

Health Information Technology Associate Degree Program Student Handbook 2021-2022

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**Health Information Technology Associate Degree
Program Handbook
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Welcome

Congratulations on being accepted into the Health Information Technology program at McDowell Technical Community College. The faculty welcomes you! We will be working together to help you attain your goal of becoming eligible to apply to write the national qualifying examination for certification as a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) and other certification exams which are applicable.

Introduction

The McDowell Technical Community College Catalog provides policies and guidelines for the student to follow during enrollment at MTCC. The Health Information Technology program provides additional policies and guidelines for Health Information Technology Students.

This handbook will serve as a reference for Health Information Technology students throughout enrollment in the program. Health Information Technology program policies will be followed to address issues and concerns that may arise. It is expected that the student will become familiar with and abide by the policies of the MTCC college catalog and the Health Information Technology program for satisfactory completion of the program.

Updates may be provided periodically to this document. It is suggested that students maintain this handbook in a manner that makes it easily accessible for future use.

Program Oversight & Accreditation

The Health Information Technology (HIT) program is a health science curriculum administratively directed by the Dean of Arts & Sciences. All programs at McDowell Technical Community College are reviewed and approved by the North Carolina Department of Community Colleges & Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

The Health Information Technology program at McDowell Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). This accreditation is based on the academic program's ability to meet the CAHIIM Standards for Health Information Management Associate Degree (program policy manual) as established by the American Health Information Management Association; and by making efforts toward ensuring that students will be able to meet AHIMA's HIM Associate Degree Entry-Level Curricular Competencies (2018 revision).

Students in the HIT program are expected to follow the policies, schedules, and standards of McDowell Technical Community College. In addition, by enrolling in and declaring a major in Health Information Technology, whether it be the Certificate, Diploma or Associate Degree Programs, students are expected to follow the policies of this program as stated in this handbook.

Program Needs Analysis: The HIT program at MTCC was started as a result of the Needs Analysis performed in October, 2000. The first class of students was accepted in the fall semester of 2001.

Program Evaluation Plan

Goals and Standards of the Health Information Technology Program

These goals and standards are set forth as required for Accreditation by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) and the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), our accrediting agency.

CAHIIM Standard 5 – Curriculum Goal: The program will annually assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum, relating to curriculum content, curriculum improvements and/or pedagogy effectiveness.

Target Outcome: Perform assessment and evaluation of course syllabi quarterly (25% - 4 out of 16) to verify compliance and inclusion of domains, subdomains, and tasks along with the knowledge clusters, which are used to write the course learning outcomes to ensure they are current and compliance with AHIMA/CAHIIM Curricular requirements.

Steps to Achieve the Target Outcome: **(1)** 25% (4 out of 16 core courses) of course syllabi are reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with target outcome. **(2)** Courses will include both individual and team projects to enhance the overall application of course concepts related to the knowledge clusters, domains, subdomains, and tasks.

CAHIIM Standard 6 – Faculty Development: 100% of all faculty who have responsibility to deliver academic components of the program will maintain continuing competence in the areas in which they teach; with the program demonstrating how it will assure that faculty development occurs and is targeted to improve faculty subject knowledge.

Target Outcome: 100% of Faculty will demonstrate current knowledge, skills, qualifications and professional development in the content area they teach through submission of CEU's according to their AHIMA CEU renewal cycle.

Steps to Achieve the Target Outcome: **(1)** HIT Program Director will attend at least one education-focused program every 3-5 years, such as those offered by the Assembly on Education. **(2)** AHIMA credentialed faculty (FT/PT) are required to earn at least 8 CEUs per year in the HIM content area they teach. **(3)** The Program Director will collect and review based on AHIMA CEU renewal cycle to ensure targeted CEUs toward areas of assigned instruction and/or relevant content.

CAHIIM Standard 7 – Students & Graduates: The program will annually assess the educational readiness of students and graduates to enter the workforce by demonstrating at least the AHIMA entry-level curriculum competencies through student learning outcomes.

Target Outcomes: **(1)** 90% of all HIT Program completers will pass the mock certification exam at the first sitting. **(2)** 80% of employer's surveys will express satisfaction with graduates or completer's who are hired. **(3)** 80% of graduates who sit for the national certification exam within 6 months of their graduation date will pass. **(4)** 100% of program graduates will express overall satisfaction with the program.

Steps to Achieve the Target Outcome: (1) Mock Certification exam, (2) Employer surveys, (3) AHIMA exam score reports (4) Graduate Surveys

CAHIIM Standard 8: Communities of Practice Outreach: The program will respond at least on an annual basis to the needs of its communities of practice. The program will demonstrate how it serves as a source of continued education for the HIM professional community.

Target Outcome: **(1)** Provide space for local or state association meetings at least once every two years. **(2)** Volunteer to give presentations at state or local meetings at least once every two years.

Steps to Achieve Target Outcomes: **(1)** Provide meeting space on campus for Regional or State NCHIMA meetings **(2)** Faculty volunteer to speak at regional or state meetings

CAHIIM Standard 9: Advisory Committee: The program must have an advisory committee representative of its communities of interest that meets at least annually. The committee responsibilities include

assisting program faculty and sponsoring educational institution personnel with the development and revision of program goals and curriculum, monitoring program needs and expectations, and ensuring program responsiveness to change.

Target Outcome: The advisory committee will analyze 50% of the course content to determine if the curriculum meets AHIMA standards and is consistent with current practice.

Steps to Achieve Target Outcome: Gather data and information from representatives of the PPE sites as to what (if any) updates to the syllabi, course outcomes, questions and activities need updating.

SACS COC Accreditation: As part of the SACS (Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools) visit preparation in 2020, the HIT Program has identified the HIT Program Student Learning Outcomes and those are listed on the individual core course syllabi. These outcomes and the assessments for each are reviewed on annual basis:

Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

1. The student will utilize verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in a variety of healthcare settings.
2. The student will apply critical thinking skills in a variety of healthcare settings.
3. The student will evaluate policies and procedures to ensure organizational and departmental compliance with federal, state, local laws and accrediting regulations.
4. The student will utilize technology & computer applications/processes to support entry-level HIM functions.
5. The student will integrate concepts from biological and health sciences to accurately assign diagnosis and procedure codes in compliance with current reimbursement practices.
6. All students enrolled in HIT 280 (the final course in the program) will pass the MOCK Certification Exam by scoring at least 75% of the National Mean for the RHIT Certification Exam.

Definition of Community served by the Health Information Technology Program

1. **Students**
The majority of students enrolled in the HIT program are residents of McDowell County and the average age of students in the HIT Program is 38 years of age.
2. **Employers**
Potential places of employment within the geographical area include physicians' offices, hospitals, long-term care centers, and ambulatory care centers, hospice, home care agencies, dentist offices, etc.
3. **Health Care Agencies/Institutions**
Many of the health care agencies/institutions most likely to be the employers of the graduates of this program also serve the role of serving as Professional Practice site for the training of students in the HIT curriculum. The health care agencies/institutions in the area should provide a variety of clinical experiences from which the student can better understand his role as a health information practitioner.
4. **Prospective Students**
Individuals currently employed in health care facilities throughout the area have expressed interest in this program. As can be expected, much of this interest has been expressed by individuals employed by hospitals; however, a significant display of interest has been expressed by employees of physicians' offices and smaller health care facilities. The HIT faculty attends the local high school's Career Days to recruit high school students for the HIT program.

5. **Community**

The designated service area for the College and the HIT program is McDowell County, but the program may draw from the geographic area which includes the counties of Avery, Burke, Buncombe, Mitchell, Rutherford, and Yancey.

6. **The College: McDowell Technical Community College**

McDowell Technical Community College was established as the Marion-McDowell Industrial Education Center in 1964. In 1971, the school was designated a Technical Institute. In 1988, McDowell Technical College changed its name to McDowell Technical Community College to accurately reflect the comprehensive educational opportunities available to students.

McDowell Technical Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097: Telephone number 404-679-4500) to award certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees. The most recent accreditation (2000-2010) was approved at the December 2001 Annual Meeting of the Commission on Colleges.

Faculty Information & Availability

Hours of faculty availability are posted on the door of the individual instructor's office and will differ each semester. Other hours are available by appointment only.

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Description of the Profession

Health information management is the profession that focuses on health care data and the management of healthcare information resources. The profession addresses the nature, structure, and translation of data into usable forms of information for the advancement of health and health care of individuals and populations.

Health information management professionals collect, integrate, and analyze primary and secondary health care data, disseminate information and manage information resources related to the research, planning, provision and evaluation of health care services.

A. Description of a Health Information Technician:

The health information technician is the professional responsible for maintaining components of health information systems consistent with the medical, administrative, ethical, legal, accreditation, and regulatory requirements of the health care delivery system. In all types of facilities, and in various locations within a facility, the health information technician possesses the technical knowledge and skills necessary to process maintain, compile, and report health information data for reimbursement, facility planning, marketing, risk management, utilization management, quality assessment and research; abstract and code clinical data using appropriate classification systems;

and analyze health records according to standards. The health information technician may be responsible for functional supervision of the various components of the health information system.

B. Categories of learning experiences related to the Registered Health Information Technician Exam, effective October 2, 2018.

Domain 1 – Data Content, Structure, and Information Governance (24-28%)

1. Apply health information guidelines (e.g. coding guidelines, CMS, facility or regional best practices, federal and state regulations).
2. Apply healthcare standards (e.g. Joint Commission, Meaningful Use).
3. Define the legal health record.
4. Maintain the integrity of the legal health record.
5. Audit content and completion of the legal health record (e.g. validate document content).
6. Maintain secondary health information (e.g. patient registration, financial records).
7. Educate clinicians on documentation and content.
8. Coordinate document control (e.g. create, revise, standardized forms).
9. Maintain the MPI.

Domain 2 – Access, Disclosure, Privacy, and Security (12-16%)

1. Manage disclosure of PHI using laws, regulations, and guidelines (e.g. ROI, accounting of disclosures).
2. Determine right of access to the legal health record.
3. Educate internal customers (e.g. clinicians, staff, volunteers, students) on privacy, access, and disclosure.
4. Educate external customers (e.g. patients, insurance companies, attorneys) on privacy, access, and disclosure.
5. Assess health record disposition (retain, archive, or destroy)
6. Conduct privacy audits.
7. Conduct security audits.

Domain 3 – Data Analytics and Use (14-18%)

1. Abstract data.
2. Analyze data.
3. Analyze privacy audits.
4. Analyze security audits.
5. Report data (e.g. registries, core measures).
6. Compile healthcare statistics and reports.
7. Analyze healthcare statistics (e.g. census productivity, delinquency rates, resource allocation).

Domain 4 – Revenue Cycle Management (14-18%)

1. Code medical record documentation.
2. Query clinicians.
3. Conduct utilization review.
4. Manage denials (e.g. coding or insurance).
5. Conduct coding audits.
6. Provide coding education.
7. Monitor DNFB.
8. Analyze the case mix.

Domain 5 – Compliance (13-17%)

1. Refine departmental procedures.

2. Perform quality assessments.
3. Assess risks (e.g. patient care, legal).
4. Report health information noncompliance.
5. Ensure HIM compliance (e.g. coding, ROI, CDI).
6. Maintain standards for HIM functions (e.g. chart completion, coding accuracy, ROI turnaround time, departmental workflow).
7. Monitor regulatory changes for timely and accurate implementation.

Domain 6 – Leadership (11-15%)

1. Provide education regarding HIM laws and regulations.
2. Review HIM processes.
3. Create or modify HIM policies
4. Create or modify HIM procedures
5. Establish standards for HIM functions (e.g. chart completion, coding accuracy, ROI, turnaround time, departmental workflow).
6. Collaborate with other departments for HIM interoperability.
7. Provide HIM technical expertise.

C. Professional Organizations

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) is the organization for the community of professionals engaged in health information management, providing support to members and strengthening the industry and profession.

The mission of this organization is to:

- Provide career, professional development, and practice resources
- Sets standards for education and certification
- Advocates public policy that advances HIM practice
- Facilitates member communication
- Promotes the contributions of its members

AHIMA values:

- A code of ethical health information management practices
- The public's right to provide high quality health information
- The celebration and promotion of diversity

AHIMA vision:

A world in which the public values the contribution of health information management professionals and the American Health Information Management Association, in the advancement of health through quality information.(As documented on the AHIMA website www.AHIMA.org)

The North Carolina Health Information Management Association (NCHIMA) is a component state association of AHIMA and is a state-wide affiliated group of health information technicians, health information administrators, and interested individuals. NCHIMA is divided into ten regions whose function is to provide continuing education on a local basis.

The mission of NCHIMA is:

To promote the quality, access, and security of health information in all health care settings for the benefit of the members, health care consumers, providers and other users of clinical data. (As documented on the NCHIMA website www.NCHIMA.org)

Student Membership in AHIMA is required for all first and second year students. Membership in AHIMA automatically allows for membership in NCHIMA. By joining these groups, a student receives a

subscription to the monthly publication entitled The Journal of the American Health Information Management Association (JAHIMA), receives reduced registration fees at educational meetings, receives the NCHIMA publication entitled Footprints, and is assured of being a member of a progressive professional organization. The cost of the national membership is currently \$45.00 per year. Students will be required to join the student Engage Community and participate in assignments which use the Journal of AHIMA as well as selected portions of the website. The HIT Program Coordinator will provide student membership applications at the beginning of each Fall Semester.

Membership in the regional organization is separate from that of AHIMA or NCHIMA. Throughout the year, continuing education activities will be offered which may be of interest to students. Students may elect to join the regional organization as well. Membership fees for this are quite nominal.

D. Earning and Maintaining Accreditation

The goal of the graduate of the HIT program is to be eligible to write the national qualifying examination for certification as a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT), administered by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). Eligibility to take this examination is dependent upon the accreditation of this program by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

The HIT program at McDowell Technical Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

The American Health Information Management Association, in its quest for the maintenance of high professional standards has a mandatory continuing education requirement which individuals must meet to maintain credentials. An RHIT must complete 20 clock hours of continuing education every two years. Failure to complete these required CE hours results in revocation of the individual's accreditation status rendering that individual unable to use the designated credentials as a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT).

The Educational Process, Policies and Procedures

A. Curriculum framework:

The HIT curriculum is designed to be a five-semester program requiring completion of the courses outlined in the college catalog. In accordance with the requirements of AHIMA through the Essentials of an Educational Program for the Health Information Technician and the Health Information Administrator, the focus of this curriculum shall be on the student's successful attainment of the HIM Associate Degree Entry-Level Competencies. While the ideal method to complete the curriculum as it is currently designed is to be enrolled as a full-time student, it is recognized that for a variety of reasons, this is not possible for all students. Therefore, it is the intent of this program to work, in every possible way, to meet the needs of the student seeking part-time program completion without compromising the level and intensity of the educational process.

The student must realize that like most other health care professions, health information courses must be taught in a specific sequence to follow a logical pattern of thought and training. Because of this, numerous courses have prerequisites. Additionally, due to limited faculty and clinical site resources, the HIT courses are currently taught once per year, this means that if a student misses or elects not to take one of the sequential courses, completion of subsequent course work may be delayed for a year or longer. To pursue this degree at a less than full-time basis, a student may take related and general courses according to his/her preferred schedule in accordance with prerequisite requirements.

B. Professional Practice Experience (Clinical) Education

Professional Practice Experience (Clinical) education is the practice of training in one's field at the physical location of a health care setting and learning from participation in the accomplishment of tasks of the profession. It involves the practice of tasks and functions in a hospital/health care facility in order to better understand and correlate theory into actual performance. Completion of the Professional Practice Experience is a vital component of health information education, and the completion of professional practice experience education is an extensive aspect of the second year of the HIT Associate Degree curriculum.

Prior to attending a Professional Practice Experience in second year Fall semester, the student is required have a physical exam by appropriate medical personnel and all immunizations must be up-to-date as defined in the STUDENT MEDICAL FORM. The Student Medical Form for North Carolina Community College System Institutions (Appendix C) should be used. The cost of the physical exam and immunizations is the responsibility of the students.

***Students should be aware upon admission to a program with a professional practice/clinical component that criminal background checks and/or drug testing may be required by the health facilities used for clinical sites. McDowell Technical Community College is an open door college and will not refuse admission to anyone based on a criminal record. However, the clinical site reserves the right to refuse someone with a criminal record, positive drug test, and/or visible tattoo the use of its facility. If a student does not complete the clinical portion, he or she will not be able to successfully complete a health science program at McDowell Technical Community College. (The Program Coordinator will provide a specific date). The cost of the criminal background check, drug screening or additional clinical site requirements is the responsibility of the students.*

C. Course Scheduling

While the ideal class times may be in the morning or early afternoon, it is important to realize that HIT classroom/clinical education activities will be scheduled throughout the day. In scheduling work activities and other responsibilities, a student needs to be cognizant of the time demands that this program requires. It is recommended students enrolling in the program extensively review the MTCC Health Information Curriculum (catalog) to gain an understanding of the sequencing of courses and the contact hours involved with each in order to have a comprehension of the time involved in the completion of the program. **PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THAT MEETING THE DEMANDS OF YOUR EMPLOYMENT IS NECESSARY, WE CANNOT SCHEDULE THE CURRICULUM AROUND THE NEEDS OF THE WORK SCHEDULES OF STUDENTS.**

D. Confidentiality Statements

Throughout the educational experience of the HIT student, both in the classroom and the professional practice setting, actual patient records will be utilized for training purposes. While the identity of records used in the classroom has been altered, the identity of the records in the professional practice setting is that of the individuals whose names appear on them. As the confidentiality of patient information is of the highest priority, the student must realize that any action resulting in the release of unauthorized information can result in disciplinary action. The Confidentiality Statement (see Appendix A) includes information regarding this disciplinary action and this statement must be signed by the student prior to contact with or use of actual medical information.

E. Admission Procedures & Policies

To gain admission into the HIT program, a prospective student must follow a series of steps in a standardized review process. These are listed in the MTCC College Catalog. In addition to the policies within the MTCC catalog, the following are the policies of the HIT Program regarding Program Progression, Advance Placement and Transfer Credit, which are in addition to the NC System Comprehensive Articulation Agreement for most College Transfer and General Education Majors.

E-1 Progression Policy:

1. Students must achieve a “C or better” on all HIT, MED, BIO and OST curriculum courses and maintain at least a 2.0 GPA after being accepted and enrolling in the program to satisfy the progression policy.
2. If a student makes less than a compliant grade of “C or better”, or does not maintain a 2.0 GPA, the student will be dismissed from the program. To be reinstated into the program, the student must request readmission in writing to the program chair and submit a written improvement plan to his/her advisor for approval. If approved, the student may enroll the next semester with the understanding that all future grades in the program must be compliant. Without approval of both the request for readmission and improvement plan, the student will be ineligible to progress in the program and will not have his/her Advisor Hold lifted for future enrollment until the student submits a Change of Major Form.
 - a. One dismissal and one readmission is allowed after initial admission. The noncompliant grade constitutes a dismissal.
 - b. Approval of a request for readmission and an improvement plan constitutes one allowed readmission.
 - c. To be approved, the improvement plan must incorporate strategies to be successful such as tutoring, or reducing the course load from full-time to part-time as discussed with one’s academic advisor.
 - d. The student who is readmitted will be on probation until a compliant grade is achieved, which must occur in the next consecutive semester that the course is offered to continue in the program.
3. If the student makes two noncompliant grades within a single semester, the second noncompliant grade will fall under the one allowed dismissal. The procedure for requesting readmission and submitting an improvement plan must address strategies to be successful in both courses.
4. A second or third non-compliant grade in a second semester constitutes dismissal with no option to request readmission. (If the student was readmitted after receiving two noncompliant grades in the same semester, the student has no remaining readmission left; if the student makes a single noncompliant grade in two separate semesters, the student has no remaining readmissions left.)
5. If the student received three or more noncompliant grades in a single semester, he/she is not eligible for readmission for five years.
6. If the student has been readmitted once, and then makes a noncompliant grade, he/she is not eligible for readmission for five years.
7. A student who has not met the Progression Policy and has been dismissed from the MTCC HIT program due to non-compliant grades may reapply for a second readmission to the program 5 years after the last semester of enrollment. If accepted, the student will remain on probation for 3 semesters. A single noncompliant grade will constitute dismissal with no allowed readmissions.

8. To maintain accountability to program outcomes, students must take all courses in the HIT curriculum at MTCC once admitted.
9. It is recommended that the HIT degree program be completed in five (5) consecutive semesters and the HIT diploma program be completed in three to five (3-5) semesters. Degree students must complete the HIT curriculum within eleven (11) consecutive semesters; diploma students must complete the program within seven (7) consecutive semesters. For students not following the full-time program of study to complete the HIT degree or diploma programs, all general education and related courses must be taken prior to taking HIT prefixed courses. (HIT 110, 112 and 114, the exception). This will provide a greater opportunity for students to maintain the body of knowledge needed for success on the national "RHIT" exam and/or the "CCS" and/or "CCS-P" exam.
10. If the student does not complete the degree program within 11 semesters or the diploma program within 7 semesters, the student must start repeating courses that were taken outside of these time limits.

E-2 Readmission Policy:

A student may enter the HIT Program two (2) times (admission is counted as the first entry; readmission is counted as the second entry). Readmission is contingent upon availability of space in the program. The student desiring readmission to the HIT Program must complete the following steps:

1. Contact the Program Director in writing to request readmission.
2. If the readmission was due to noncompliant grades, a written improvement plan must also be submitted to the faculty advisor. Once both steps are completed:
 - a. Meet current admission requirements.
 - b. Update medical information and other clinical requirements such as background check and drug screen as directed by the faculty advisor.
 - Students called to active military duty while enrolled in the HIT Program will be readmitted with the same academic status that he/she had when last attended.
 - Students who have been dismissed twice from the program due to noncompliant grades are not eligible for readmission for 5 years.
 - Students who have been dismissed as a result of unsatisfactory clinical performance are not eligible for readmission to the program for 5 years after the last semester of enrollment.
 - Any student readmitted to the HIT Program due to noncompliant grades will be required to repeat any HIT courses that are more than three (3) years old.

E-3 Transfer Policy:

Applicants desiring admission into the HIT Program after having been enrolled in an HIT Program at another school must meet criteria for transfer as well as admission requirements of the program.

1. Only students who have been enrolled in a CAHIIM-accredited HIT program are eligible to apply under these policies. Applicants from HIT programs that were not CAHIIM-accredited at the time of enrollment must follow the admission steps of new applicants and retake all HIT coursework.
2. To be eligible to apply as a transfer student, applicants must not have made more than two noncompliant grades (less than a C or better).
3. Students who have left a CAHIIM-accredited HIT program as a result of unsatisfactory clinical performance that resulted in dismissal will not be eligible for transfer.

4. If accepted, a single noncompliant grade will constitute dismissal with no option to apply for readmission.
5. If accepted, the student will be required to repeat any HIT & OST prefix courses that are more than 2 years old upon admission and repeat any C-level HIT & OST coursework that is less than 2 years old upon admission. HIT and OST courses that are less than 2 years old with a B grade or higher upon admission do not have to be retaken.
6. All professional practice experience (clinical) courses must be repeated, no matter their age.
7. Acceptance is contingent upon availability of clinical space in the program.
8. Students transferring into the HIT program must complete at least 25% of the credit hours required for a degree, diploma, or certificate at McDowell Technical Community College. Within the 25%, at least eighteen (18) semester hours must be major course work (HIT) for a degree or diploma.
9. To be considered for transfer:
 1. Contact the Program Chair in writing to request the transfer.
 2. If the request for transfer was due to noncompliant grades, a written improvement plan must also be submitted to the faculty advisor.
 3. Once both steps 1 & 2 are completed:
 - a. Meet current admission requirements.
 - b. Submit medical information and other clinical requirements such as background check and drug screen as directed by the faculty advisor.

Transfer credit will generally be granted from another HIT Program within the North Carolina Community College System that is accredited as an HIT Associate Degree Program by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

E-4 Advance Placement:

Applicants desiring to be considered for Advanced Placement shall complete the HIT Program Advanced Placement Intake packet and choose one option by meeting the criteria listed below:

1. Option 1: Advanced Placement with Credit by Examination (please note that courses completed with the credit by examination option are awarded the grade 'CR' and do not typically transfer to another college or university.)
 - a. Eligibility Criteria (Students who are currently working in the HIM or medical records field and have been employed in that field for 5 or more years may be eligible to receive credit by examination. Documentation of employment is REQUIRED in the form of an employer letter)
 1. Register and enroll in the course.
 2. Attend through 10% of the course.
 3. Complete the request for credit by examination form and obtain the course instructor and program advisor signatures.
 4. Set a date to sit for the examination.
 5. Complete the examination with a grade of 80 or higher.
 6. If grade of 80 or higher is earned, the Instructor will complete the request for credit by examination form and sign to award grade of 'CR' on student's transcript. If grade is 79 or below, the student will remain in the course and complete the course requirements as stated in the syllabus.
2. Option 2: Advanced Placement Online Program
 - a. Eligibility Criteria (Students who are currently employed in the HIM or medical records field who meet the following pre-requisites)

1. Must be a high school graduate or hold high school equivalency diploma
2. Must have 2.5 GPA in general education and recommended courses for the program
3. Must be currently working in a healthcare facility
4. Must have completed the MTCC Application Process and HIT Program Intake Packet
5. Medical Form, Immunizations and Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen due January 1 of each year
6. Must attend Program Orientation in December (date provided in acceptance letter)
7. Must have confirmed clinical site placement (coordinated by the program director)
8. Complete the following courses with a grade of 'C' or better and/or in progress at the time program application is submitted:

<input type="checkbox"/> BIO 169	<input type="checkbox"/> ENG 111	<input type="checkbox"/> ENG 112	<input type="checkbox"/> MAT 143
<input type="checkbox"/> ACA 115	<input type="checkbox"/> MED 121	<input type="checkbox"/> MED 122	<input type="checkbox"/> CIS 110
<input type="checkbox"/> HUM/ARTS ELECTIVE		<input type="checkbox"/> Social Science Elective	

F. Financial Aid

Students who have satisfactory academic records and are in need of aid may qualify for financial assistance. Although the primary responsibility for financing an education remains with students and families, McDowell Technical Community College participates in several programs designed to supplement individual and family contributions. Financial aid may consist of grants, scholarships, campus employment, student loans or any combination of these as determined by the policies of the Financial Aid Office. Students are encouraged to reference the [MTCC Website Tuition & Financial Aid](#) link for further information.

G. Grade Standards

It is expected that the student will perform at his/her optimal level in all coursework. Because of the nature of any type of health career, it is important that the student be well prepared in the biological sciences, medical terminology, and coding. Therefore, minimum grades of "C" are required in all science-BIO, HIT, OST and MED courses. See the MTCC Catalog for further specifications of grade requirements and prerequisites.

Students must remember that their grades will be an indication to future employers of their ability to perform in the work setting. Often, employers establish minimum grades which must be met before an individual can be considered for certain areas of employment. An example of this is that many hospitals will not consider graduates for employment in coding positions if their grades indicate less than a "C" in medical terminology, biological sciences, and coding courses. A student may not progress to the next course in the sequence without having made a "C" in the prerequisite course. Because of the sequential order of the courses and the fact that each course is taught once annually, the student must realize the implications of delays caused by less than "C" level work.

H. Attendance/Make-Up Test Policy

Regular class attendance is expected in all major, related, and general courses taken by the HIT student. Not only is regular attendance conducive to academic progress of the student, it serves to establish a reputation with the course instructor which naturally transfers to recommendations for employment that might be requested by prospective employers. Performance by students continuously absent or tardy is generally less than optimal and often is interpreted by prospective employers as being indicative of poor work habits. This may affect the hiring of an individual as a new employee. Three tardies are equal to one absence. The MTCC attendance policy will be followed.

Make-up tests will be given for reasons of illness, death in one's family, or a circumstance deemed by the instructor to be of such critical nature that it shall be allowed. Notification of inability to take a test or complete a graded assignment must be made in advance through contact with the instructor. Voice mail and email are available 24 hours daily for student notification to the instructor (652-0699 or 652-0620 to reach HIT faculty).

I. Academic Counseling

While counseling of a general nature is available through the Counseling Office, the HIT faculty shall serve as the main provider of academic counseling. This shall be accomplished by HIT faculty participation in the preregistration and registration processes as well as through regular individual reviews of students' academic progress held throughout the academic year. It is the intent of the HIT faculty to serve as a referral source for students having academic or personal difficulties in an attempt to assure that a student has a reliable resource for information or counseling.

J. Social Media Policy

Please see the social media statement located in the college catalog.

K. Academic Dishonesty Statement

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. McDowell Technical Community College is responsible as an accredited institution for guaranteeing academic integrity.

Cheating is the intent to deceive the instructor in his or her effort to evaluate fairly an academic assignment. Cheating includes copying another student's homework, classwork, or project (partly or entirely) and submitting it as his or her own; giving, receiving, offering, and/or soliciting information on a quiz, test, or exam; or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the copying of any published work such as books, magazines, audiovisual programs, electronic media, and films or copying the essay or any written work of another student. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses direct quotations without proper credit and proper punctuation and when a student uses the ideas of another without giving proper credit.

L. Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of McDowell Technical Community College that no individual shall, on the basis of sex, age, religion, race, color, national/ethnic origin, disability or political affiliation, be excluded from participation in, be denied admission to or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in his/her education program, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Any student who feels he/she has been discriminated against should contact the Director of the Student Enrichment Center, MTCC, 54 College Drive, Marion, NC 28752 Phone (828)652-0631. In addition, he or she may consult with or write to the Office for Civil Rights, District of Columbia Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue., NW, Room 316, P.O. Box 14620, Washington DC 20044-4620; (202)786-0500.

M. Disability Services Provisions

McDowell Technical Community College provides equal access to education for persons with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the responsibility of the student to make his or her disability known and to request academic adjustments or modifications. The MTCC Special Needs Counselor advises and assists in securing academic adjustments, support services and other provisions for qualified students with

disabilities. Request for modifications, adjustments or accommodations should be made five working days before events or activities and submitted to the Director of the Student Enrichment Center. Every reasonable effort will be made to make reasonable adjustments.

In order to establish the student's eligibility for services, documentation of disability is required of all students who request academic accommodations or modifications. Documentation should be submitted to the Director of the Student Enrichment Center and may include results of medical or psychological tests or other professional evaluations that verify the existence of an ADA-recognized disability. Students with learning disabilities should provide a current psychological evaluation that states the specific learning disability and the functional limitation within the learning environment. All documentation and records will be maintained in a confidential manner as outlined in the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. College procedures for application and admission apply to students with disabilities. For additional information, contact the Director of the Student Enrichment Center.

Disability Services Contact Any students in this course who have a documented disability which may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should **contact the Special Needs Counselor in Student Services at 652-0602**. The Special Needs Counselor will collaborate with the student and instructor to discuss what, if any, reasonable accommodations may be necessary to complete the course requirements.

N. Learning Resources Center

The Learning Resources Center (MTCC Library) and Academic Resource Center is available for student usage on weekdays. The LRC & ARC contains journals and books recommended for required and suggested reading. Audiovisual aids and individualized learning media are also available. Computers are available for student use. The Academic Resource Center (located above the Library) is also available during designated hours for student use, tutoring services, and assistance with courses in which students are having difficulty. **Academic Resource Center (ARC) Lab** located above the Library in Building 11 has computers with lab assistants present from the hours of 8 am to 8 pm on Mondays through Thursdays and from 8 am to 4 pm on Fridays. Classroom labs are not available for student use outside of regularly scheduled classes. These times are subject to change, so please verify current posted schedules the first week of this semester. For **Tutorial Services**, contact the Student Enrichment Center above the Library in Building 11, Telephone 652-0653.

O. Student Conduct

Personal conduct that detracts from the educational process will not be tolerated. The College reserves the right to dismiss any student who in its judgment conducts him or herself in a manner that detracts from or does not benefit the purpose of this college.

Use of telephones and mobile devices: *Interruptions and distractions resulting from the use of mobile devices such as this can be very distracting to other students as well as the instructor not only during class, but also during testing times especially. It is expected that students will have mobile devices turned off or placed on vibrate when in class. Please respect others who are in your presence and do not disrupt the learning environment.*

P. Title IX: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence:

McDowell Technical Community College is committed to providing and promoting an atmosphere in which students can engage fully in the learning process. Incidents of sexual harassment or violence that disrupts the learning process may be reported to the college Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Ryan Garrison,

Vice President of Finance, phone [\(828\) 652-0627](tel:8286520627), ryang@mcdowelltech.edu Reports will be confidential.

Q. Student Employment Policy

Although the ideal situation would be that students not be employed during their enrollment in the HIT program, it is recognized that for many students this is impossible due to financial and other constraints.

The employed student should realize that the demands of employment cannot interfere with the demands of student activity in any way, and that scheduling of courses shall take precedence over the scheduling of work activities.

Students should also note that they will generally not be assigned to a professional practice site in which he/she is currently or has been previously employed. To do so would put both the student and the various personnel involved in the professional practice experience at the site in a potentially difficult situation for evaluation purposes.

Students may not take the responsibility or the place of qualified staff. However, after demonstrating proficiency, students may be permitted to undertake certain defined activities with appropriate supervision and direction. Students may be employed in the field of study outside regular educational hours, provided the work does not interfere with regular academic responsibilities. All activities required in the program must be educational and students must not be substituted for paid staff. (CAHIIM Standards for Health Information Management Associate Degree, 2012).

R. Medical and Liability Insurance

Medical Insurance - All HIT students are encouraged to carry hospitalization and medical insurance. While very limited patient contact is necessary as a health information technology student, it is frequently necessary to conduct educational and/or training sessions in and/or around patient care areas. Because of this, a minimal increase in incidence of disease might be realized.

Liability Insurance - All HIT students are **required** to purchase liability insurance prior to the clinical affiliation. Arrangements for this shall be made during Fall Semester of the second year with the college business office and is directly associated with HIT 122, 124 and HIT 222 courses.

S. Infectious Disease Policy

Because of the nature of the health care profession, students participating in required professional practice experiences may find themselves at risk for exposure to infectious diseases. Even though the risk is extremely small, the possibility of exposure cannot be totally eliminated. Health professions not usually requiring patient contact (such as Health Information Technology) have less risk. Staff members responsible for the activities of health information technology students, will, at all time, use techniques to minimize exposure.

Prior to assignment to the professional practice site, in the second year of study, the student must provide medical documentation to verify that he/she is free from and immunized against infectious diseases. No student shall be placed at a professional practice site without this documentation having been received by the HIT Program Coordinator. Each student will receive the medical form at the pre-registration for second year. Specific information will be given as to when the completed form is to be turned in to the HIT Program Coordinator. Students are responsible for making sure

physicians/mid-level healthcare providers follow all directions regarding: completion of all required vaccinations, testing, information/documentation dates, and signatures as indicated on the medical/physical exam forms. This information must be complete. Failure to follow these directions by the deadline date will be considered an incomplete application, and the student will not be allowed to participate in professional practice (Appendix D).

Any student with an infectious disease must report this promptly to the faculty member in charge of the professional practice experience. As necessary, consultation will be made with the staff of the infection control department of the professional practice site to which the student is assigned or to the responsible party to determine the student's eligibility to participate in the professional practice experience. Students cannot participate in professional practice experiences when it has been determined that a significant risk of transmission occurs.

T. Contact with Patients Infected by HIV

As the professional practice experiences involved in Health Information Technology do not usually require patient contact, the possibility of exposure to patients infected with HIV is very limited. In the remote possibility that exposure should occur in the professional practice, efforts will be made by the staff of the of the infection control department of the facility to handle the situation in an urgent manner and to provide the necessary guidance and instructions to the student and the HIT Program Coordinator.

U. Professional Practice Site Expectations

1. Professional practice sites will be selected from health care facilities within a reasonable commuting distance (as determined by the HIT faculty) from McDowell Technical Community College.
2. A student currently or previously employed in a health care facility will generally not be assigned to that facility for the primary professional practice experience. To do so could create difficulty in assessing student performance.
3. Student transportation and all costs involved in the performance of professional practice duties shall be assumed by the student. Student car pools are the responsibility of the individual students and are not the responsibility of the HIT program or the College.
4. Student attire at the professional practice site shall consist of clothing that is neat and allows the student to present himself in a professional manner that is consistent with acceptable professional dress in the workplace, students should follow this guidelines listed below:
 - a. Female students are expected to wear clothing with a skirt length satisfactory to cover the mid portion of the knee. Dress pants/slacks are acceptable.
 - b. Male students are expected to dress in a likewise professional manner which should include tailored slacks and designated polo shirt.
 - c. Blue jeans, shorts, halter tops, tee shirts with graphic/written patterns or other attire deemed to be inappropriate by the HIT faculty or the professional practice site shall not be allowed.
 - d. Shoes should be comfortable, well cared for and should be appropriate for professional attire. No tennis/athletic shoes, boots, clog-type shoes shall be allowed. Of particular note is the attention that should be paid to safety, and for this reason, the wearing of heels of an excessively high nature is discouraged.
 - e. In order to maintain a professional appearance, students will not be allowed to wear multiple ear rings in each ear, or have jewelry in body piercing other than the ears or have visible tattoo(s) showing during the PPE site placement.

- f. Students must practice appropriate hygiene and grooming. Daily showers, brushing of teeth/mouthwash, and use of deodorants are encouraged. Nail color should be neutral. Male students with facial hair should keep neatly trimmed. Hair is expected to be styled neatly, no unnatural hair color is accepted.
- 5. While at the professional practice site, students must wear a name photo ID name tag issued by MTCC which shall identify them as Health Information Technology students representing McDowell Technical Community College.
- 6. Students are to park only in the areas designated by the professional practice site for student use. All costs incurred as a result of parking are the responsibility of the student.
- 7. Students should be aware upon admission to a program with a clinical/professional component that criminal background checks and/or drug testing may be required by the clinical facilities used for PPE sites. McDowell Technical Community College is an open door college and will not refuse admission to anyone based on a criminal record. However, the clinical/professional practice site reserves the right to refuse someone with a criminal record to use its facility. If a student does not complete the clinical portion, he or she will not be able to successfully complete the health information technology program. The clinical site reserves the right to refuse someone with a criminal record, positive drug test and/or visible tattoo to use its facility.

V. Statement on Accreditation

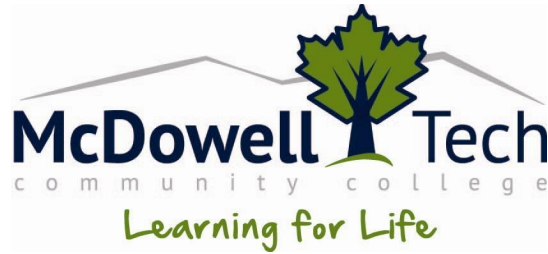
This program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

W. Expenses

Current information regarding tuition and student activity fees, etc. can be obtained from the most recent edition of the MTCC Catalog or other official publication. As with all health science programs, texts are very costly and because of their importance and future use, the student will not likely desire to resell them. Some clinical facilities may require a criminal background check before allowing students to participate in Professional Practice in the facility. Additional expenses specific to the HIT program include, but are not limited to:

Professional Practice Experience Costs (within 60 days of PPE start date)	Medical Form (\$80-120)	\$	120.00
	Immunizations/Titers (0-\$250), please see immunization list on NCCCS Physical Exam Form	\$	250.00
	PPD (\$20)	\$	20.00
	3 rd Party Vendor (Criminal Background Check, Drug Screen, and Immunization Tracking)	\$	110.00
	PPE Lab Jacket (Please see Program Director for Ordering Information)	\$	40.00
	Subtotal	\$	540.00

College Fees, Textbooks/5 Semesters	Tuition (in-state: up-to \$1,216 per semester)	\$	6,080.00
	Student Activity Fee (\$20.00 per semester)	\$	100.00
	Student Success Fee (\$5.00 per semester)	\$	25.00
	Campus Parking Fee (\$5.00 per semester)	\$	25.00
	Computer Use & Technology Fee (\$1.50 per credit hour, maximum \$24.00 per semester)	\$	120.00
	Liability Insurance (\$14.50 per year)	\$	29.00
	Accident Insurance (\$1.30 per semester)	\$	6.50
	Lab Fee (V-Lab \$100 per year)	\$	200.00
	Textbooks (Please see the MTCC HIT Program Textbook Listing with current pricing; **All pricing is approximate)		
	1st Year	\$	780.00
	2nd Year	\$	1,100.00
	Subtotal	\$	8,465.50
Professional Dues	AHIMA Membership Dues (\$49 per year)	\$	98.00
Certification Exam Fee	Registered Health Information Technician Exam	\$	300.00
	Subtotal	\$	398.00
	Program Total	\$	9,403.50



**MCDOWELL TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM**

APPENDIX A - Acknowledgment of Accreditation Status

The goal of the student who completes the Health Information Technology Curriculum is to become eligible to apply to write the national certification examination of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA); therefore, by successful completion of this examination becoming credentialed as a Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT). To become eligible for this examination, a student must have graduated from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

McDowell Technical Community College recognizes the importance of this accreditation and the Health Information Technology program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the accreditation status of the Health Information Technology Program at McDowell Technical Community College.

Student's Signature

Date

HIT Program Director

Date



McDowell Technical Community College
Health Information Technology Program

APPENDIX B - CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Students in the Health Information Technology Program of McDowell Technical Community College will be working with medical information of actual patients in various types of health care facilities and in the classroom. It is imperative that the student remember:

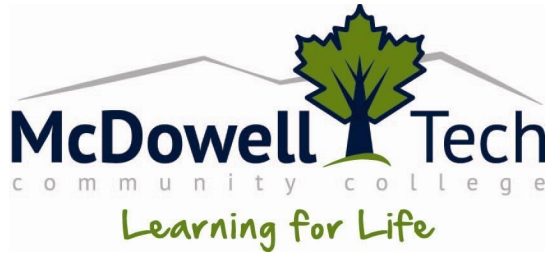
1. Legally the information belongs to the patient. Any violation of the confidentiality of patient information is punishable in a court of law.
2. The professional code of ethics of the American Health Information Management Association stipulates that maintaining confidentiality of patient information is a part of professional responsibility and integrity.

Health records in the practice laboratory contain actual patient data and must never be physically removed from the laboratory, either in whole or in part, nor photocopies for removal purposes. Information concerning physicians, such as indexes, registers, and statistics must remain in the laboratory.

Having read the above, I do hereby agree to maintain the confidentiality of all pertinent information to which I am exposed. I understand that failure to abide by the agreement will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Student Signature

Date



McDowell Technical Community College
Health Information Technology Program

APPENDIX C - ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLICIES OF THE HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM AS SPECIFIED IN THE HIT STUDENT HANDBOOK

I, _____ have received, read, and understand the Health Information Technology Student Handbook. Further, I have received, read, and understand the instructions given to me for the completion of the required Student Health Form. I understand that failure to comply with the instructions can result in my not being allowed to participate in the required Professional Practice portion of the Health Information Technology curriculum.

Student name (printed)

MTCC Student ID #

Student signature

Date

APPENDIX D - STUDENT MEDICAL FORM

**Please see the McDowell Technical Community College website at
<http://www.mcdowelltech.edu/HIT/>
for the most current requirements for Professional Practice Experience Courses.**