

**Title:**

How to Determine the Quality of an Online Nursing Program

**Word Count:**

775

**Summary:**

The process of accreditation is not mandatory for nursing programs, but it is desirable. Accreditation is a voluntary program that schools can use to make sure that their program is on par with other schools across the country. While there may be many fine schools that are not accredited, accreditation should give you confidence in an online nursing program.

**Keywords:**

Scrubs, Nursing Uniforms, Nursing Masters Degree, Nursing Scrubs, Online Nursing Program

**Article Body:**

*Accreditation*

The process of accreditation is not mandatory for nursing programs, but it is desirable. Accreditation is a voluntary program that schools can use to make sure that their program is on par with other schools across the country. While there may be many fine schools that are not accredited, accreditation should give you confidence in an online nursing program. Another reason to choose a school with a valid accreditation is that many schools will not take transfers or allow continuing education from a school that is not accredited.

There are two groups that accredit nursing programs in the United States. They are the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission, or NLNAC, and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, or CCNE. By choosing a school that has the seal of approval from one of these agencies, you should feel confident that you are enrolling in a quality program.

*Styles of Learning*

Once you are comfortable that your school meets national standards, you must determine whether it will work for you. Online classes are becoming increasingly popular, which is both good and bad. The rapid growth in popularity of online classes has made it difficult for some schools to turn away students. Consider it from the schools point of view. An online course normally costs the same as a

regular course. However, the online student does not need a seat in the classroom, does not need to fit into a class. Many colleges do not restrict the class size for online classes. While this may not be a problem if you really understand the coursework and are able to work well independently, it can cause a problem if you need extra help or find yourself falling behind.

One way that many online classes work is by collaborative learning. It is not unusual for the instructor to divide the class into smaller groups and provide assignment for each small group to work together on. Depending on your group you may find yourself spending a good deal of time in online discussions that you had not counted on when planning your time.

Other classes provide little to no interaction between yourself and other students. You will check a class message board for assignments and receive your grades in an email and have little interaction with anything other than the text book.

While it is helpful to discuss the styles of classes before you settle on a school, most teachers within a school have their own style of teaching, and you will have to adapt to each method. The most important factor when considering an online nursing program is the availability of the teachers. In even the smallest classes, if the teacher is unavailable or less than timely in returning graded assignments it will be hard to get the most from your classes.

### *Hands on Training*

In a nursing profession it is important to receive hands on training. You will have to count on a certain number of class hours to be clinical, or hands on. The number of hours and how they are accumulated will vary by school and degree program. Someone studying for the registered nurse, or RN, degree will spend a great deal of time doing clinical work, while a student completing their Bachelor's of Science in Nursing that already is an RN and has worked as a nurse will require few, if any, clinical hours.

### *Getting Your Questions Answered*

An online nursing program, like any other online degree program, is only as good as the people running it. It can be more difficult to determine the quality of the teaching in an online setting, but by paying attention and doing your research you may have find some clues. When you contact the school initially, how are you treated? Are your calls and emails returned promptly? Are your questions answered in a clear manner? The treatment you receive before you are a registered student can be indicative of the treatment you will receive through

your time at the school.

Does the staff seem generally knowledgeable and available to answer your questions about financial aid, transferring credits, and other factors that you must consider before committing to one school? While everyone is an individual, you may discover that a helpful and administrative staff often works in the same places as supportive teachers.

The bottom line when shopping for an online nursing program is straightforward. Check that the program is accredited, make sure that there is a system in place for you to receive your clinical hours, and consider the attitude of the staff before you enroll as a student.