RSP by one or more institution(s) and the "new" institution can be added as also offering the program.
  - b) The program is a *candidate for a new RSP listing*. NEBHE distributes a program description to other campuses for their review.
3. Campus representatives conduct an institutional review of a proposed RSP program, to determine whether or not they offer a comparable program. As needed, they forward the program description to the appropriate academic department on campus for an in-depth review. The RSP representative reports one of the following to NEBHE (by submitting a response form provided by NEBHE):
  - a) Their institution does *not* offer a comparable program. Note: If all the institutions of a particular state do *not* have a comparable program, the residents of that state *will be* RSP-eligible.
  - a) Their institution *offers* a comparable program, therefore, the residents of that state *will not be* RSP-eligible.
  - b) Their institution *offers* the same program and would like to also offer the program through the RSP.

## Review of Flexible Programs (Policy 3B2)

1. Participating institutions notify NEBHE about specific degree programs, certificates and/or diploma programs they wish to offer through the RSP and if there are any special requirements or restrictions. Eligibility for Flexible Programs is not dependent on approval by the home-state public colleges.
2. Proximity-Based Programs of Study. Institutions notify NEBHE during the annual RSP review of their intent to participate in the Proximity policy.

Institutions reserve the right to limit students' eligibility under the Proximity Policy to certain approved programs and/or to commuting students. Institutions establish criteria regarding eligible distances and make final decisions regarding which students they accept on this basis.
3. NEBHE compiles and publishes a list of institutions participating in Flexible Programs and their list of programs offered on this basis.

## On-Demand RSP Program Review

### Eligibility Questions Regarding Approved Programs\*

At any time during the year a student or institution may initiate a review pertaining to a *currently listed* RSP program. The NEBHE RSP Director obtains a detailed description of the program from the offering institution(s), circulates it to the institutions located in the state for which there is an eligibility question, and determines one of the following:

- a) All the institutions of the state respond they do not have a comparable program, therefore, the residents of that state may be RSP-eligible, effective immediately. NEBHE informs concerned parties of the change in eligibility status, and updates the program lists accordingly.
- b) At least one institution in the state responds it has a comparable program, therefore, the residents of that state will *not* be RSP-eligible.

### Additional Program Eligibility

#### Graduate Programs Petition for Eligibility

*Refer to Policy 3B2a.*

A prospective graduate student may petition for RSP eligibility for a specialized program that is *not* listed as RSP-eligible. The petition process is as follows:

- a) The student requests letter(s) from the graduate deans at the public institutions in his/her state indicating their institutions do not offer the program;
- b) Letters are sent to the graduate dean at the institution offering the desired program with the student's request for RSP eligibility. Approval is at the discretion of the receiving institution.