ACCSC Initial Accreditation Workshop

MARCH 11 – 12, 2024

Workshop Agenda

Day 1

Session time (Eastern Standard!)	Topic	Facilitator
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Welcome from the Commission	Michale McComis
10:30-11:00	Eligibility	Lisa Miles
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Application Process and Forms	Maurya Sorokes
12:00 pm – 12:45 pm	LUNCH	
12:45 pm – 2:00pm	Management Standards	Maurya & Lisa
2:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Program Standards	Sarah Havlicek
3:45pm – 4:30pm	Faculty Qualifications	Maurya Sorokes

Workshop Agenda

Day 2

Session time (Eastern Standard!)Par	Topic	Facilitator
9:00 am – 9?45 am	Recruitment	Lisa Miles
9:45 am – 10:30 am	Admissions	Maurya Sorokes
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	Student Achievement	Sean Forman Lisa Miles
12:00 pm – 12:45 pm	LUNCH	
12:45 pm – 1:30 pm	Student Services	Lisa Miles
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	On-site Evaluation & Commission Review	Maurya Lisa
3:00 pm – 3:30pm	Parting Thoughts	Maurya Lisa

Welcome from the Commission

Michale McComis

Executive Director

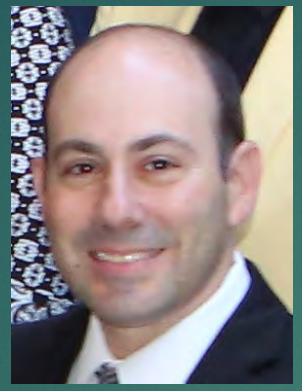
Alicia DeMartini

Director, Accreditation

Maurya Scanlon

Manager, Accreditation

Introductions



Sean Forman

Lead Analyst,
Commission Affairs

Sarah Havlicek

Lead Analyst,
Accreditation

Lisa J. Miles

Special Projects,
Commission Affairs

Ground Rules

AGENDA – FLUID!

BE CURIOUS AND CONSIDERATE!

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Getting to Know You

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- What is your school?
- What are your programs?
- How many students?
- Why are you here?

Dr. Michale McComis

Executive Director, ACCSC

Mission

ACCSC'S mission is to ensure quality education that enhances **Student Success** in the workforce

Fundamental Components

- Self-Evaluation
- Continuous Improvement
- Quality Standards
- Accountability

Key Concepts

- Standards are Best Practices
  - ✓ Meet Minimally
  - ✓ Exceed Where Possible
- Quality Matters

Key Concepts

- Use Self-Evaluation to Thoughtfully Assess
- Burden to Demonstrate Compliance is on the School
  - Subjective and Objective Evidence

Key Concepts

- Institute Continuous Improvement Efforts
- Be Student Centric

Key Concepts

- Diversity of Membership
- Diversity of Methods
- Scalability
- Subjective v. Objective

Workshop Objectives

- ACCSC mission and values (check)
- Principle steps in the accreditation process (*up next*)
- Institutional Success
  - ★ Standards are a blueprint
  - ★ Outcomes measure success
  - ★ Strong leadership is critical
  - ★ Assessment and Improvement… to infinity and beyond!

Face to a Name

The Who

The Staff

- ✓ Carry out the work of the Commission
- ✓ Process applications
- ✓ Write letters
- ✓ Facilitate on-site evaluations
- ✓ Provide guidance

The Commission

- ✓ 13-member board
- ✓ School members
- ✓ Public Members
- ✓ Decision makers
- ✓ Promulgate standards

Purpose

Establish high educational standards and

Ethical business practices

Assess compliance

Scope

- Private and public postsecondary institutions
- Non-degree and degree granting institutions - associate, baccalaureate and master's
- Occupational, trade and technical career education
- Distance education

Institutional Accreditation

Programs and Scope

All Programs Within the Commission's scope

Must be approved by the Commission

Educational Objectives

What the learner will know or be able to do as a result of having attended an educational program

Primary Educational Objectives and Scope

To prepare students for entrance or advancement in one or more occupations requiring technical or career-oriented competencies and skills.

Limitations of Scope

Schools primarily directed toward AVOCATIONAL OR GENERAL EDUCATION objectives are ineligible for ACCSC accreditation

Secondary Objectives

A school may have secondary educational objectives (e.g., a GED preparation course, refresher training course, avocational courses, continuing education courses, etc.)

Priority Must be Vocational Objectives

Secondary educational objectives may not have greater priority within the school's mission and operations than its career-oriented educational objective

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Fall within the Commission's scope

Meet the Educational Objectives

Have necessary authorizations from the state

Two Years Continuous Operation

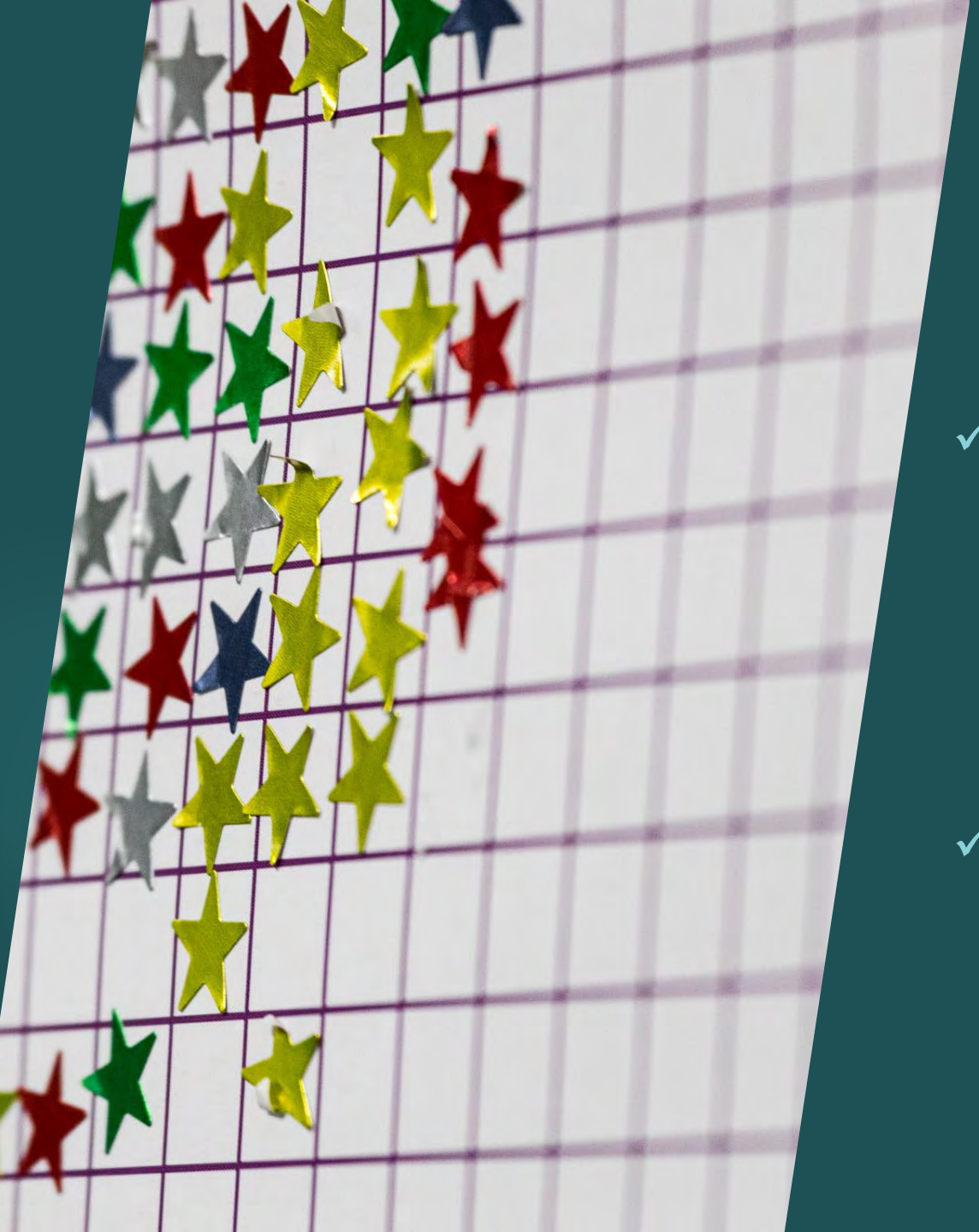
Operating without cessation – with the exception of regularly scheduled breaks, vacation periods, or an approved change of location

Providing education and training to students in accordance with its primary educational objective(s)

And with continuous licensure by the state granting approval to do so.

Minimum Clock Hours

MUST OFFER AT LEAST ONE PROGRAM IS 300 CLOCK HOURS OR LONGER IN LENGTH



Student Achievement

- ✓ Graduated at least one class of students from the longest program(s) offered during the two-year period preceding its application for accreditation.
- ✓ Provide student achievement outcomes for its programs prepared in accordance with the Commission's student achievement reporting requirements

Financial Soundness

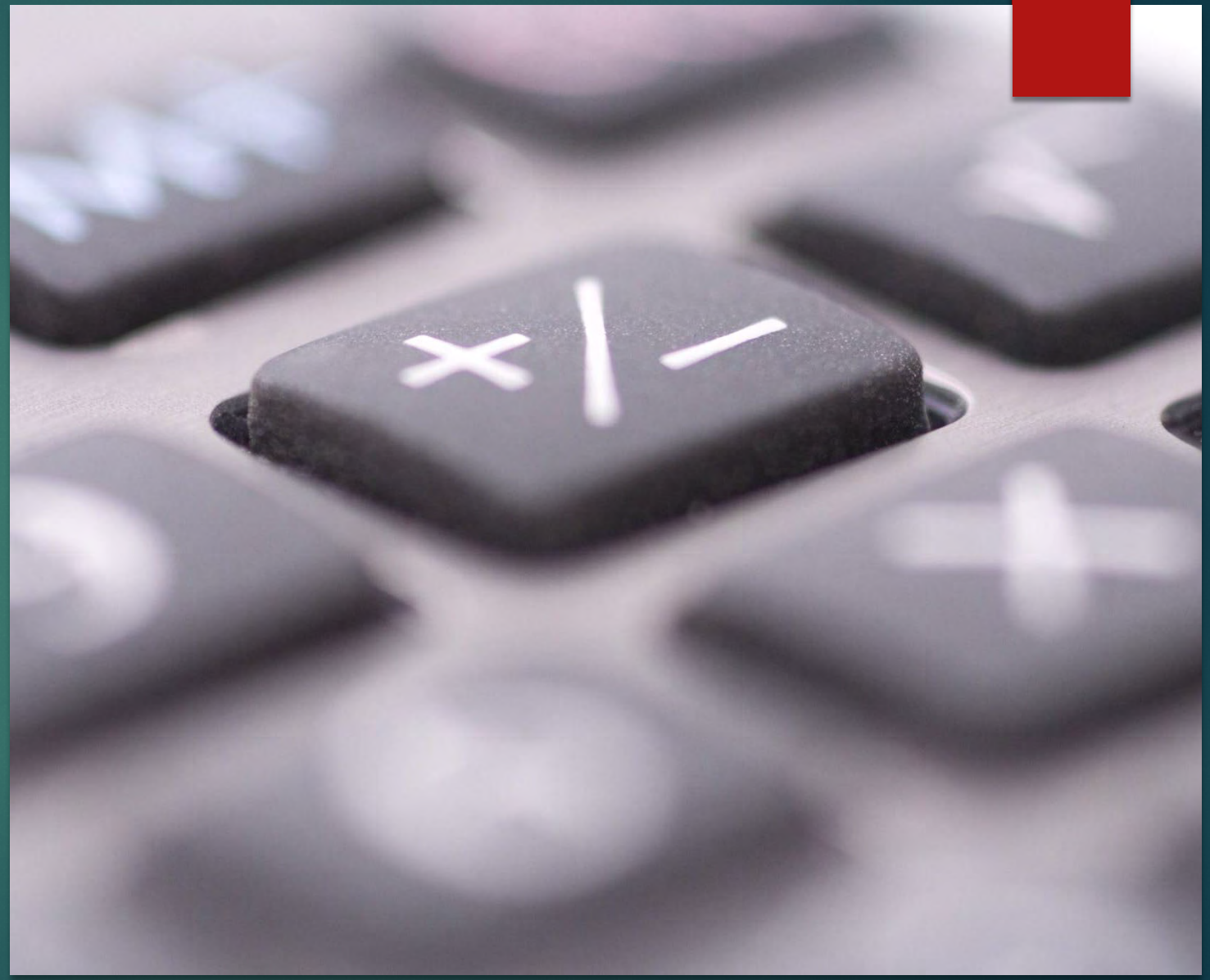
- ✓ Sufficient resources for its proper operation and discharge of its obligations to students.
- ✓ Must demonstrate two years of operating history through the submission of financial statements that are prepared in accordance with the Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Financial Statements and Related Information
- ✓ Show that the school has met the financial tests for initial applicants included in those instructions

Presentation of Financial Statements

- ✓ Audited financial statements
- ✓ Prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)
- ✓ By an independent certified public accountant licensed by the state to perform such services

Application Will NOT be Accepted

- ✓ Net loss for the two most recent fiscal years;
- ✓ Negative net worth for the two most recent fiscal years; or
- ✓ Negative cash flow from operations for the most recent fiscal year.

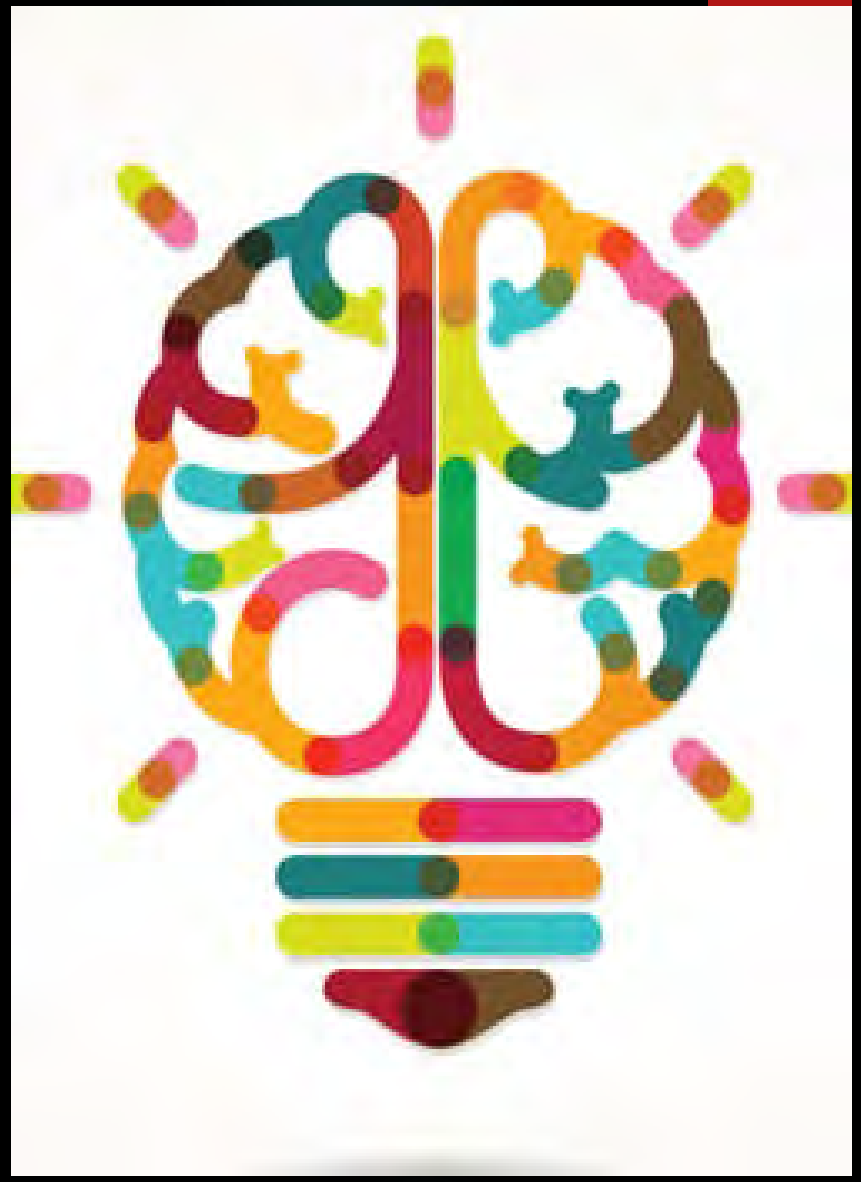


Questions to Consider

Is ACCSC a good fit for my school?

Am I prepared to make changes at my school in order to meet accrediting standards?

Do I have the resources to be successful in the accreditation process?



ACCSC

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

~~Starting the Process~~

How Long and How Much?

Process Overview – First Leg

March 2024
Workshop

September 2024
Application Part I

March 2025
Application Acceptance Letter

September 2025
Self-Evaluation Report + Application Part II

December 2025
Orientation Evaluation

February 2026
Orientation Report

Process Overview – Crossing the Finish Line

April 2026

Final Materials for the On-Site Evaluation (revised Application Part II and Self-Evaluation Report)

June 2026

On-Site Evaluation

August 2026

On-Site Evaluation Report

November 2026

Commission Review

December 2026

School Action Letter

Plan for
18-33 months in the process

How much is this going to cost me?

- The total process for a single program school would be a minimum of $13,300 in Commission-related fees.
- This total does not account for any fees charged by other parties such as any financial institutions which audit the school's financial statements or fees associated with employment verification.

Costs associated with Initial Accreditation Process

	Fee
Pre-Workshop Application	$150
Initial Accreditation Workshop	$650
Application for Initial Accreditation – Part I	$750
Use of University in Name (as applicable)	$250
Application for Initial Application – Part II	$2,250 + Program Fees

Program Type	# of Active Programs	Fees
Non-Degree Programs	1 to 3	No Fee
	4 to 9	$500
	10 to 15	$1,000
	16 to 20	$1,500
Degree Programs – Occupational Associate, Academic Associate, and Baccalaureate	1	No Fee
	2 to 3	$1,000
	4 to 9	$2,000
	10 to 15	$3,000
	16 to 20	$4,000
Master's Degree	Each Program will require a separate Application for Approval of a Master's Degree Program	$1,500/each

	Fee
Orientation Evaluation	**$2000**
On-Site Evaluation	
Institutions with three or fewer active programs	**$7,500**
Institutions with four to nine active programs	**$9,000**
Institutions with ten to fifteen active programs	**$12,500**
Institutions with sixteen to twenty active programs	**$14,000**
Institutions with greater than twenty active programs	**$15,000 and $500 for each additional program**
Institutions with more than 500 students	**Additional $2,000**

Additional Fees

If an Occupation/Subject Matter Specialist travels more than 200 miles to participate in an evaluation, the institution will be assessed additional travel based-fees on a direct cost basis.

If an evaluation team requires more than two days at the school, then the Commission will assess an additional fee of $600 per evaluator per day.

If an evaluation requires additional evaluators based up institutional and/or programmatic circumstances the institution will be assessed an addition $2,000 per evaluator.

First Steps

GROWING IN THE PROCESS

Workshop

The individual or team with authority to make changes at the institution

Attend an accreditation workshop and pay attention, prior to submission of the application for accreditation

Within Six Months…

Application for Initial Accreditation – Part I

Collects information about the school and its programs, and determines compliance with ACCSC eligibility criteria

Section I – SCHOOL INFORMATION

- Address
- Contact Information
- Director
- Workshop Attendance
- Name
- Ownership

SEPARATE FACILITY INFORMATION

Section II:

Information about the main campus, if the school applying for renewal of accreditation is a branch

Section III:

Information about any additional locations (branch, satellite, facility expansion) associated with the school applying for renewal of accreditation

Section IV – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- Eligibility Criteria
- State licensure
- Other accrediting body/regulatory agency
- Programmatic accreditation

Section V

REQUIRED EXHIBITS

Application Exhibits

1. Application Processing Fee - $2,250

2. Additional information If the school's name includes the term University

3. Accreditation Workshop

4. Ownership of the School and list of current owners

5. Outline all changes of control in the previous two years

Licensure, Approval, & Accreditation

6. Three Years of Cohort Default Rates (Campus Specific)

7. Corporate Affiliations with Other Schools

8. Current Organizational Chart

9. Current state license

10. State Program Approvals (Clock / Credit Hour)

11. State Authorization for Distance Education

Program Information

12. Other Accreditations (Notices)

13. Programmatic or Other Regulatory Approval Required for Employment

14. ACCSC Program Chart

15. Avocational or Continuing Education List

Personnel & Program Advisory Committee

16. Application for a Satellite Location (if applicable)

17. Financial Statements

Section VII – DISCLOSURES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- ✓ Attestations

"This application is submitted by the chief executive officer of the school for which accreditation is sought, and that official hereby attests to the following"

Sample attestations

- The school has every opportunity to present itself in its best light and to respond to any concerns
- The school is postsecondary with vocational objectives
- The school is voluntarily seeking accreditation
- School officials have read the standards and attended a workshop
- School officials fully accept and support the concept of accreditation

Disclosures

Have owners or managers been directly or indirectly employed or affiliated with any school during the individual's period of employment or affiliation		
Lost or was denied accreditation	Closed or entered into bankruptcy	Lost or was denied eligibility to participate in Title IV Funding programs

Disclosures

Is any action pending, or has action been taken by any court or administrative body with regard to any owner, manager, or any institution with which any owner/manager has been affiliated?

Has any owner or manger served in a similar capacity in any other school where either that individual or the school has been charged or indicted in a civil or criminal forum or proceeding alleging fraud, misappropriation, or any criminal act?

If the answer is "**YES**" to any disclosure

The school is given the opportunity to provide an explanation of the facts and circumstances surrounding the situations reported in the disclosure section.

CERTIFICATIONS

Acknowledge	Grant	Acknowledge	Certify
Acknowledge that the school must be consistently described to all agencies	Grant permission for ACCSC to contact other agencies appropriate to the review of the application	Acknowledge the requirement for a third-party audit of employment records	Certify that the information herein and attached hereto is correct.

Financial Review Committee

The ACCSC Financial Review Committee evaluates the financial statements submitted with Applications for Initial Accreditation to determine whether the school has sufficient resources.

Financial Review Committee

Red:

- Financial statements indicate the institution's financial structure is not sound

Yellow:

- Financial statements may not provide sufficient information to demonstrate financial viability

Green:

- Financial statements indicate that the institution's financial structure is sound

Within (another) Six Months

Application Acceptance Letter

Application has been accepted, school may proceed into the next part of the process

Effective date of institution's compliance with accrediting standards

Recommendations and observations

Within (another) Six Months

Application Part II

- ✓ Updated snapshot of the institution
- ✓ Longer list of attachments, providing opportunity for more in-depth analysis of the institution

Self-Evaluation Report

A narrative response to a series of questions, guiding the school through an assessment of its effectiveness in achieving educational objectives and status of compliance with accreditation standards.

Self-Evaluation Report

- ✓ Involve the Entire School
- ✓ Improvements due to internal efforts
- ✓ Significant and on-going process

Self-Evaluation Report

- ✓ Includes an introduction, nine sections, and three appendices
- ✓ The sections parallel the *Standards of Accreditation*.
- ✓ The three appendices describe additional information the school will need to prepare for the on-site evaluation.

Self-Evaluation Report

- ✓ Quantitative data, such as number of managers, faculty qualifications, student achievement rates
- ✓ Qualitative reflection: what does the data mean? Are the policies and procedures effective? Is the school successfully meeting its mission?
- ✓ External and internal validation

Sample SER Prompts

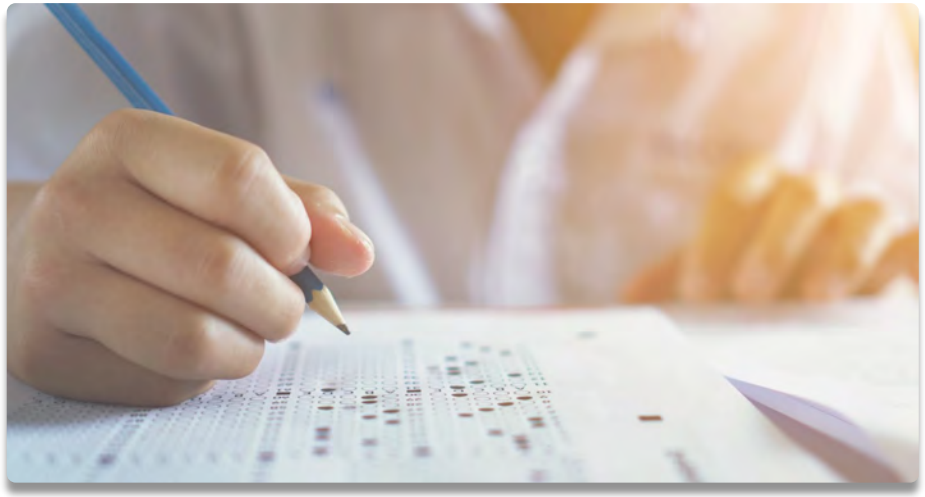
- List all individuals responsible for full-time on-site management of the school (including campus-based and corporate oversight) and include as an exhibit a Staff Personnel Report for each individual listed.
- Provide a detailed description of how each member of the management team is qualified for his or her particular role, including education, training, experience, and demonstrated ability to lead and manage a post-secondary educational institution.

Section I (A)(1)(b)

- What is the average tenure (in years) of the current faculty members?
- What impact has this level of tenure had on educational delivery?

Section III (A)(3)

Review your SER responses and ask...



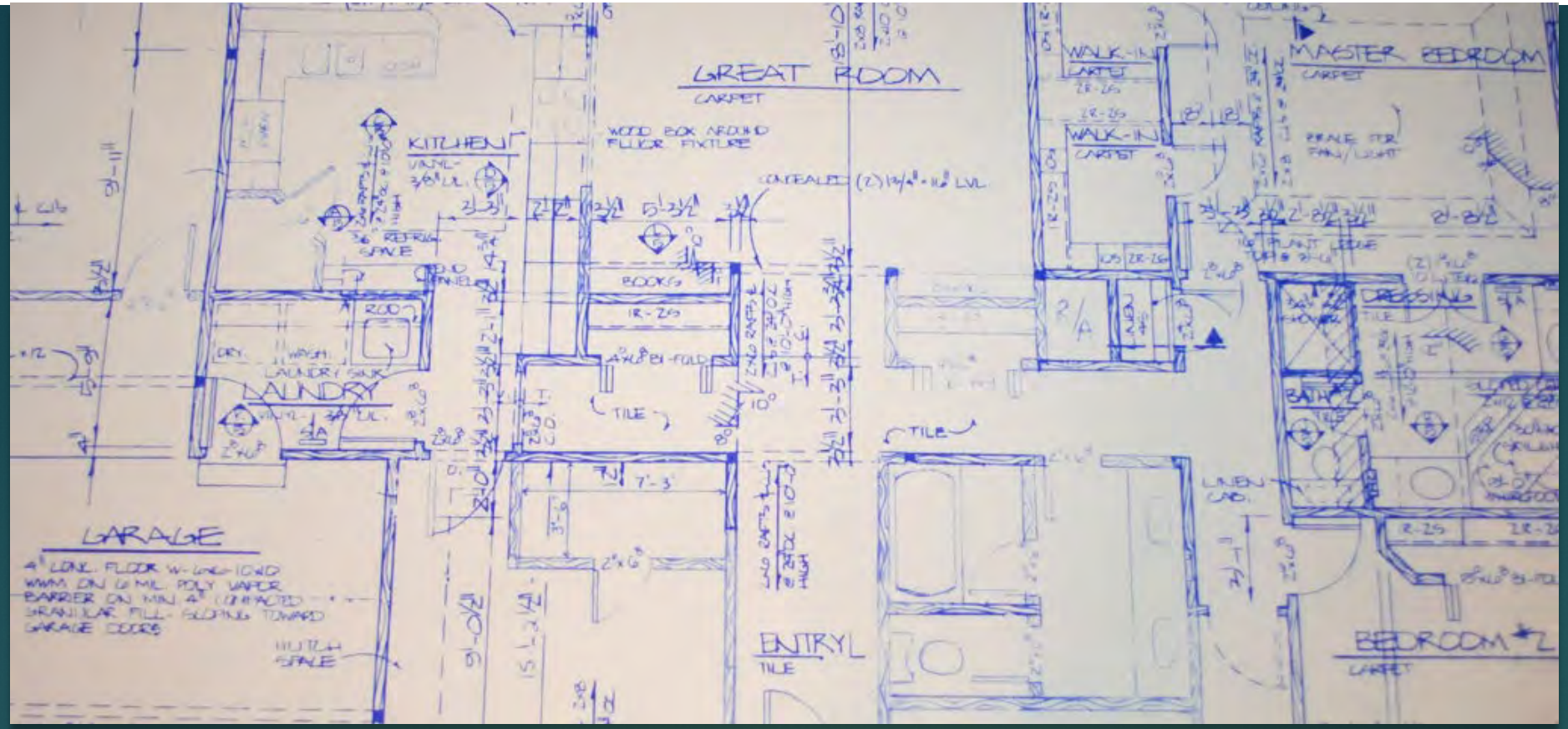
- Does the response answer the question being asked?
- Is the response complete and clear?
- Does the response accurately reflect day-to-day operations?
- Is necessary documentation available to support the response?
- Is supporting documentation complete, clear, and concise?

Orientation On-Site Evaluation

A consultative review conducted by an experienced accreditation staff member providing feedback regarding compliance with standards and readiness to continue through the accreditation process

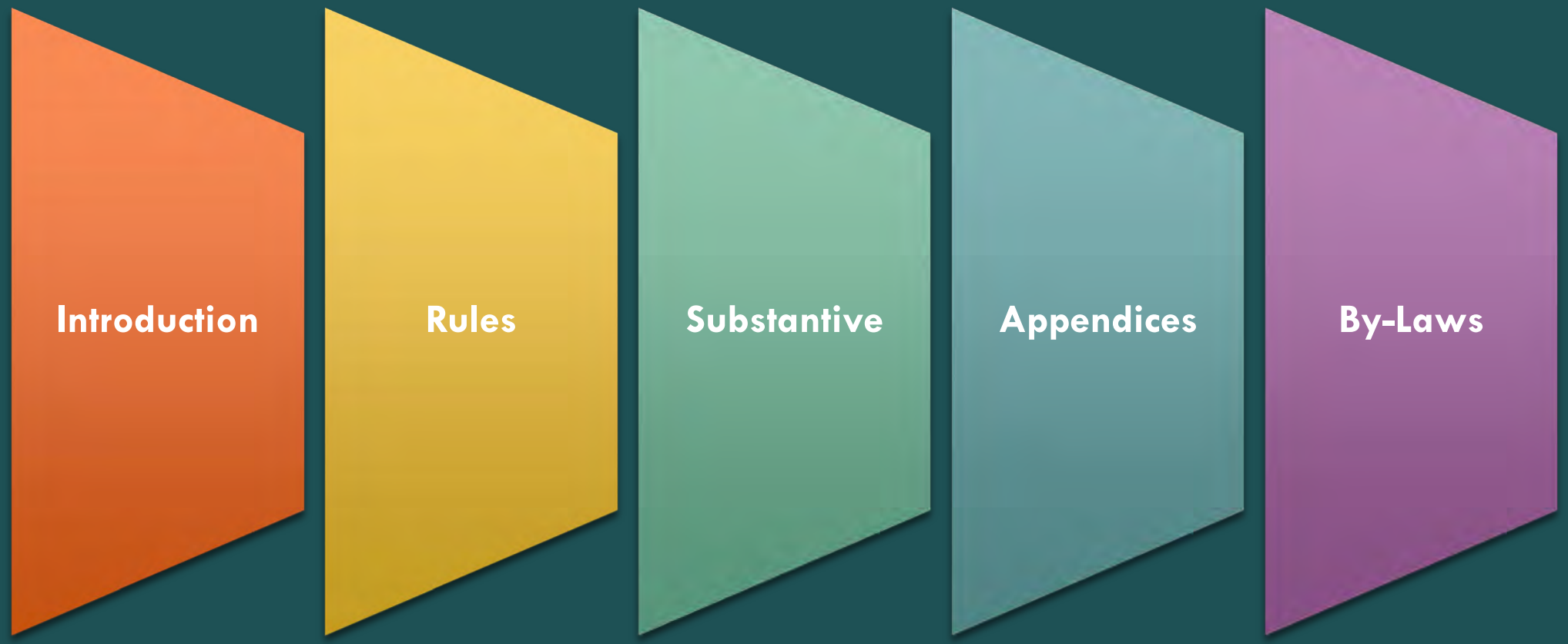
Good to Go…

- ✓ Update processes
- ✓ Implement new procedures
- ✓ Secure documentation
- ✓ Revised Materials



Standards of Accreditation

BLUEPRINTS FOR SUCCESS


Introduction
Rules
Substantive
Appendices
By-Laws

Standards of Accreditation

The Commission has the authority and responsibility to establish and promulgate criteria for the evaluation and accreditation of private career schools and colleges.

These criteria take the form of the *Standards of Accreditation* which are under continuing review.

Revisions to the Standards of Accreditation are made by the Commission as appropriate and required.

Call for Comment

Interested parties are advised of proposed standards

→

A minimum of 30 days to file written comments

Accreditation Alert!

Provides guidance to accredited schools regarding the adoption of additions and revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* and reflects the Commission's final adoption of additions and revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation.*

Fundamentals

The Commission's deliberations and decisions are made on the basis of the **written record** of an accreditation review.

A school must supply the Commission with complete **documentation of the school's compliance** with all accrediting standards if it is to be granted and maintain accreditation.

Fundamentals

The burden **rests with the school** to establish it is meeting the standards.

A **high level of reliance** is placed upon information, data, and statements provided by the school.

The **integrity and honesty** of a school are fundamental and critical to the process.

Fundamentals

In cases where accrediting standards and federal or state government requirements differ, the **more stringent will apply**

Adequate

- As much as is good or necessary for some requirement or purpose

Sufficient

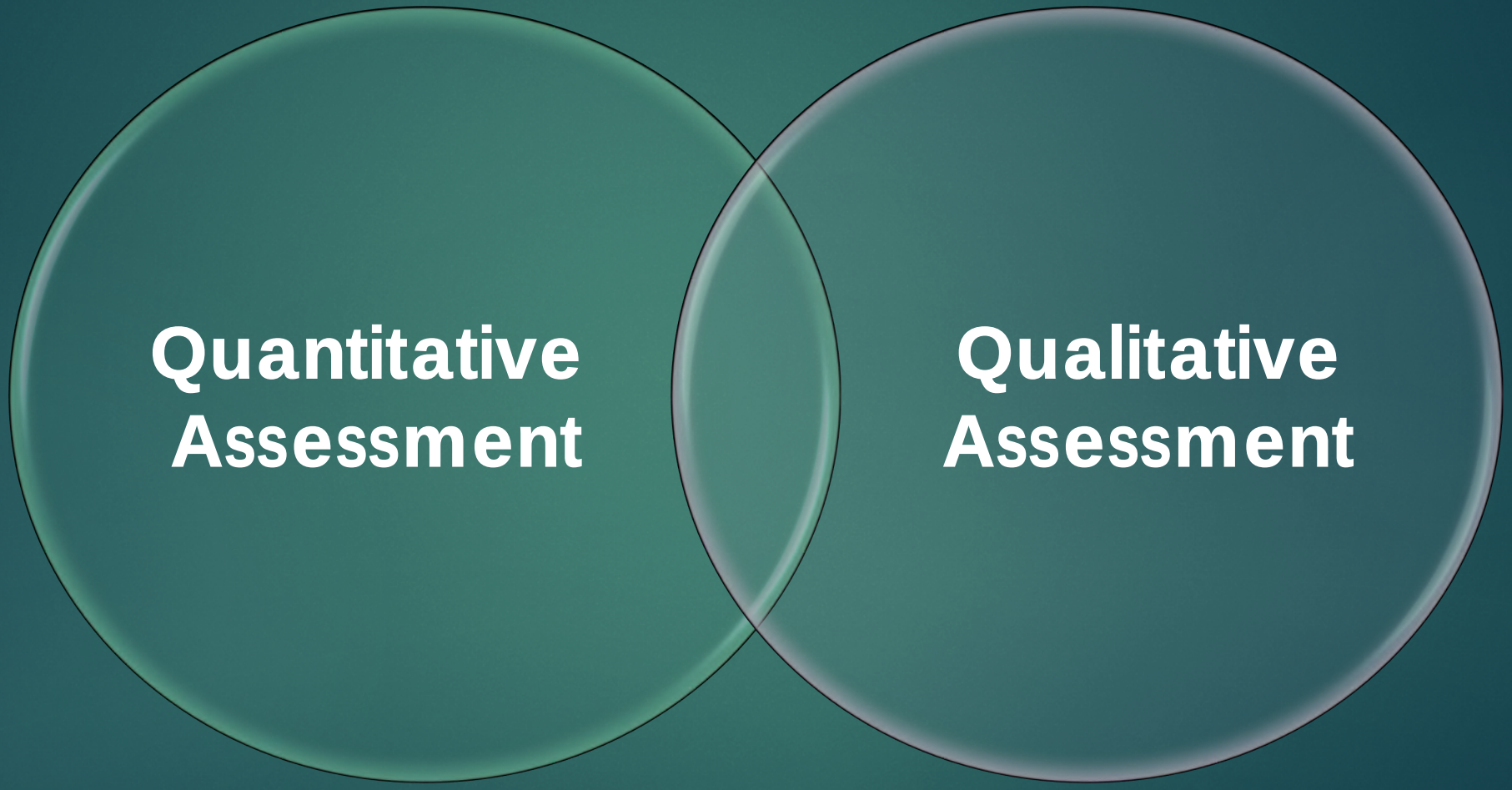
- Adequate for the purpose; enough

Appropriate

- Suitable or fitting for a particular purpose

Reasonable

- Agreeable to reason or sound judgment; logical


Quantitative Assessment
Qualitative Assessment

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION I - MANAGEMENT

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the fundamentals of leadership, management, and administrative elements essential to an institution dedicated to student success.

Statement of Purpose

These fundamentals provide assurance that the school will be focused on providing quality education to students, engage in ethical, fair, and honest practices, and comply with accrediting standards.

Section I (A)

OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

What is adequate management?

Full-time on-site supervision by an individual or team with the appropriate combination of education, experience, and

Demonstrated ability to lead and manage a post-secondary educational institution in compliance with accrediting standards

Qualified for their particular roles and who possess the appropriate education, training, and experience commensurate with the level of their responsibilities

Sufficient number necessary to support the school's operations, student services, and educational programs

Appropriate administrative and operational **policies and procedures** to which the school adheres and reviews and updates

Past Records of Owners/ Managers/ Administrative Employees Show Commitment to:

- Providing quality education to students;
- Ethical, fair, and honest practice; and
- Compliance with accrediting standards and applicable federal, state, and local requirements

Considerations

Affiliation with a school that has lost or been denied accreditation, entered into bankruptcy, or closed;

Involvement in criminal proceedings and any pending or past action in a judicial, law enforcement, or administrative body

Any other information related to the performance of or commitment to providing quality education to students; ethical, fair and honest practice; and compliance with accrediting standards and applicable federal, state, and local requirements

Management Matters

- Ongoing development and training activities
- Continuity of Management through Reasonable retention

Section I (B)

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Key Concepts

- Significant
- Ongoing
- Appropriate to the size and scale of the school operations

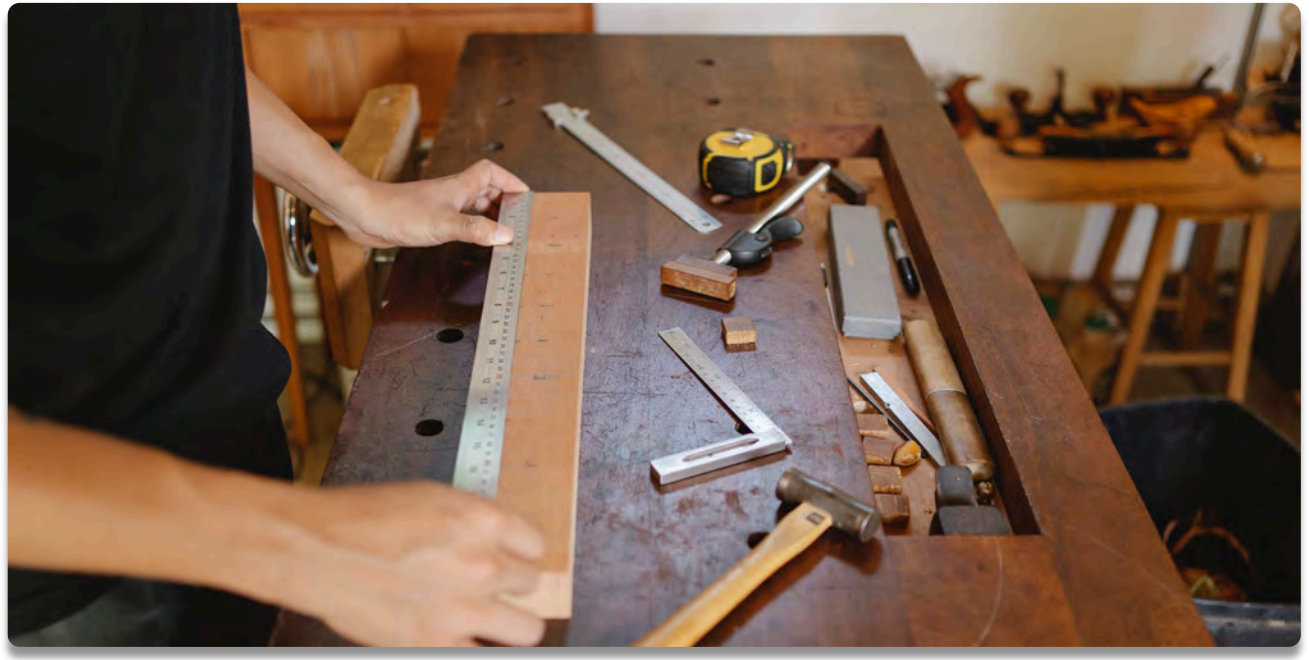
Assessment

Analyze the Effectiveness and Compliance of Each Area of School Operation

Document your process and findings

Act (ivities)

With the understanding that results from a thorough assessment, the school can then move forward with improvement activities



Best Practices Footnote

OBTAIN INFORMATION INTERNALLY (e.g., staff and faculty development and planning, and student input and feedback)

OBTAIN INFORMATION EXTERNALLY (e.g., Program Advisory Committees, employers, community involvement, school graduates, etc.)

ASSESSMENT validates the school's educational and administrative practices and documents/improves student learning and achievement.

PLANNING that includes goal setting, establishing timelines, and benchmarking is a useful practice in institutional assessment and improvement activities and is encouraged

By examining its annual report outcomes data, the school finds that its graduation rates for this year are lower than last year. The school then engages in assessment and improvement activities designed to improve retention rates.

- **Assessment**: The school conducts a study of the reasons for student withdrawals and finds that most students drop due to academic reasons

- **Action**: The school decides to implement more rigorous admissions criteria in order to identify applicants that are more academically capable of being successful

Measuring Effectiveness

- ✓ Compare the academic progress of students who were admitted under the old and new criteria.
- ✓ Over time, the school can also use retention data to determine the effectiveness of the new admissions criteria.

Documenting the Process

Helps the school make the necessary adjustments to ensure that its resources are expended on the most effective strategies.

Creates a historic record that provides valuable insight for future managers

Demonstrates compliance with ACCSC standards

Documenting the Example

- Graduation data showing the lower rate
- A copy of the “reason for withdrawal” study
- Minutes of the meetings in which the new admissions policy was proposed, discussed, and developed
- A copy of the new policy in the school’s policies and procedures manual
- Admissions documentation in each new student’s file
- Comparison of academic success between previous admissions criteria and new admissions criteria
- Retention data for students admitted under the new criteria

What are the Required Areas of Assessment?

- Management
- Fiscal condition and budget
- Administrative policies and practices
- Emergency preparedness
- Student support services
- Faculty and staff development
- Educational program curricula
- Learning resource system, equipment, and supporting materials
- Facilities
- Student achievement outcomes

Section I (C)

FINANCIAL STABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Key Requirements

- The financial structure of the school is sound, with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the school and the discharge of obligations to its students
- Financial statements prepared in accordance with ACCSC's instructions

Key Requirements

- $ Financial budget for each fiscal year AND monitors budgetary projections in relation to actual income and expenses
- $ Insurance that provides adequate protection to the school, students and employees

Section I (D)

TUITION CANCELLATION REFUND PAYMENT

Tuition Policies

- All charges must be as published in the catalog, enrollment agreement, and accompanying addendum(a)
- All costs must be fully, clearly, and accurate described
- All costs must be fairly applied
- Tuition changes in programs are bona fide and effective on specific dates.
- Tuition for students currently in school is changed only if authorized in the enrollment agreement and only if reasonable advance notice is provided

Discounts and Scholarships

TUITION DISCOUNT

Must be a bona fide reduction in the tuition that would otherwise be charged.

GRANT OR SCHOLARSHIP

- Funds are applied toward a qualified student's costs
- Be issued for recognized and acceptable purposes
- Include specified criteria that a student must meet in order to be eligible for and receive the grant or scholarship

Cancellation Policies – Before Class Start

If applicant has not visited the school prior to enrollment, **within three days** following a tour of facilities and inspection of equipment = return all monies paid

Within three days of signing the enrollment agreement = return all monies paid

More than three days after signing the enrollment agreement and **before school starts** = return all monies paid minus a registration fee of 15% of the contract price of the program, but in no event may the school retain more than $150

REFUND POLICY

Determines how much tuition to charge when a student ceases enrollment before completing a program or payment period

The school may be required to follow a policy that complies with state or third-party requirements.

In the absence of such requirements, the school must follow a policy that aligns with generally accepted practices.

REFUND POLICY ELEMENTS

- How refunds are calculated (e.g., pro rata);
- The date from which refunds will be calculated; and
- The time frame within which refunds will be made

Refund Policies

- Written notification of withdrawal from the student shall not be required for refund payment.
- A school may not make required refunds in excess of 90 days from the student's withdrawal or termination date.
- In instances where state or third-party requirements and accrediting requirements conflict, the more stringent requirement shall apply.
- The refund policy must be disclosed consistently in the catalog and enrollment agreement

Payment Policies

Requirements for student tuition and fee payments must be as described;

If promissory notes or contracts for tuition are sold or discounted to third parties, either the student signing such note, or the financial sponsor who signed the note, must sign a statement authorizing such sales; and

Methods used by a school in requesting or demanding payment are in good taste and follow sound and ethical business practices.

Section I (E)

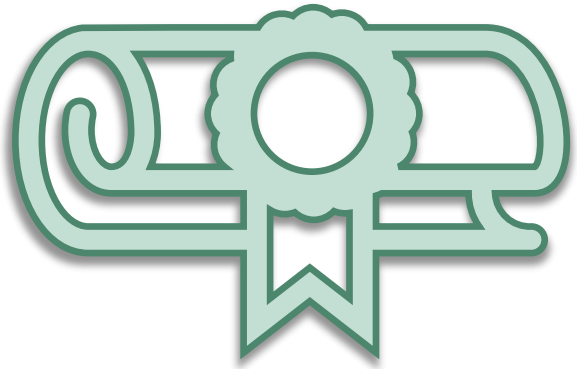
STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT

What's the Why?

Accredited schools have an obligation to encourage and facilitate repayment of financial obligations, including guaranteed loans, used to finance students' education and training.

Factors Schools CAN address

- Willingness to pay - provide information and advice
- Ability to pay - provide training and skills that enhance the value of their graduates to employers.



Written Comprehensive Program

The program must address areas such as student loan information, advising and monitoring, cooperation with lenders, and collection of information to facilitate location of borrowers

The school must document implementation of the program and conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's efforts.

The Commission's Role

Review the annual cohort student loan default rates of its accredited institutions to determine if those rates are at a high level or have increased significantly in relation to standards established by law or regulation.

If this is the case, the Commission will review available information to determine whether the school is in compliance with accrediting standards.

Section I (F)

INSTITUTIONAL NAME

Use of “University” in the School Name

- At least one graduate-level degree program
- Can show successful student achievement in graduate level programs
- Diverse programs of study with a comprehensive learning resource system
- Comparable to other schools with University status
- An established professoriate with a commitment to scholarship

Section I (G)

PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Physical Facilities

- All facilities owned or controlled for administrative, instructional, and housing purposes must meet fire, safety, and sanitation standards required by appropriate regulatory authorities.
- The school's physical facilities must be sufficient in size to create an effective and suitable learning environment.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

- Emergency scenario identification and concordant action plans;
- Evacuation and lockdown procedures;
- Communication protocols for sharing information with appropriate parties during and following an incident;
- Orientation for students; and
- Regular training for staff and faculty.

Section II - Programs

Statement of Purpose

To establish the fundamental requirements for the development and delivery of viable, quality programs that lead to students' successful attainment of knowledge, skills, and vocational objectives.

Programs v. Courses

Fundamentals

- Careful Design
- Clear learning objectives
- Appropriate program length
- Detailed and organized course outlines and syllabi
- Adequate instructional materials, equipment, and learning resources materials
- Rigorous ongoing assessment of programs

General Program Requirements

SECTION II (A)

Program Design and Development

- Supports articulation opportunities with other schools
- Address instructional and teaching methods
- Involve administrative and instructional staff, students, and graduates

The school has an established process:

To **design** and **develop** courses, course learning materials and resources, curricula, student learning outcomes and competencies, and student assessment

To determine the **need** and **viability** of the program based on input from appropriate internal and external resources

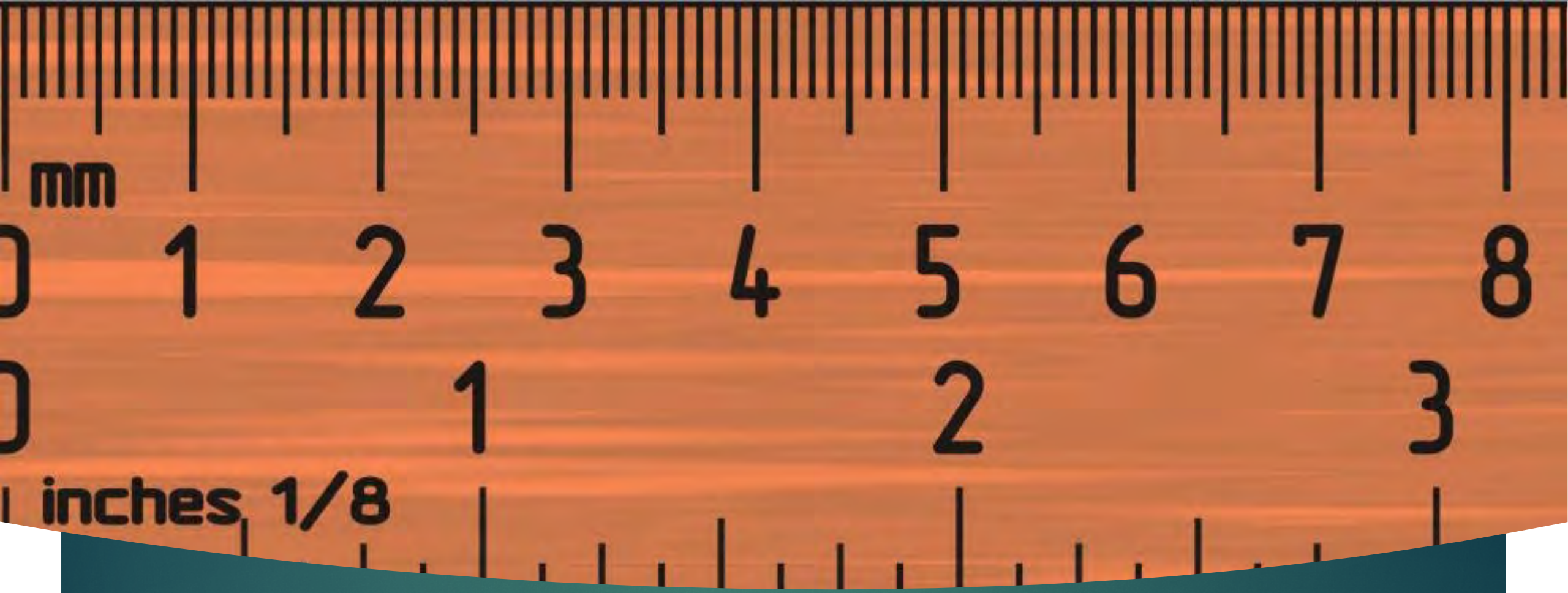
Program Organization & Length

- Detailed and organized instructional outlines and course syllabi showing a scope and sequence of subject matter
- Subject matter must be sufficient to achieve the program objectives
- The name accurately aligns with stated objectives
- Program length conforms to regulatory requirements or state, federal, or national standards
- The program length is aligned with the program objectives and neither too short nor too long in relation to those objectives

Not Too Short, Not Too Long

The estimated number of hours (clock or credit) awarded per course must conform to generally accepted practice in higher education.

Schools that have or apply for programs that appear to be significantly shorter or longer in clock or credit hours than comparable programs (i.e., within the same field of study) will be required to justify the appropriateness of the program length.



Program Length is Generally Measured in Clock and/or Credit Hours

Clock Hours

A CLOCK HOUR IS DEFINED AS 50 MINUTES OF INSTRUCTION IN A 60-MINUTE PERIOD OF TIME.

Credit Hours

A credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes comprised of the following units:			
Didactic learning environment	Supervised laboratory setting of instruction	Externship	Out-of-class work/preparation

Program Composition

- Technical and Occupationally Related Courses
- Applied General Education Courses
- Academic General Education Courses
- Other types of courses that support a student's educational experience such as orientation, career services, health and wellness, and life skills

Program Evaluation

- Evaluate curriculum and course content
- Assess the adequacy of program equipment and supporting resource materials
- Assess student achievement outcomes and program viability
- Make revisions to the curriculum as deemed necessary

Program Evaluation

Comprehensive & Regular

Conducted by faculty and educational administrators

Uses input from internal and external sources

Sources of Input

- Program Advisory Committee
- Student and alumni input
- Other external sources

Program Advisory Committee

An independent and diverse Program Advisory Committee for each program area

Review the established curricula of the program/program area, instructional-related program materials, equipment and facilities, and student achievement outcomes

Comprised of appropriately qualified representatives **external** to the institution (i.e., non-school employees) who can provide a meaningful review of the school's programs and supporting resources and materials

Appendix III - PAC Meetings

- School must conduct at least one meeting of each PAC annually
- At least three members must be in attendance
- Written and detailed minutes must be maintained
  - ✓ Description of all members in attendance
  - ✓ Date, time, and location of the meeting
  - ✓ Comprehensive and clear description of the review of and commentary

Other PAC Requirements

- PAC review and comment on new programs
- Provide a detailed description and virtual tour of the equipment and facilities for meetings that are not at the physical facility
- The school must provide evidence that it gives consideration to Program Advisory Committee input

Instructional Materials and Equipment

Sufficiently comprehensive and reflect current occupational knowledge and practice

Similar to what is found in common occupational practice

Sufficient equipment and learning stations are provided to allow each student adequate scheduled time for practice

All machinery and equipment is properly maintained and provided with proper safety devices, which are in working order and used whenever the machinery and equipment is operated

Learning Resource System (Library)

Materials that Support Education

- Texts
- Electronic resources
- Learning resource laboratories and centers
- Library consortia and interlibrary loan agreements
- Computers
- Internet access
- Research databases

LRS Elements

Materials commensurate with the level of education provided and appropriate to the courses of study

Sufficient quantity and scope

Easily and readily accessible to students and faculty during and beyond classroom hours

Integrated into a school's curriculum

LRS Elements

- Managed by qualified personnel
- Orient, train, and assist students and faculty
- Ongoing development
- Sufficient allocations and budgetary support

Externships

- Component of a program offered in an occupational setting
- Written training plan
- Supervised by a designated school employee
- An on-site supervisor from the occupational setting
- Appropriate balance among didactic, supervised laboratory, outside work/preparation, and externship activities

Consortium/Partnership Agreements

The school retains responsibility for the quality of education

A school may not award more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours required in a program via a consortium, partnership, or contractual agreement

Independent Study

- Self-directed learning
- Credit hour programs only
- Limited to 10% of the program
- May not be offered to students transferring in 75% of the program

Transfer of Credit

Comparable in scope and content to the school's own coursework

Appropriate criteria (e.g., comparability, applicability, source, and age of the previously earned credit; and others)

Process for determining whether to accept credit earned

Document in the student record from what school and on what basis transfer credit was accepted

Prior Learning Experience

Award credit based on an assessment of experience acquired outside of educational settings

Settings such service in the armed forces, employment and on-the-job training, apprenticeships, or similar

No more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours

Don’t Run Away Just Yet…

Non-Degree Composition

At least 80% technical and occupationally related courses

The remainder may be a combination of applied general education, general education, or other courses

Degree Programs

Measured in semester credit hours or quarter hours

Course numbering system that differentiates between lower-level courses, upper-level courses, and graduate level courses

Associate Degrees

- Minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours
- Two classifications of associate degree programs – occupational and academic

Occupational Associate Degree

- 9 semester credit hours or 13.5 quarter credit hours in academic or applied general education courses
- 45 semester credit hours or 67.5 quarter credit hours in technical and occupationally

Academic Associate Degree

- 15 semester credit hours or 22.5 quarter credit hours in academic general education courses
- 30 semester credit hours or 45 quarter credit hours in the technical field

Baccalaureate Degrees

- 120 semester credit hours or 180 quarter credit hours
- 30 semester credit hours or 45 quarter credit hours in academic general education courses
- 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours that represent courses in the occupational field
- May offer concentrations

Master's Degrees

- Place emphasis on higher-level course work, including research and analytical skills, and independent and critical thinking skills
- 30 semester credit hours or 45 credit quarter hours
- At least 24 semester credit hours or 36 quarter credit hours must be in the technical field
- May offer concentrations

Other Program Types

Avocational

English-as-Second Language

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION III EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the fundamentals with regard to the administration and delivery of education in a manner that maximizes the students' ability to achieve the knowledge, skills, and vocational objectives of the program.

Statement of Purpose

These elements include well-qualified and competent educational administrators and faculty dedicated to student success and engaged in continuous improvement; clearly written and consistently executed educational policies and procedures; and sufficient numbers of educational administrators and faculty to support the student body.

Director of Education

- At least one person on-site at the school
- Manages the school's instructional programs
- Educational administration experience and competence to manage
- Non-degree granting: educational background equal to or exceeding
- Degree-granting: earned degree at least one level higher than the highest credential

Director of Education

- Overall educational experience in such areas as:
- Curriculum development
- Educational effectiveness assessment and improvement
- Faculty development and performance appraisals

Program Head

- For each program or group of related programs
- Manages the occupational elements
- Educational background equal to or exceeding the maximum credential offered in that program area
- Qualifications for technical faculty teaching in a degree program

Graduate Level Education

Supervised and coordinated by an individual with an earned doctorate degree.

Director of graduate level education has the experience and competence to manage the instructional program

Each master's degree program must be appropriately managed by an individual with a minimum of a graduate degree in the same field for which training is provided.

Faculty Assessment and Development Activities

- Teaching skill development
- Instructional methodology development
- Continuing education in the subject area(s) taught
- Membership in trade and professional organizations

Reasonable Retention

The school must ensure the continuity of instruction by the reasonable retention of the educational administrative staff and faculty

Faculty Qualifications

The faculty must be sufficient in number to serve the number of students enrolled

Must maintain a satisfactory working relationship with students.

Faculty members must be certified or licensed where required by law.

Training in Instructional Methods and Teaching Skills

Faculty members must have prior training or receive training before assuming primary instructional responsibilities in any classroom, curriculum, laboratory, or program related training

A school's faculty must engage in ongoing development of teaching skills as part of its plan for faculty improvement

Teacher Training

Formal education

Workshops/seminars presented by an appropriate individual focusing on areas related to instructional methods and teaching skill development

Formal in-house mentoring programs with appropriately qualified and experienced faculty.

Technical and Occupationally Related Courses

Level	Technical/ Occupationally Related Courses
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	Three years practical work experience in a related field
Occupational Associates Degree	
Academic Associates Degree	Four years of practical experience AND a related degree* at the same level
Baccalaureate Degree	

Asterisk: Exceptional Cases

Outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field of study may be substituted for a formal degree.

The faculty member must possess a minimum of eight years of related practical work experience

Justify and document on an individual basis the outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field.

Applied General Education

Level	Type of Course Applied General Education
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	• Three years practical experience OR • College-level coursework* OR • Appropriate mix of experience and coursework
Occupational Associates Degree	• Baccalaureate degree with appropriate coursework* OR • Eight years practical experience and college-level coursework*
Academic Associates Degree	N/A
Baccalaureate Degree	

Asterisk: Definition

"Appropriate coursework and preparation," "college-level coursework," and "appropriate academic coursework and preparation"

A minimum of 15 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) in related subject areas that support the curriculum content.

Master's Degree Programs

At least 50% of graduate level courses taught by faculty with	• A minimum of four years of related practical work experience, and • An earned doctorate degree or other terminal degree in a related field of study
Remaining courses taught by faculty with	• Four years of related practical work experience and a master's degree in a related field of study or • A master's degree in an unrelated with 18 semester credit hours or 27 quarter credit hours of graduate level education in the subject area taught

Academic General Education

Level	Type of Course Academic General Education
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	• For terminal non-degree programs: a baccalaureate degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject(s) taught. • For non-degree programs that articulate into degree programs, see requirements for degree programs below
Occupational Associates Degree	Master's degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject area(s) taught.
Academic Associates Degree	
Baccalaureate Degree	

Exceptional Cases

Outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field of study may be substituted for a formal degree.

The faculty member must possess a minimum of eight years of related practical work experience

Justify and document on an individual basis the outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field.

Other Courses and ESL

Faculty teaching other courses (e.g., electives, orientation, career services, health and wellness, and life skills, etc.) must be appropriately qualified based upon the type of course content offered

Faculty teaching ESL courses must have appropriate experience and educational background including state or equivalent credentials in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Verify Prior Work Experience

The terms “verify prior work experience” and “maintain documentation of academic credentials” mean

- When prior work experience is a qualification, obtain written or verbal verification from previous employers
- When an academic credential is a qualification requirement, obtain academic transcripts

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION III EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the fundamentals with regard to the administration and delivery of education in a manner that maximizes the students' ability to achieve the knowledge, skills, and vocational objectives of the program.

Statement of Purpose

These elements include well-qualified and competent educational administrators and faculty dedicated to student success and engaged in continuous improvement; clearly written and consistently executed educational policies and procedures; and sufficient numbers of educational administrators and faculty to support the student body.

Director of Education

- At least one person on-site at the school
- Manages the school's instructional programs
- Educational administration experience and competence to manage
- Non-degree granting: educational background equal to or exceeding
- Degree-granting: earned degree at least one level higher than the highest credential

Director of Education

- Overall educational experience in such areas as:
- Curriculum development
- Educational effectiveness assessment and improvement
- Faculty development and performance appraisals

Program Head

- For each program or group of related programs
- Manages the occupational elements
- Educational background equal to or exceeding the maximum credential offered in that program area
- Qualifications for technical faculty teaching in a degree program

Graduate Level Education

Supervised and coordinated by an individual with an earned doctorate degree.

Director of graduate level education has the experience and competence to manage the instructional program

Each master's degree program must be appropriately managed by an individual with a minimum of a graduate degree in the same field for which training is provided.

Faculty Assessment and Development Activities

- Teaching skill development
- Instructional methodology development
- Continuing education in the subject area(s) taught
- Membership in trade and professional organizations

Reasonable Retention

The school must ensure the continuity of instruction by the reasonable retention of the educational administrative staff and faculty

Faculty Qualifications

The faculty must be sufficient in number to serve the number of students enrolled

Must maintain a satisfactory working relationship with students.

Faculty members must be certified or licensed where required by law.

Training in Instructional Methods and Teaching Skills

Faculty members must have prior training or receive training before assuming primary instructional responsibilities in any classroom, curriculum, laboratory, or program related training

A school's faculty must engage in ongoing development of teaching skills as part of its plan for faculty improvement

Teacher Training

Formal education

Workshops/seminars presented by an appropriate individual focusing on areas related to instructional methods and teaching skill development

Formal in-house mentoring programs with appropriately qualified and experienced faculty.

Technical and Occupationally Related Courses

Level	Technical/ Occupationally Related Courses
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	Three years practical work experience in a related field
Occupational Associates Degree	
Academic Associates Degree	Four years of practical experience AND a related degree* at the same level
Baccalaureate Degree	

Asterisk: Exceptional Cases

Outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field of study may be substituted for a formal degree.

The faculty member must possess a minimum of eight years of related practical work experience

Justify and document on an individual basis the outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field.

Applied General Education

Level	Type of Course Applied General Education
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	• Three years practical experience OR • College-level coursework* OR • Appropriate mix of experience and coursework
Occupational Associates Degree	• Baccalaureate degree with appropriate coursework* OR • Eight years practical experience and college-level coursework*
Academic Associates Degree	N/A
Baccalaureate Degree	

Asterisk: Definition

"Appropriate coursework and preparation," "college-level coursework," and "appropriate academic coursework and preparation"

A minimum of 15 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) in related subject areas that support the curriculum content.

Master's Degree Programs

At least 50% of graduate level courses taught by faculty with	• A minimum of four years of related practical work experience, and • An earned doctorate degree or other terminal degree in a related field of study
Remaining courses taught by faculty with	• Four years of related practical work experience and a master's degree in a related field of study or • A master's degree in an unrelated with 18 semester credit hours or 27 quarter credit hours of graduate level education in the subject area taught

Academic General Education

Level	Type of Course Academic General Education
Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)	• For terminal non-degree programs: a baccalaureate degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject(s) taught. • For non-degree programs that articulate into degree programs, see requirements for degree programs below
Occupational Associates Degree	Master's degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject area(s) taught.
Academic Associates Degree	
Baccalaureate Degree	

Exceptional Cases

Outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field of study may be substituted for a formal degree.

The faculty member must possess a minimum of eight years of related practical work experience

Justify and document on an individual basis the outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field.

Other Courses and ESL

Faculty teaching other courses (e.g., electives, orientation, career services, health and wellness, and life skills, etc.) must be appropriately qualified based upon the type of course content offered

Faculty teaching ESL courses must have appropriate experience and educational background including state or equivalent credentials in Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Verify Prior Work Experience

The terms “verify prior work experience” and “maintain documentation of academic credentials” mean

- When prior work experience is a qualification, obtain written or verbal verification from previous employers
- When an academic credential is a qualification requirement, obtain academic transcripts

Standards of Accreditation

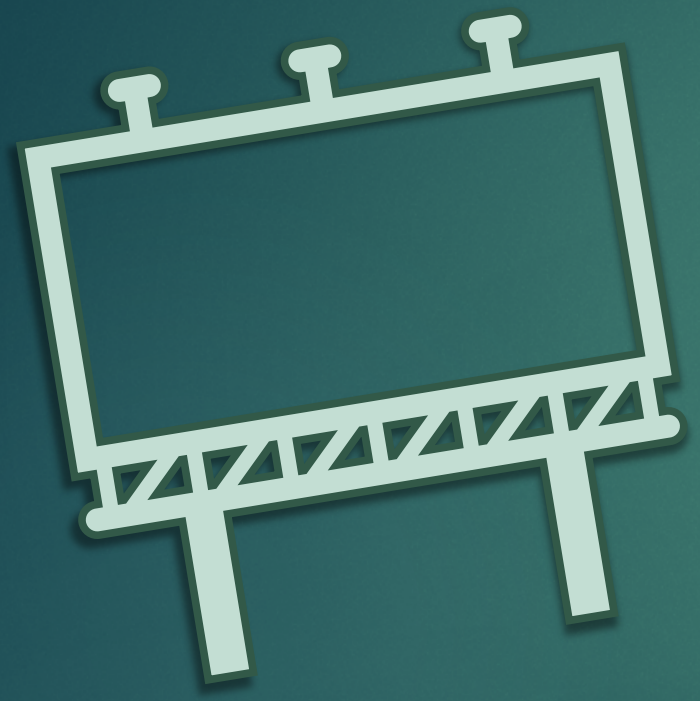
SECTION IV RECRUITMENT

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the fundamental elements of fair recruitment practices that ensure schools describe themselves fully and accurately to prospective students and permit prospective students to make **well-informed and considered enrollment decisions without undue pressure**.

Statement of Purpose

The recruitment practices of accredited schools should focus not on simply obtaining student enrollment numbers, but on creating a student body of individuals who are qualified and likely to benefit from the education and training objectives and to achieve success.



WHAT DOES RECRUITMENT MEAN?

ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES OR USING PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS OR PRESENTATIONS TO ATTRACT AND ENROLL STUDENTS.

the NICE LIST

- Focus on attracting students who are qualified and likely to complete and benefit from the training provided by the school
- Permit prospective students to make informed and considered enrollment decisions without undue pressure
- Use the school's employees to conduct student recruiting activities

Select	• Select recruiters and representatives with the utmost care
Provide	• Provide adequate training
Maintain	• Maintain proper supervision

Code of Conduct

- In writing
- Includes all elements in Appendix IV
- Signed and dated by the employee
- Maintained in the individual's personnel file

May only use a title that accurately represents the individual's primary duties.

Comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations

School is responsible for actions of and materials used by recruiters

Clearly identified in all advertising, promotional materials, and contacts made with prospective students

Provide the applicant with a receipt for any money collected

on the
naughty
list

DO NOT

- Use employment agencies to recruit prospective students
- Create undue pressure
- Focus on simply obtaining enrollments
- Make false, exaggerated, or misleading statements

DO NOT CONTINUED

- Make explicit or implicit promises of employment or salary prospects
- Discredit other schools or influence any student to leave another school
- permit the payment of cash or other similar consideration to any prospective student as an inducement to enroll

DO NOT CONTINUED

- Permit its personnel to engage in recruiting activities in settings where prospective students cannot reasonably be expected to make informed and considered enrollment decisions
- Except employment opportunity centers operated under government auspices

RECRUITERS CANNOT

Assist prospective students in completing application forms for financial aid.

→

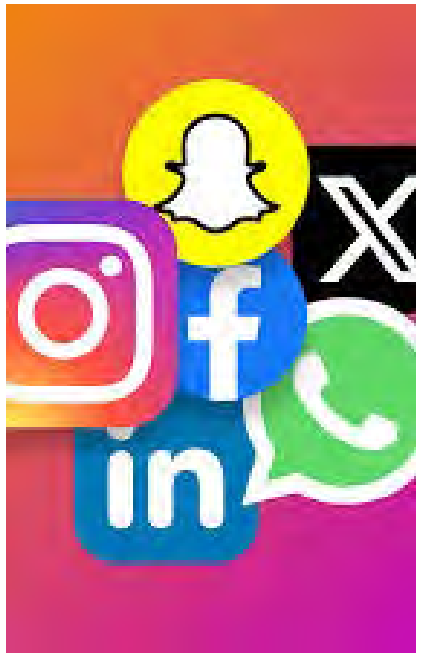
Become involved in admission testing or admission decisions, including signing and accepting the enrollment agreement

Annual Review

Evaluate recruiting policies and procedures and the performance of personnel involved in recruiting activities

Compliance Monitoring

The Commission may require a school to audit its recruiting activities for compliance with accreditation standards or applicable law and regulation using a qualified independent third-party approved by the Commission



Advertising

Truthful and Accurate

A school's advertising and promotional materials are truthful and accurate and avoid leaving any false, misleading, or exaggerated impressions with respect to the school, its location, its name, its personnel, its training, its services, and its accredited status.

Education – NOT Employment

A school's advertising and promotional materials clearly indicate that education, and not employment, is being offered.

No overt or implied claim or guarantee of individual employment is made at any time

References to employment or salary prospects must be accurate and sourced

May not use the Employment or Help Wanted classifieds for any form of student recruitment

Salary Information

Information pertaining to potential salary accurately portrays the normal range and starting salaries in the occupation for which training is provided

Salary information must also include the source of the information, which is valid.

Accredited Status

A school may only use the term “accredited” if it indicates by what agency or organization it is accredited. Publication of accreditation must comply with the Advertising of Accredited Status form.

Accreditation/ Approval required for Licensure/ Employment

The school discloses to students whether such accreditation and/or third-party recognition has been achieved and is in good standing

Accreditation and Approvals

A school closes its ACCSC institutional accreditation and the Commission's contact information (i.e., address, phone number, and website address).

Financial Aid Availability

Advertising of financial aid and scholarships includes an eligibility phrase (e.g., financial aid available for those who qualify).

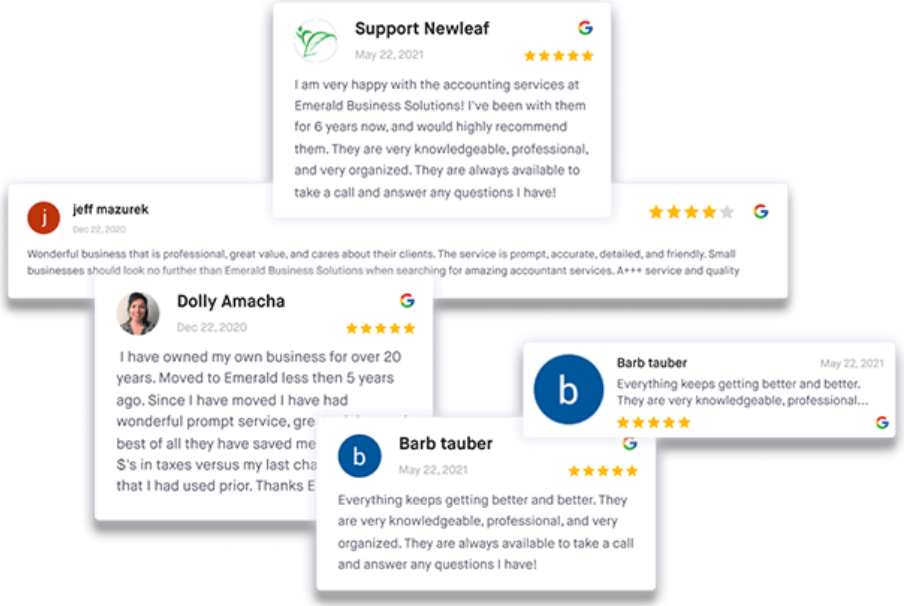
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

APPENDIX IV – Guidelines for Advertising

Item #12

Distinction between "endorsements" and "publicly shared media" is origination

ENDORSEMENT



If a school solicits an endorsement for its advertising and the endorser gives such written or verbal statements

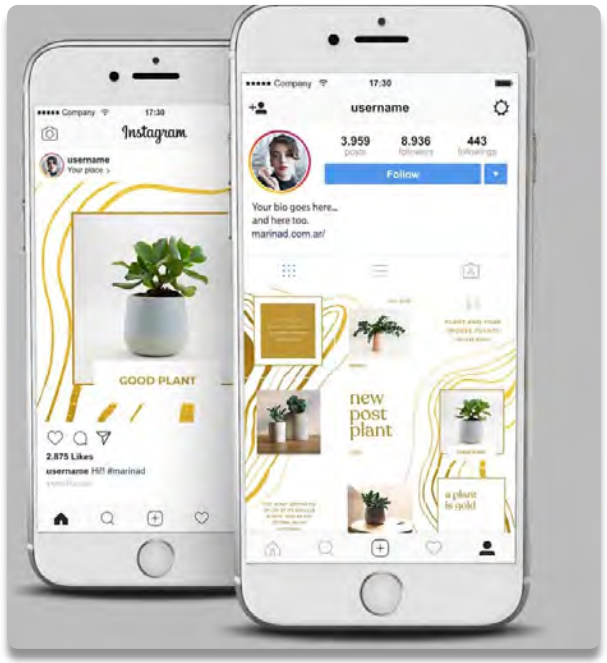
Endorsements

Only use endorsements with the written consent of the authors

Must be a bona fide expression of the author's opinions, strictly factual, and a portrayal of currently correct conditions or facts

May not use endorsements from currently enrolled students

PUBLICLY SHARED MEDIA



If “an individual” – including current students – chooses of their own volition to post a comment using publicly shared media (e.g., a social media site), then the school can use/share that post in its own social media and advertising

Images and Publicly Shared Media

The media must originate with the individual and is bona fide

The media is actually and contextually accurate, and unadulterated

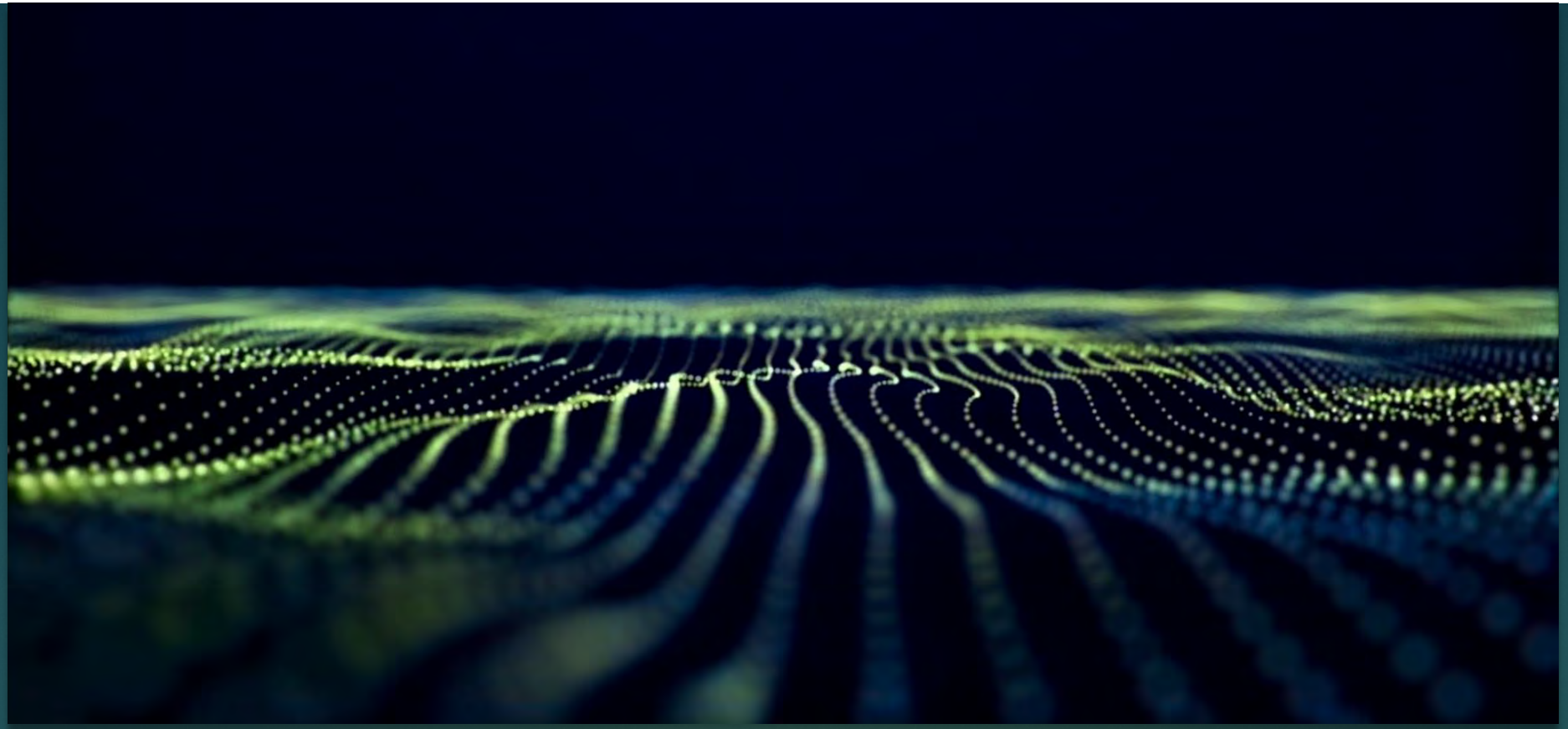
Schools may not compensate or provide any or other consideration for such use

APPENDIX IV – Guidelines for Advertising

Maintain documentation of the content used as a means to demonstrate context and accuracy

Ensure social media posts reflect current conditions at the school

Remove/ discontinue use of the content at the author's request



Scenarios

Scenario: A school wishes to post/use in advertising a video it has created of students in action. No comments from students or graduates are shared, only the narrator describing the school's programs and equipment.

Guidance: Pursuant to *Section IV (B)(4)(b)*, the school would need to obtain written consent from the students allowing the school to share their images.

Scenario: A school wishes to post/use in advertising a video it has created of students in action that includes current and former student/graduates providing statements about their positive experience at the school and after graduation working in their chosen field.

Guidance: Pursuant to Section IV (B)(4)(a-b), the school would need to obtain written consent from the former students/graduates allowing the school to share their endorsements and images. However, the school would be in violation of Section IV (B)(4)(a), if in fact the school uses endorsements from currently enrolled students.

Scenario: A current student posts to a social media account about a Blood Drive hosted by the school and the student's "awesome experience" helping people and practicing new skills. The post thanks the faculty and the school director for "making this happen for our community." The school sees this post and re-posts it to its own social media account with the caption "We are so excited to share our student success stories."

Guidance: Pursuant to Section IV (B)(4)(b), so long as the media originated with the individual (i.e., the current student) and is bona fide, factually and contextually accurate, unadulterated (i.e., not changed), and a faithful representation, then no written consent is required.

Disclosures

- Catalog
- Enrollment Agreement
- Achievement Rates
- Accreditation/Approval

CATALOG CHECKLIST

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

This checklist must be cross-referenced to and accompanied by the school's catalog.

School Name:		School Number:		Date:	
Address:		City:		State:		Zip code:	

The Catalog Checklist provides a list of each item required for inclusion in a school's catalog and serves as a detailed index to aid reviewers in finding each of these requirements. A copy of this Catalog Checklist is to accompany each catalog sent to the Commission. Mark the Catalog Checklist to show page number(s) (or references to specific covers or supplements) where each required item is included. Mark the catalog with the Catalog Checklist item number at the location where the required information appears. The catalog of each ACCSC accredited school must include the following items. If any item is not included, the catalog must refer to the supplement/addendum which contains the item and the supplement/addendum must refer to the catalog. The supplement/addendum must contain the school's name and location and the effective date of the supplement/addendum.

As per *Section IV (C)(1)(b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*, the catalog must be designed, written, printed, and bound to convey an accurate and dignified impression of the school. The catalog's illustrations, photos and narrative must pertain directly to the school and sources of illustrations and photos must be clearly identified.

Item Number	Catalog Checklist Item	Page Number(s)
1.	The title of the publication (i.e., "catalog").	
2.	The name and address of the school.	
3.	The date of publication (month/year).	
4.	The school's mission statement.	
5.	A statement of the school's history.	
6.	A description of the school's general physical facilities and equipment.	
7.	The maximum number of students in typical classroom or laboratory/shop settings of instruction.	
8.	The admission requirements for each program.	
9.	The admission procedures.	
10.	The transfer-of-credit policy to include the criteria and process for evaluating and accepting credit earned at other institutions for transfer, as well as any types of institutions or sources from which the institution will not accept credits.†	
11.	The total number of clock hours or credit hours as applicable for each course and program.	
12.	As applicable, the type of credit hour awarded, semester or quarter.	
13.	The length of time in weeks or months normally required for completion of each program.	
14.	A clear description of each program offered by the school to include: • The program title, • Educational objectives, • Scope and course sequence, • Course descriptions, and • The name, nature and level of occupations (e.g., entry-level) for which training is provided.	
15.	The policy relating to attendance.	

CATALOG CHECKLIST

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

Item Number	Catalog Checklist Item	Page Number(s)
17.	The policy relating to make-up work.	
18.	The policy relating to conduct.	
19.	The policy relating to probation and termination.	
20.	The grading / assessment system(s) used.	
21.	The satisfactory progress policy.	
22.	The required levels of performance for graduation.	
23.	The credential (certificate, diploma, or occupational associates, academic associates, etc.) awarded upon graduation for each program.	
24.	The tuition and other student charges related to the enrollment, such as deposits, fees, books, supplies, tools, equipment, transportation, and any other "extras" e.g., make-up work, special testing, equipment, late charges, or other school services for which a student may be responsible.	
25.	The refund policy and a statement indicating where information regarding any applicable third party funding agency refund or return of funds policies (e.g., Title IV, Veterans Administration, WIA, etc.) may be obtained. (Please note that the refund policy in the school's catalog must be consistently disclosed in the school's enrollment agreement – see *Section I (D)(3) & (6), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).	
26.	A detailed and explicit description of the extent and nature of employment assistance available to students and/or graduates.	
27.	A detailed description of the nature and extent of all available student services and how students go about obtaining such services.	
28.	A calendar for the school year including vacation periods, breaks, holidays, etc.	
29.	A list all separate facilities. If a different catalog is used for a separate facility, it must include the name and location of the main school or branch, and must clearly disclose and define the relationship between a branch campus and its main school or between a satellite location and its branch campus or main school oversight entity.*	
30.	The complaint policy and procedures which includes, at a minimum, all items required in the Student Complaint Procedures of the ACCSC Complaint Review Process Form.**	
31.	If the school offers a course with secondary objectives,*** a designation and disclosure that clearly shows the course(s) are not within the school's scope of accredited programs, except those that fall under item #32 of this checklist.	
32.	If the school offers a course with secondary objectives that have been approved by ACCSC to be included as within the school's scope of institutional accreditation, the school's catalog must include: • A statement making clear the course is not vocational in nature and does not lead to initial employment; • A course description that clearly shows the clock hour length, length in days or weeks, and educational scope of the course; • Whether the course is a prerequisite or provides credit toward any vocational program offered within the school; • The type of completion document provided by the school upon completion; • The refund policy; and • The complaint policy in accordance with #30 of this checklist.	
33.	Items as may be required by any regulatory or governmental bodies (such as state licensing and	

CATALOG CHECKLIST

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

† Item #10 – *Section II (A)(11)(e), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation* indicates that a school may award credit based on an incoming student's prior learning experience, provided that the school has appropriate written criteria used to evaluate equivalency and award credit for only such prior learning experience garnered through education and training in areas such as, service in the armed forces, employment and on-the-job training, apprenticeships, or other demonstrated competency or learning sources. Credits awarded may not exceed 10% of the credits required for the program.

* Item #29 – *Section VIII (D)(3), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation* indicates that a branch may advertise and disclose its relationship to the main school only after the approval of the Application for a Branch – Part I. A satellite location may disclose its recognized status and relationship to the main school only after it has been granted recognition by the Commission. A school submitting a proposed branch catalog should not include the proposed branch's affiliation to the main school until the Commission has approved the Application for a Branch – Part I.

** Item #30 – *Section IV (B)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation* requires that institutions avoid the use of ACCSC accredited status in a false or misleading manner. Therefore, applicant schools and proposed branches should not publish Catalog Checklist Item #30 in the applicant school's catalog or proposed branch's catalog. Rather, applicant schools and proposed branches should submit - with each copy of the school's catalog submitted for Commission review - a draft copy of Checklist Item #30 for inclusion in the school's catalog upon a grant of accreditation.

*** Item #31 – See *Section I (B)(1)(d)(ii) Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation.*

CATALOG CHECKLIST

Representation

Designed and written in such a manner so as to convey an accurate, comprehensive, and dignified impression of the school.

Narrative and any illustrations and photos pertain directly to the school and sources of illustrations and photos are clearly identified.

Basis of an Informed Decision

Provide each applicant with a current and complete catalog and an opportunity to review the catalog **PRIOR TO SIGNING THE ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT** so that each potential student may make an informed decision relative to the school's educational programs, institutional policies, and procedures.

Format

- A printed and bound copy of the catalog
- A read-only format electronic copy that cannot be altered (e.g., portable document format (PDF), etc.)
- All versions of the catalog are identical
- A printed and bound copy of the catalog upon request.

Enrollment Agreement

Clearly states the obligations of both the student and school

Includes, at a minimum, all required items listed on the ACCSC Enrollment Agreement Checklist and

ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT CHECKLIST

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)

This checklist must be cross-referenced to and accompanied by the school's enrollment agreement.

School Name:		School Number:		Date:	
Address:	City:		State:		Zip code:

The Enrollment Agreement Checklist provides a list of each item required for inclusion in a school's enrollment agreement and serves as a detailed index to aid reviewers in finding each of these requirements. A copy of this Enrollment Agreement Checklist is to accompany each enrollment agreement copy sent to the Commission. Mark the Enrollment Agreement Checklist to show the page number(s) where each item is included. Mark the enrollment agreement with the Enrollment Agreement Checklist item number at the location where the required information appears. The enrollment agreement of each ACCSC-accredited school must include all required items (Items 1 through 19). As applicable, the school's enrollment agreement must also include conditional items (Items 20 through 30) which disclose and outline any other conditions, circumstances, or qualifications imposed by the school.

REQUIRED ITEMS:

Item Number	Enrollment Agreement Checklist Item	Page Number(s)
1.	Title of agreement.	
2.	Name and address of school.	
3.	Program title.	
4.	Number of clock hours (or credit units, if applicable), including the number of weeks or months required for graduation.	
5.	Type of document (certificate, diploma, or degree) awarded upon graduation.	
6.	The tuition period which the agreement covers (e.g., quarter, semester, etc.) and the number and length of such periods required for graduation must be clearly disclosed.	
7.	Tuition and other student charges related to the enrollment, such as deposits, fees, books, supplies, tools, equipment, transportation, and any other "extras" e.g., make-up work, special testing, equipment, late charges, or other school services for which a student may be responsible.	
8.	Payment method and terms of payment.	
9.	Starting date of program.	
10.	Specific times of class attendance.	
11.	Grounds for cancellation / termination by the school.	
12.	Procedures for cancellation / termination by the student (see also *Section I (D)(4)(a-b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).	
13.	The school's refund policy as disclosed in the school's catalog[1] (see also *Section I (D)(5) & (6), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).	

ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT CHECKLIST

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)

Item Number	Enrollment Agreement Checklist Item	Page Number(s)
15.	Acknowledgment statement in large and conspicuous print that the student has read and received a copy of the enrollment agreement.	
16	Acknowledgment statement in large and conspicuous print that the student has read and received a copy of the school catalog and understands and agrees to the school's policies published in the catalog.	
17.	Signature of applicant and date signed (parent or other sponsor may sign, as applicable).	
18.	Signature of appropriate accepting school official (excluding those involved in recruiting activities) and the acceptance date, constituting admission into the school.	
19.	Each page must be clearly and conspicuously paginated providing the page number and the total number of pages in the agreement (i.e., Page 1 of 5, Page 2 of 5, etc.).	

CONDITIONAL ITEMS:

20.	Items as may be required by any regulatory or governmental bodies (such as state licensing and approval agencies).	
21.	The name and location of the main school or branch, and a clear disclosure that defines the relationship between a branch campus and its main school or between a satellite location and its branch campus or main school oversight entity, where applicable.*	
22.	Reasons and maximum period for possible delay of scheduled starting date with list of alternatives and effect on the refund policy.	
23.	Nature and extent of possible changes in program content, materials, or schedule and extra expenses to the student.	
24.	Special graduation conditions or requirements must be listed.	
25.	Compliance with appropriate state and local retail installment requirements (e.g., type size, notice to buyer, computation box, etc.), as well as compliance with Federal Truth-In-Lending requirements (Regulation Z) if more than four payments are scheduled (e.g., mention of interest rates) must be outlined. The school's enrollment agreement must contain a statement if there is a separate retail sales contract and, at a minimum, incorporate that document in the enrollment agreement by reference.	
26.	If the school reserves the right to adjust tuition rates before completion of the program, specific points in the program at which tuition changes may occur (school year, quarter, etc.) and the amount of reasonable advance notice to students must be outlined.	
27.	Requirements that student (and financial sponsors, if any) authorize the sale, discount or transfer of agreement or promissory notes and statement that the refund policy continues to apply must be outlined.	
28.	Name of the field representative and compliance with Federal Trade Commission door-to-door sales rule must be disclosed for any contacts made away from the school premises.	
29.	If a parent company, headquarters, or other organization or agency, separate from the school, is involved in the student contact or relations, name and address of the company or agency, nature of the anticipated contact or relations, role of the school in arranging the contact and in settlement of possible disputes must be outlined.	
	If the school offers a course with secondary objectives[2] that have been approved by ACCSC to be	

ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT CHECKLIST

Rights and Responsibilities

A school executes an enrollment agreement for all enrolled students

A school ensures that each applicant has an opportunity to review the enrollment agreement before it is signed

Furnish a copy to the student

At the time the applicant signs

Prior to the student starting class a final copy of the enrollment agreement signed by both parties.

Binding Contract

No enrollment agreement is binding until it has been signed by the student and accepted by the appropriate school official.

Graduation and Employment Rates

- As last reported to the Commission
- Public notice of a graduate employment rate is accurate, not intended to mislead
- Includes the school's graduate population base and time frame upon which the rate is based

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION V ADMISSIONS

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this section is to ensure that ***schools only admit those students who are capable of successfully completing the training*** offered. Admission decisions are based on fair, effective, and consistently applied criteria **that *enable the school to make an informed judgment*** as to an applicant's ability to achieve the program's objectives.

General Requirements

A school develops admissions criteria to admit only those students who are reasonably capable of successfully completing and benefiting from the training offered.

Through the catalog, the school informs students of admissions requirements, process, and procedures

The school consistently and fairly applies the admissions criteria

Prior to Enrollment

- ✓ The school determines the applicants meets the admissions requirements
- ✓ Secures documentation that the applicant meets the admissions requirements
- ✓ Documents that any applicants rejected did NOT meet the admissions requirements.

ADMISSIONS DOCUMENTATION

Appendix V

Admissions Documentation is Key

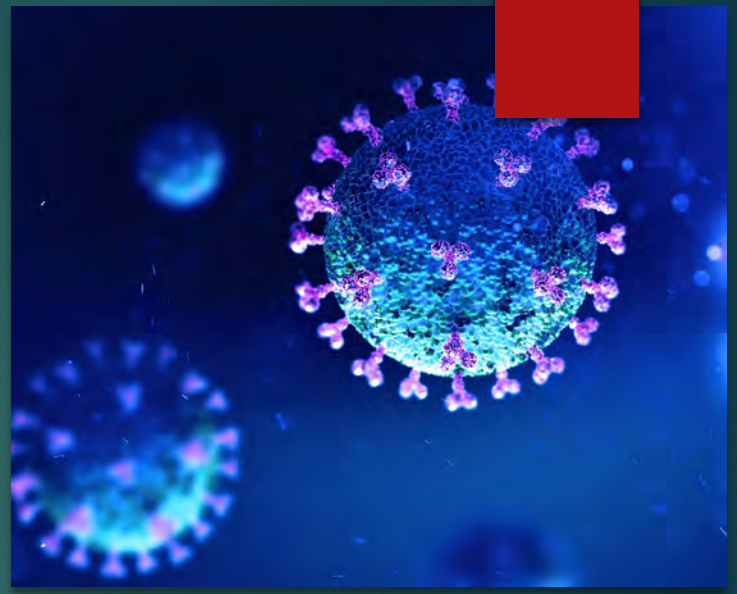
- Diligence in requiring documentation is a key component
- Self-certification by a student that he or she has a high school diploma or the equivalent is NOT considered to be “documentation” that the student has met this admissions requirement.

Documentation from Foreign Countries

- ✓ Translated into English
- ✓ Certified to be at least equivalent to the credential required by the school in its admissions criteria (e.g., a U.S. high school diploma).

Rare Circumstances

- An admissions test may be used in lieu of documentation of high school graduation
- Student must sign a statement attesting to graduation and explaining why the documentation is not available



Five Years

- Maintain documentation that admissions requirements were met
- The reason for denial

- The school does not deny admission or discriminate
- Reasonably accommodate applicants and students with disabilities
- The school does not admit any person of compulsory school age or attending a school at the secondary level if the pursuit of training will be detrimental to the student's regular schoolwork.

Distance Education

An assessment of the student's **technical** skills, competencies, and access to technology necessary to succeed in a distance education environment prior to their enrollment in the program or course of study

The school must utilize an assessment tool (e.g., test, preparation/ orientation course, etc.) to determine if the student's **learning style** is conducive to online learning

Admissions Study

The Commission, at its discretion, may require a school to conduct a study to document the effectiveness of its admission requirements for all students.

Ability-to-Benefit

- Applicant did not graduate from high school
- May only be admitted into non-degree programs
- Ability to benefit must be confirmed by achievement of an approved score on an appropriate test
- Test instrument and score have been reviewed by an independent third party for appropriateness

Associate or Baccalaureate Degree Programs

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION

Graduate Degree Programs

Applicant must possess an earned baccalaureate degree from a recognized higher education institution

Standardized or national examinations may be required (e.g., GRE or GMAT) or

The school may utilize other entrance tests that have been reviewed by a qualified, independent third party for appropriateness of the instrument and specific score levels required for admission.

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION VI STUDENT SERVICES

Statement of Purpose

Support for student's academic and non-academic needs

Employment Assistance

Availability and secure maintenance of records

Student Services Program

The school is attentive to its students' educational and other needs

Adequate services and resources to support students

Student services program takes into account the number of programs, the composition of the student body, and responds to individual student needs.

Coordinated by an individual with appropriate qualifications

Student Services

- ✓ Relevant coping skills (e.g., life, career development, budget, and personal financial planning skills)
- ✓ Academic advising
- ✓ Testing and tutoring services
- ✓ Supervision and monitoring of attendance records and leaves of absence
- ✓ Graduate employment assistance
- ✓ Information concerning housing, transportation, and childcare

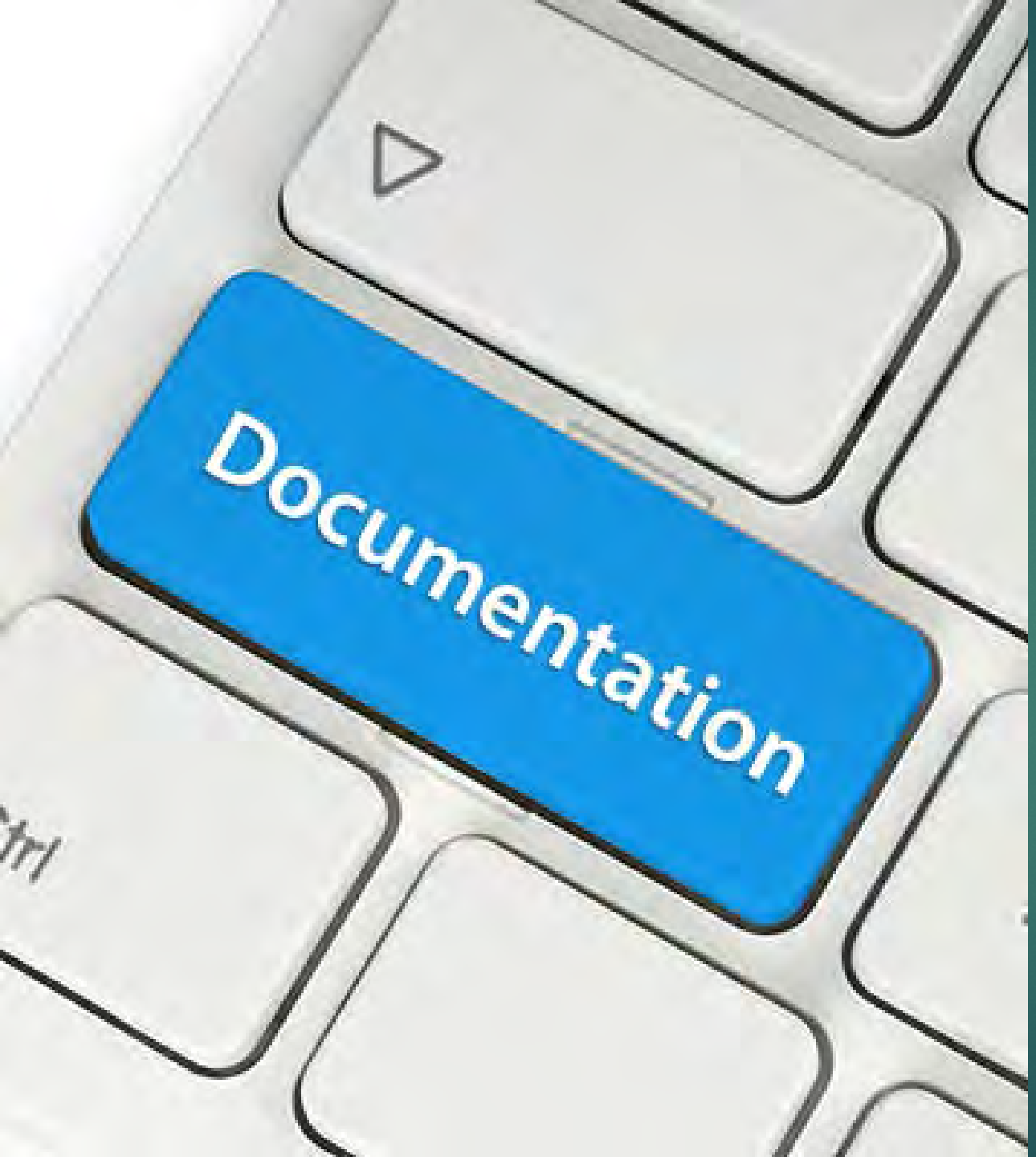
Counseling Services

Available to students when warranted and necessary based on the student population and circumstances

An individual providing counseling services must have an appropriate license, credential, or training and work experience in the area of counseling

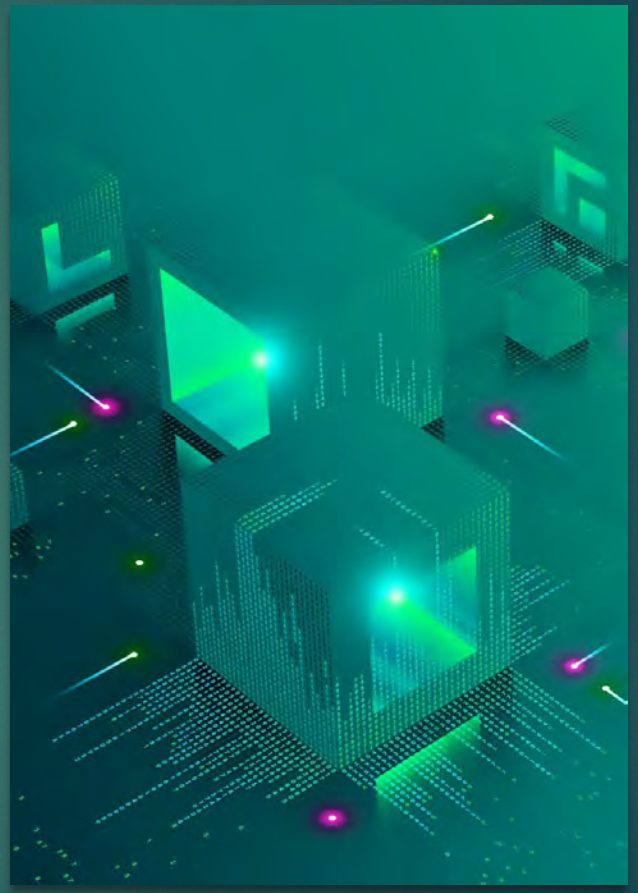
A school may contract with or refer students to an individual or service that is able to provide such counseling services

Unless so qualified, an advisor may not perform the functions of a counselor and may not be referred to as a counselor



Maintain comprehensive documentation of student advising sessions

Student Records



Records for Currently Enrolled Students

- ✓ **Admissions**
- ✓ **Transcript**
- ✓ **Academic Progress**
- ✓ **Tuition and Fee Payments**
- ✓ **Refunds**
- ✓ **Financial Aid**
- ✓ **Information upon which a student's initial and continued enrollment is based**

How long to keep records for **currently enrolled** students?

During the student's enrollment

For five years post the student's, withdrawal, or termination date

Official Transcript
Withdrawn/ Graduated/ Terminated

- Student's name and unique identifier;
- Name and address of the school;
- Program of study;
- Name and date/term of courses taken;
- Clock or credit hours and grades earned for each course;
- Credits accepted for transfer;
- Cumulative grade point average;
- Date of program entry; and
- Date of graduation, termination or withdrawal.

Official Transcripts

- Made available to students upon request and in accordance with the school's policies
- Maintained Indefinitely
- Physical or electronic
- Securely maintained and protected against damage or loss

Maintain student financial records for a minimum of five years

- Financial aid
- Tuition and fee payments
- Tuition refunds

Graduate Employment Assistance

Graduate employment assistance available to students

Extent and nature aligns with claims made by the school

Graduate Employment Records

Verifiable records are maintained for five years

Statements regarding employment rates must be based on these records

Student Complaints – School Policy

- Policy and procedure
- Inform students in writing of the policy and procedure
- Published in the school's catalog and include a reference to the school official(s) responsible for the complaint policy and procedure

Student Complaints – ACCSC Policy

- Publishes the ACCSC Student Complaint/ Grievance Procedure contained in the ACCSC Complaint Review Process Form

- Maintain a complete record of all written student complaints for at least the last five years

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION VII STUDENT LEARNING, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRESS

Student Learning Outcomes

Statements of expectation written in measurable terms that express what a student should be able to do upon completion of a course or program.

Reflect the necessary occupational and academic knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Student Learning

Be sure student learning outcomes for each program are consistent with the program objectives as defined during the institution's program design and development phase

Example:

- What makes a “good” welder?
- What skills must the welder be able to do?
- How will competencies be measured?

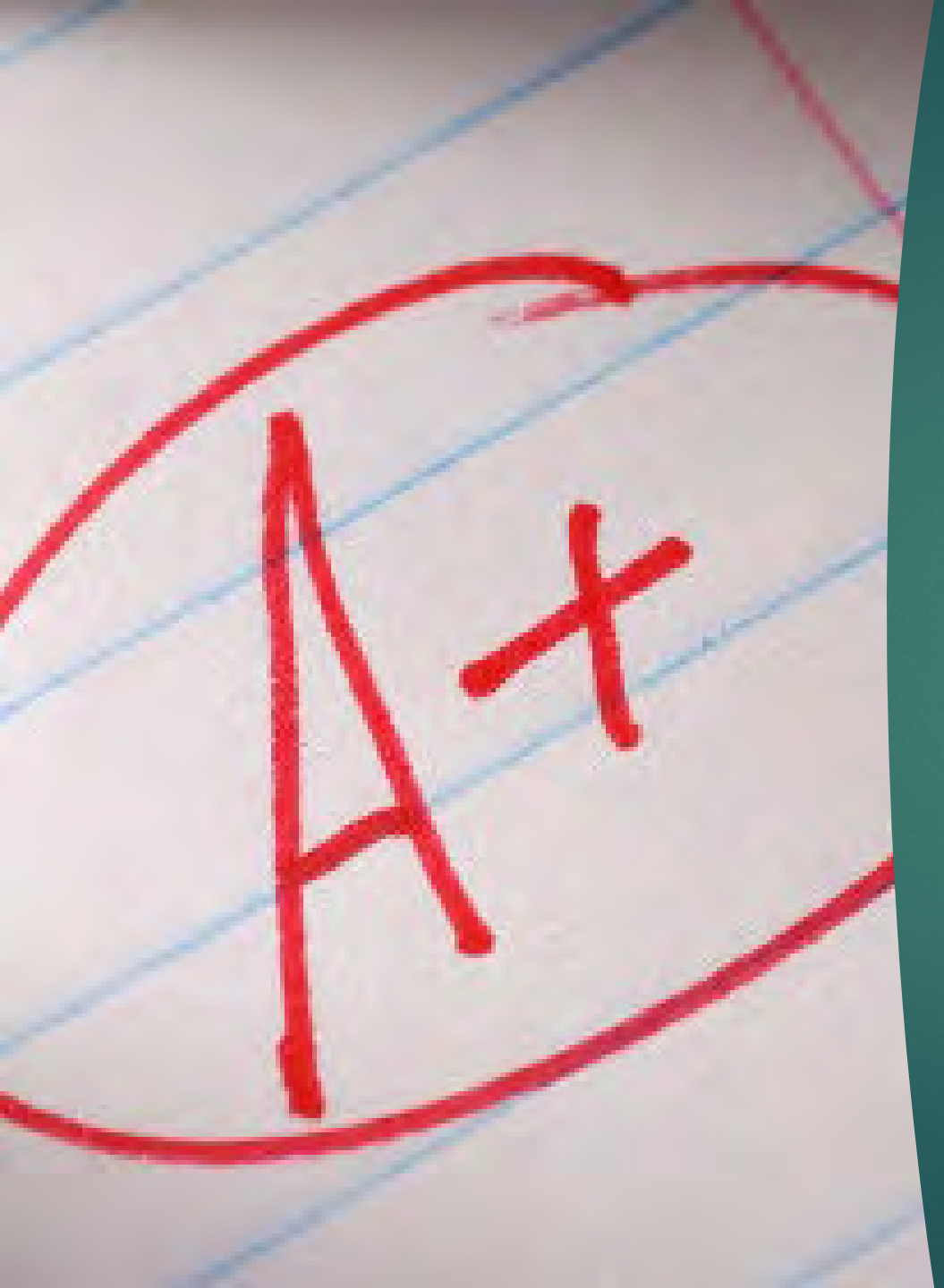
A graduate must successfully complete 10 consecutive welds using the backhand and forehand technique. The welds must meet the minimum standards as defined by American Welding Society

Reminder – share objectives; outcomes; competencies with your students- don't leave them guessing!

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

Student Assessment

- The school has a developed and structured process to assess and evaluate the defined student learning outcomes of the education.
- Tidbit: Use Assessment of Learning Outcomes to Improve Program

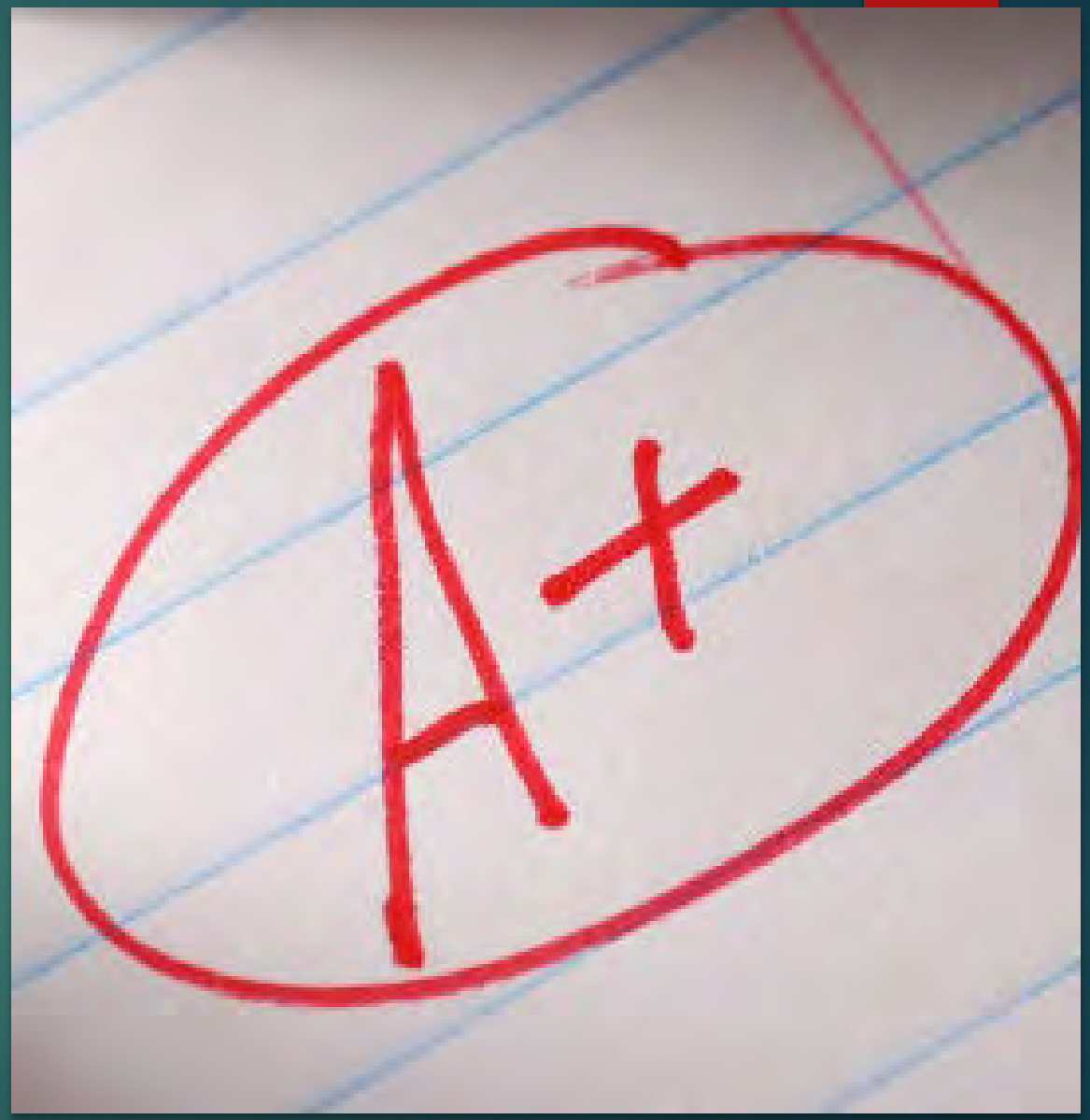


Student Assessment

- Criteria to assess a student's academic progress such as grading, portfolio assessment, rubrics, etc.
- Must be valid, fair, reliable.
- Assess a student's academic progress through the program
- Promotes academic integrity and has policies and controls to discourage academic dishonesty

Student Assessment

- Report academic progress to students at regular intervals.
- Establish minimum grade point averages (or equivalent) for intervals in the program that will help ensure that students will meet requirements for graduation.
- Publish the policy



Satisfactory Academic Progress

- ✓ Define successful progress, including the intervals of evaluation
- ✓ Have processes and procedures for placing students on Probation or Termination if not meeting successful academic progress
- ✓ Include processes and procedures for notifying students of probation
- ✓ Include the school's policies and procedures for how a student can return to normal status or re-enter school if terminated

Not using the 4.0 Scale?

If the school uses a grading scale other than the traditional 4.0 scale (e.g., letter grades, percentages, pass/fail, etc.) the school establishes comparable progress standards and publishes the grade conversion scale in its catalo

Attendance Policy

- The school publishes in its catalog and enforces a policy of acceptable student attendance. The policy must promote sufficient levels of student attendance such that the required knowledge, skills, and competencies can be reasonably achieved.
- If the school terminates a student due to lack of attendance – publish the policy.

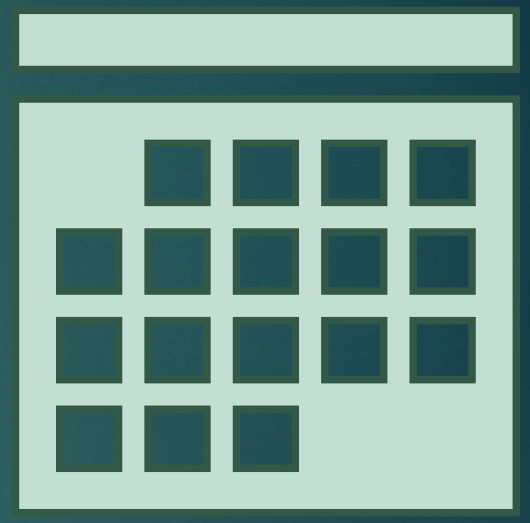
Leaves of Absence…

IF!

- Establish policies and procedures that include
  - ✓ How to get a LOA approved
  - ✓ How long a student may take a LOA
  - ✓ What happens if a student doesn't return – usual practice – terminate student and apply refunds as appropriate
- Starts when LOA approved (in writing)
- May not exceed 180 days in a 12-month period –
  - ✓ May grant more than one leave of absence - but remember that the combined leaves of absence may not exceed 180 days within the 12-month period

Maximum Timeframe

- Publish in the catalog the normal duration of each program based on regular and required course loads and schedules – i.e., 18 months, 2 years, etc.
- Publish the implications if a student does not complete the program within the maximum timeframe (e.g., loss of financial aid eligibility and program enrollment termination)
- Clock hour program - the maximum time frame shall not exceed 1.5 times the normal duration of the program
- Credit hour program - the credit hours attempted cannot exceed 1.5 times the credit hours required to complete the program



Remember!

- The school is not required to terminate the enrollment of a student who is unable to complete the program within the maximum timeframe unless the school has determined that the student has failed to meet school policies that would otherwise warrant termination (e.g., academic progress or attendance policies).

BUT

- For the purposes of reporting student achievement, the school may not classify students who do not complete the program within the maximum timeframe as graduates.

Probation and Termination Policies

- ✓ Publish in the catalog
- ✓ Specific warning procedures to notify the student in writing that continued unsatisfactory academic progress, failure to meet attendance requirements, or failure to adhere to the conduct policy will result in termination.
- ✓ DOCUMENT notification or in the case of absenteeism document that the school made an attempt to notify the student
- ✓ Publish policies and procedures to request reinstatement

What is on the Diploma?

- Graduate's name,
- School's name,
- Location,
- Program of study, and
- Date of graduation

Standards of Accreditation

SECTION VII STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

How Does a School Demonstrate Successful Student Achievement?

ACCEPTABLE RATES OF:

- Student graduation
- Graduate Employment in the Field
- Pass rates on licensure/ certification exams where required to work in the field

And What is Acceptable?

Benchmarks

When graduation, employment and licensure rates meet or exceed the Commission's established benchmarks

The Commission determines the benchmark rates from information collected in Annual Report submissions

The benchmark is defined as not less than one (1) standard deviation below the mean for comparable schools or programs

Appendix VI

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATES

Graduation Rates

Program Length in Months	Average Rates of Graduation	Standard Deviation	Established Benchmark Graduation Rates
1-3	92%	8%	**84%**
4-6	84%	11%	**73%**
7-9	72%	12%	**60%**
10-12	69%	14%	**55%**
13-15	64%	14%	**50%**
16-18	62%	15%	**47%**
19-23	61%	18%	**43%**
24+	53%	13%	**40%**

Employment Rates

Program Length in Months	Average Rates of Employment	Standard Deviation	Established Benchmark Employment Rates
ALL	78%	8%	**70%**

Licensure/ Certification Exam Pass Rates

- For programs where a governmental entity requires the attainment of a passing score on a licensure/certification exam **in order to work**
- The pass rate is acceptable when at least **70%** of the students that take the exam attain a passing score

ACCSC Graduation and Employment Chart

School #: | Name of School: | Report Date:

City: | St: | Zip: | Phone: | Email:

Program Title: | Program Length in Months:

Beginning Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM! | Ending Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM!

Please See the Glossary Tab (below) for a Line-By-Line Reference to All Terms Used in this Chart

1	Class Start Date (month/year)														TOTAL	%	%=
2	Number Started														0	100%	
3	Transfers to Another Program/Cohort														0		3/2
4	Transfers from Another Program/Cohort														0		4/2
5	Total Starts plus/minus Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	100%	
6	Unavailable for Graduation														0		6/5
7	Students Available for Graduation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0		7/5
8	Withdrawn/Terminated Students														0		8/5
9	Graduates within 150% of Program Lengt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0		9/7
10	GRADUATION RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		#####		9/7
11	Graduates - Further Education														0		11/9
12	Graduates - Unavailable for Employment														0		12/9
13	Graduates - Available for Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0		13/9
14	Graduates - Employed in Field														0		14/9
15	EMPLOYMENT RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		#####		14/13
16	Graduates - Unrelated Occupations														0		16/13
17	Graduates - Unemployed														0		17/13
18	Graduates - Unknown														0		18/13

If there is a value other than zero in any of these fields, then there is an error in the data:

Checking Calculation of Graduates	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Checking Calculation of Available for Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Checking Placement Accountability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

19	Non-Graduated Students Who Obtained Training Related Employment														0		19/5
20	Employment Rate with Non-Graduated Students Who Obtained Training Related Employment	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		#####		

G&E Chart | Glossary | Instructions

So how do I calculate these graduation and employment rates?

Instructions for activating the self-calculating beginning and ending dates into the Graduation & Employment ("G&E") Chart:

a. Use the **File** menu **Save As** function to save each chart separately under a different name.

b. Click on the **G&E Chart** tab at the bottom of the screen.

c. Once in the **G&E Chart** tab, calculate the Reporting Period:

- Enter the required **Report Date** as provided or directed by the Commission in the following format: July 2021, then

- Enter the **Program Length in Months** (round up to the nearest whole number). The Beginning and Ending dates of the 12-month Reporting Period will automatically be filled in on the chart.

If the dates do not appear, go to **File**, **Options**, **Add-Ins**. From the Add-Ins available list, select **Analysis ToolPak.** The Analysis ToolPak function is automatically loaded and you are now ready to proceed with completing a chart for each approved program.

Please note when completing the G&E Chart, under "Class Start Date," use the full four digit year (ex. Jul-2019 or 7/2019).

enter student starts within the 12-month reporting period by For any questions or additional information, please contact Sean Forman at **703-247-4505** or **sforman@accsc.org**.

Instructions

GLOSSARY

LINE BY LINE INSTRUCTIONS

Glossary of Terms Used on the ACCSC Graduation and Employment Chart

G&E Chart Line #	All Data Included in the Graduation and Employment Chart Must Be Verifiable Through Appropriate Documentation
1	**Class Start Date:** The month and year each student cohort, or groups of student cohorts, started (a group of student cohorts occurs when there are multiple class starts within a single month).
2	**Number Started:** The number of students who started in the program for each start date in the period, including students entering with advanced placement. **Start:** Students are considered to have been in attendance for reporting purposes (a "start") if, as a result of their attendance, they incur a tuition/fee or other financial obligation as specified by the institution's refund policy. Fees or other obligations (i.e., uniforms, tools, etc.) are only those associated with actual attendance; not those considered part of the application for admission or enrollment process. In any event, any student enrolled 15 days from the scheduled start date of the program must be classified as a "start" for the purpose of reporting students on the Graduation and Employment Chart.
3	**Transfers to Another Program/Cohort:** 1. The total number of students who transferred out of this program and into another ACCSC-approved program at the school; 2. The total number of students for this program who: a. Return from an approved leave of absence; b. Are unable to complete the program within 150% of the normal program length from the original start date due to the leave of absence; and c. Transfer to a later cohort in order to graduate within 150% of the normal program length as adjusted based on the length of the approved leave of absence.
4	**Transfers from Another Program/Cohort:** The total number of students who transferred into this program from another ACCSC-approved program at the school, and whose progress in the program is concurrent with the students in this class start date and the total number of students for this program who return from an approved leave of absence and transfer from an earlier cohort as allowed by the "Transfers to Another Program/Cohort" glossary definition.
5	**Total Starts plus/minus Transfers (Line 5 = 2-3+4):** The total number of students who started, minus those who transferred out, plus those who transferred in. This is the total number of students on which graduation will be based.
6	**Unavailable for Graduation:** This category removes from the graduation rate calculation students who fall into one of the following classifications: death, incarceration, active military service, or the onset of a medical condition that prevents continued enrollment.
7	**Available for Graduation (Line 7=5-6):** The total number of students available for graduation from the program.
8	**Withdrawn / Terminated Students:** The number of students who withdrew or were terminated, within 150% of the program length, from the program. This number does not include the student classified as "Unavailable for Graduation" (Line 6).
9	**Graduates within 150% of Program Length:** The number of students who graduated from the program within 150% of the stated program length.
10	**GRADUATION RATE**: The school's official graduation rate for each cohort and for the program for the reporting period (Line 10 = 9/7).
11	**Graduates - Further Education:** The number of graduates that continue on with education in an accredited postsecondary institution on at least a half-time basis.
12	**Graduates - Unavailable for Employment:** This category removes from the employment rate calculation graduates who fall into one of the following categories: death, incarceration, active military service, the onset of a medical condition that prevents employment, or international students who are enrolled on the basis of a student or work visa and are ineligible for sustainable employment in the United States post graduation. If international students as defined here represent a majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the Total Starts for the program (Line 5), then the school may not use the "international student" exclusion.
13	**Available for Employment (Line 13 = 9-11-12):** The total number of students available for employment.
14	**Graduates - Employed in Field:** The number of graduates employed in jobs for which the program trained them. NOTE: Graduates classified as employed must be supported by documentation showing position obtained, date employed, employer, and employer contact person, address, and phone.
15	**EMPLOYMENT RATE**: The school's official rate of graduate job attainment for each cohort and for the program for the reporting period (Line 15=14/13). The school's official rate of employment is that which is used to determine compliance with accreditation requirements.
16	**Graduates in Unrelated Occupations**: The number of graduates employed in jobs not related to the training obtained from the school's program.

G&E Chart | Glossary | Instructions

ACCSC Graduation and Employment Chart

School #: | Name of School: | Report Date:

City: | St: | Zip: | Phone: | Email:

Program Title: | Program Length in Months:

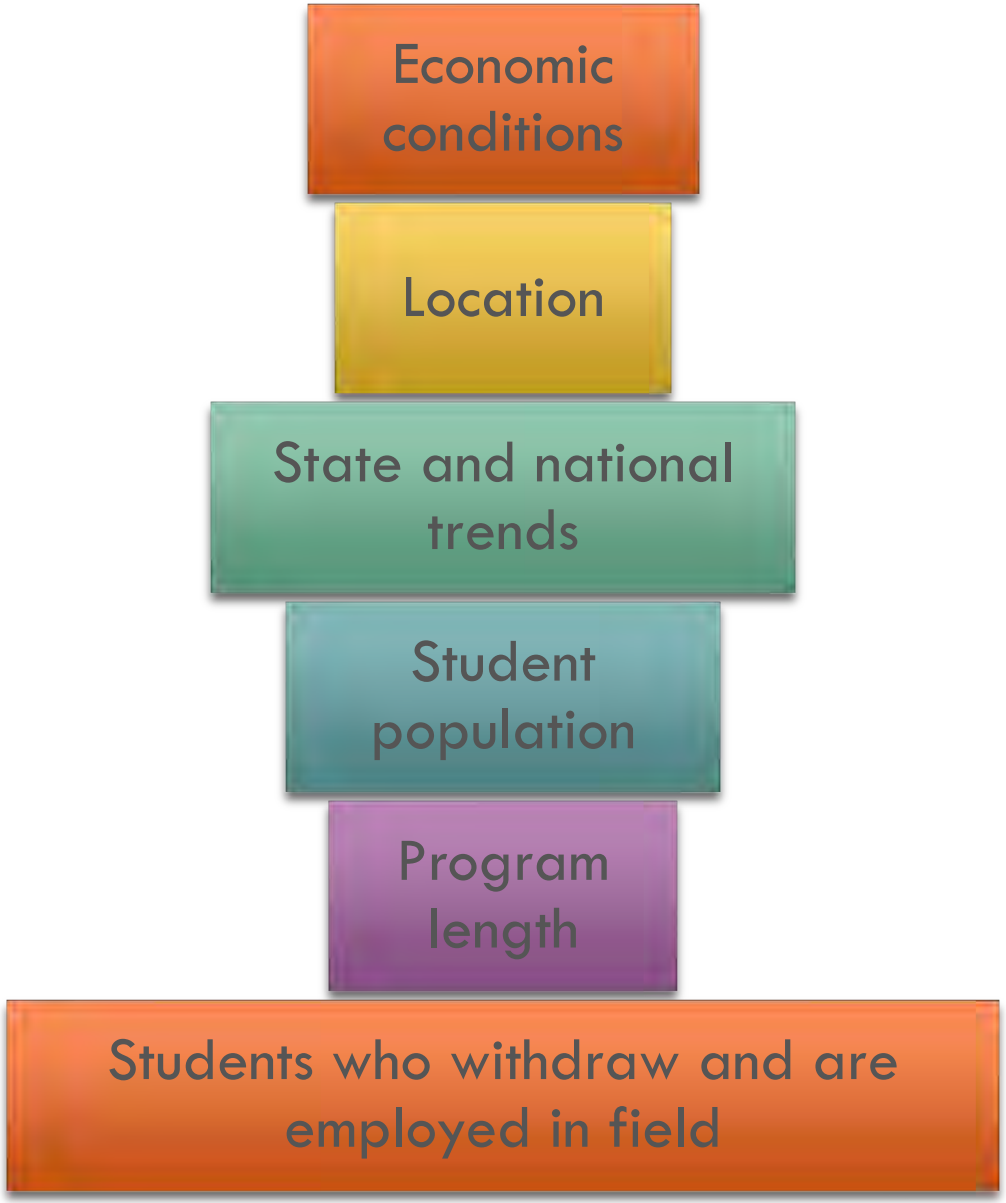
Beginning Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM! | Ending Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM!

Please See the Glossary Tab (below) for a Line-By-Line Reference to All Terms Used in this Chart

1	Class Start Date (month/year)													TOTAL	%	%=
2	Number Started													0	100%	
3	Transfers to Another Program/Cohort													0		3/2
4	Transfers from Another Program/Cohort													0		4/2
5	Total Starts plus/minus Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100%	
6	Unavailable for Graduation													0		6/5
7	Students Available for Graduation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		7/5
8	Withdrawn/Terminated Students													0		8/5
9	Graduates within 150% of Program Length	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		9/7
10	GRADUATION RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		9/7
11	Graduates - Further Education													0		11/9
12	Graduates - Unavailable for Employment													0		12/9
13	Graduates - Available for Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		13/9
14	Graduates - Employed in Field													0		14/9
15	EMPLOYMENT RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		14/13
16	Graduates - Unrelated Occupations													0		16/13
17	Graduates - Unemployed													0		17/13
18	Graduates - Unknown													0		18/13

Everyone’s Favorite Form!

Beyond Benchmarks



Guidelines for Employment Classification

Justification of "Employed in Field"

Documentation of Verification

Verifiable Employment Record Include

- Program Name
- Date of Graduation
- Date of Initial Employment
- Place of Employment
- Employer Address
- Employer Contact Person/Supervisor and direct contact information
- Descriptive Job Title (please also provide job duties if the job title is insufficient to demonstrate alignment with program name

Justification

The employment classification is appropriate and reasonable based on the educational objectives of the program.

The employment is for a reasonable period of time, is based on program objectives, and can be considered sustainable.

The employment is directly related to the program from which the individual graduated, aligns with a majority of the educational and training objectives of the program, and is a paid position.

Verification

- Regular
- Self-Employed
- Career Advancement

Regular Employment – Written Documentation

- The school secures written documentation from the employer verifying the employment

OR

- The school secures written documentation from the graduate verifying the employment

Regular Employment – Verbal Verification

- The school demonstrates diligent efforts to obtain written documentation

AND

- Signature of school staff attesting to verbal verification with the employer **AND** the graduate.

Self-Employment - Attestation

The graduate's name and contact information

An attestation that the self-employment is aligned with the individual's employment goals, is vocational & is based on and related to the education and training received

An attestation that the graduate is earning training-related income

In cases where licensure is required for employment, an attestation that such licensure has been achieved.

What is Career Advancement?

Pertains to students that are employed in a training related field prior graduation

The intent of this provision does not apply to employment toward the end of the program but prior to graduation, where the employment is based on the near anticipated completion of the program (e.g., externship to hire prior to graduation).

Career Advancement - Attestation

Written documentation (attestation) from the employer OR the graduate that the training allowed the graduate to support or maintain the employment position

Written documentation (attestation) from the employer OR the graduate that the training supported the graduate's ability to be eligible or qualified for advancement

Third Party Verification Of Employment Records

SECTION VII STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

IS THIS VERIFICATION OF OUR VERIFICATION?

Yes.

Why?

Because…

The process provides an assessment of

The school's compliance with *Section VII (B)(1)(b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation* and whether the school has "verifiable" records of employment

The extent to which the institution's records can be relied upon in making decisions about a school's compliance with the Commission's student achievement standards

Three circumstances in which third party verification is required

- ACCSC engages an independent third party to verify a random sample of employment data submitted with each year's Annual Report
- Initial and renewal applicants engage an independent third party to verify the school's most recently reported employment data that will be used for the on-site evaluation process
- The Commission may also direct a school to undergo a Third-Party Employment Verification at any time.

What does INDEPENDENT mean?

Is not affiliated with the school or share any part ownership in the school or its affiliated schools.

Does not provide **<u>any</u>** other services to the school.

Will only report accurate findings through work conducted in an independent manner.

Understands and applied ACCSC's defined classifications exactly as stated.

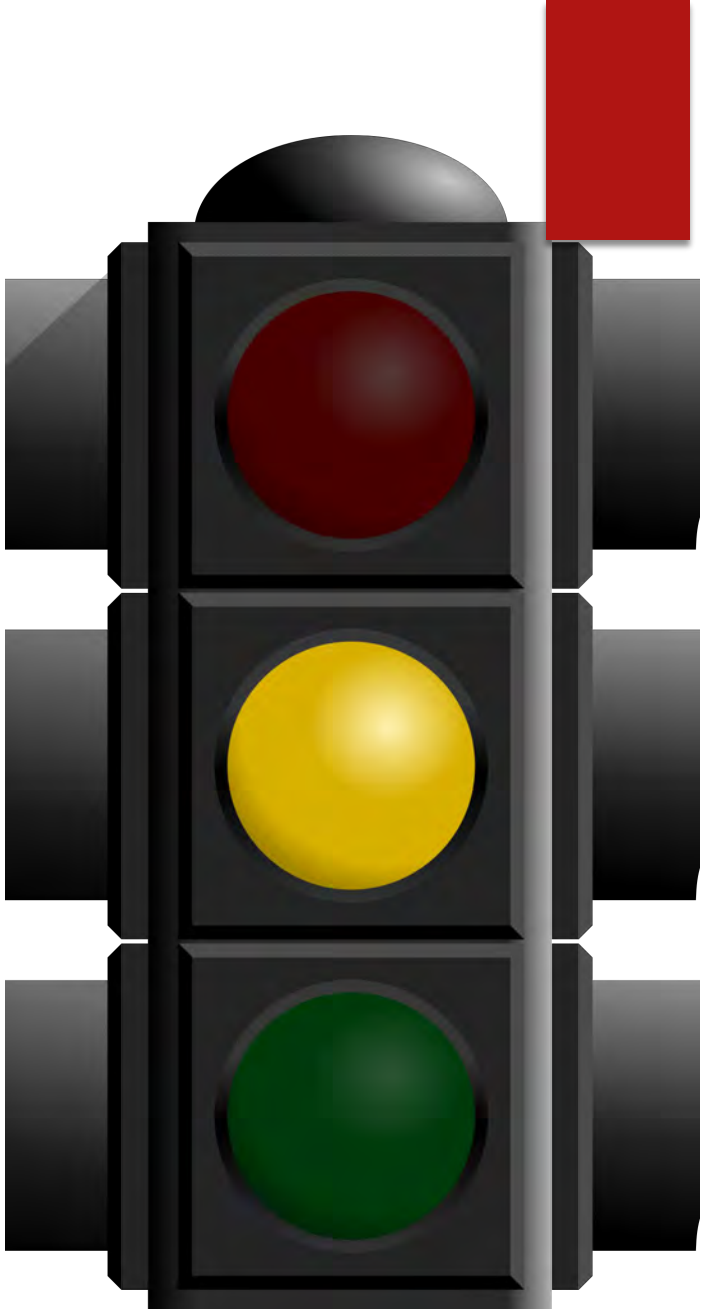
THIRD PARTY VENDOR – DISCLOSURES

The same disclosures that apply to owners and managers of *the school*

Apply to owners or managers or affiliated contractors of *the third-party verifier*

THIRD PARTY VERIFICATION IF THE VENDOR ANSWERS "YES"

- The vendor must provide a narrative explanation for YES answers to the questions above.
- The school must provide an explanation as to why the school chose this vendor and how this vendor can serve as a reliable verifier



The third party verifier will provide the following for the school to include in the SER

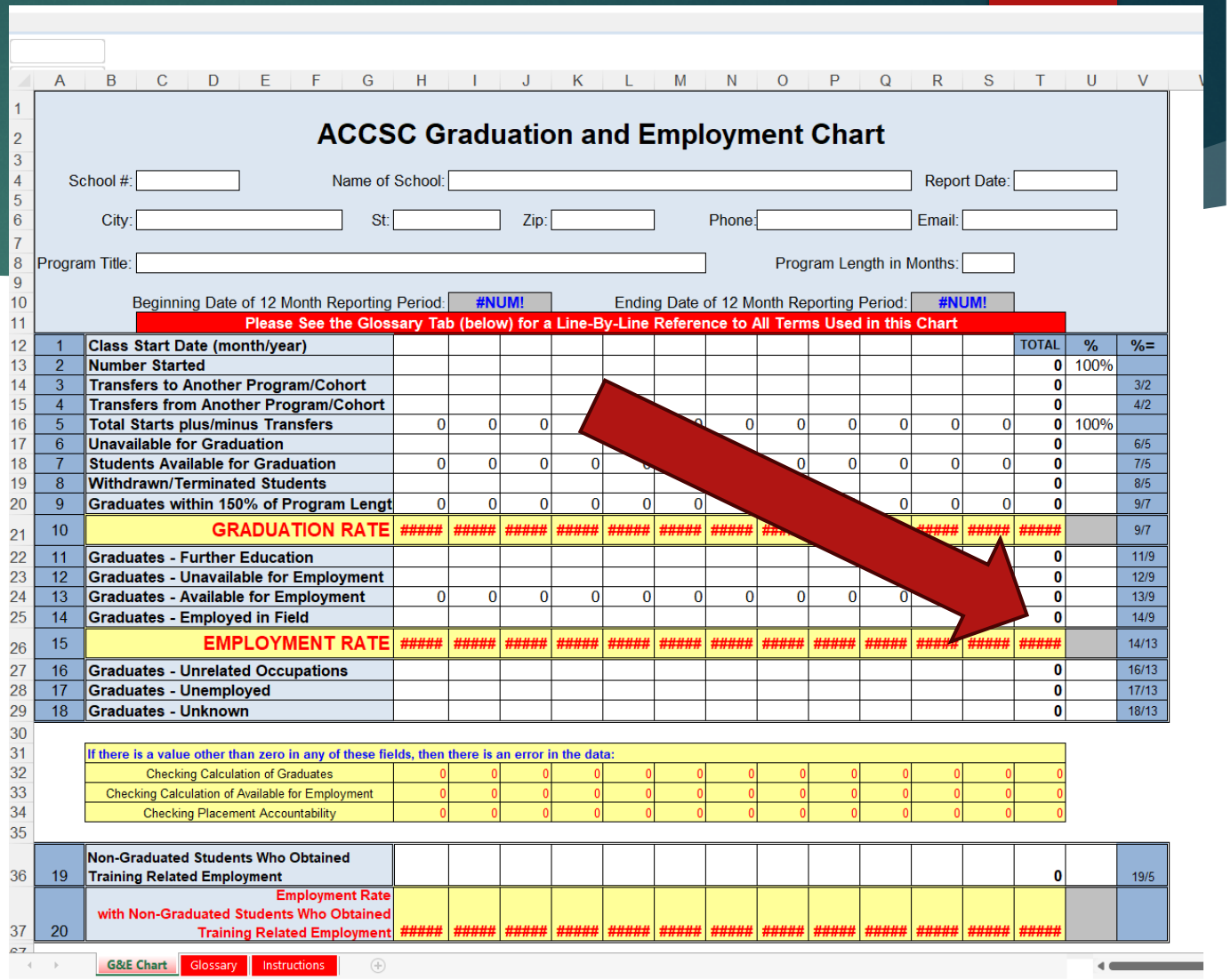
A signed attestation by the independent third-party that acknowledges the four points from the previous slide,

A description of the methodology that the verification agency used for the ***selection of the 50% sample***; and

A description of the methodology that the verification agency used for ***the verification process***.

Step Two – Records

Provide employment records for each graduate reported on Line 14 in every G&E Chart submitted with the Self-Evaluation Report.



ACCSC Graduation and Employment Chart

School #: | Name of School: | Report Date:

City: | St: | Zip: | Phone: | Email:

Program Title: | Program Length in Months:

Beginning Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM! | Ending Date of 12 Month Reporting Period: #NUM!

Please See the Glossary Tab (below) for a Line-By-Line Reference to All Terms Used in this Chart

1	Class Start Date (month/year)														TOTAL	%	%=
2	Number Started														0	100%	
3	Transfers to Another Program/Cohort														0		3/2
4	Transfers from Another Program/Cohort														0		4/2
5	Total Starts plus/minus Transfers	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	100%	
6	Unavailable for Graduation														0		6/5
7	Students Available for Graduation	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0		0		7/5
8	Withdrawn/Terminated Students														0		8/5
9	Graduates within 150% of Program Lengt	0	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	0		0		9/7
10	GRADUATION RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####			#####	#####		#####		9/7
11	Graduates - Further Education														0		11/9
12	Graduates - Unavailable for Employment														0		12/9
13	Graduates - Available for Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0		13/9
14	Graduates - Employed in Field														0		14/9
15	EMPLOYMENT RATE	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		#####		14/13
16	Graduates - Unrelated Occupations														0		16/13
17	Graduates - Unemployed														0		17/13
18	Graduates - Unknown														0		18/13

If there is a value other than zero in any of these fields, then there is an error in the data:

Checking Calculation of Graduates	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Checking Calculation of Available for Employment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Checking Placement Accountability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

19	Non-Graduated Students Who Obtained Training Related Employment														0	19/5
20	Employment Rate with Non-Graduated Students Who Obtained Training Related Employment	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####		

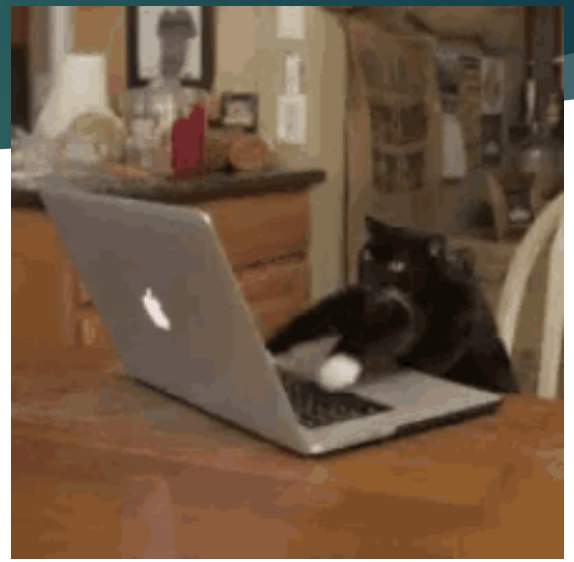
G&E Chart | Glossary | Instructions

Step Three – The Third Party Selects the Sample

The independent third-party must select minimally a 50% sample of employed graduates (classified as "Graduates - Employed in the Field") on line 14 of each G&E Chart and report the results from that sample.

Once the 50% sample has been selected the independent third-party may not alter the sample in an effort to get better results

Step Four – Third Party Verification

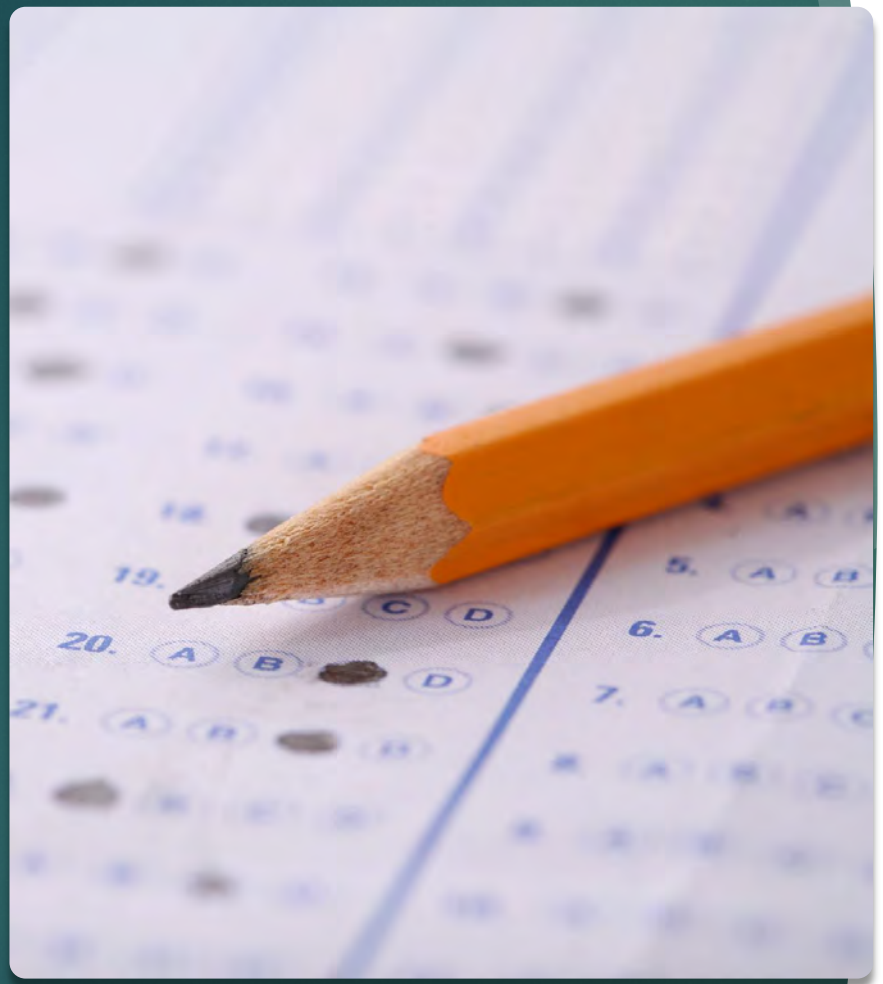


The independent third-party must verify employment records with the employer or graduate

or in writing

The independent third-party must conduct the verifications <u>without assistance</u> from the school, with the exception of the school's provision of records to be verified.

The school must provide the full report from the independent third-party verification of employment data to the ACCSC on-site evaluation team, as directed by Appendix B of the SER.



Verification Categories

Verified as Correct

The third-party verifier finds:

- ✓ The same employer as listed in the school's record;
- ✓ The start date listed in the school's record is within 45 days of the verified start date; and
- ✓ The verified job title is substantively the same as that listed in the school's record, using the following illustrative guidelines

Illustrative Guidelines

Examples from an Automotive Technology Program

- Exact Match - The school employment record matches exactly the verified job title e.g., “Mechanic”;
- Obvious Match - The school employment record states “Mechanic” and the verified job title of, “Auto Mechanic” is an obvious match; or
- Confirmed Match - The school employment record states “Mechanic” but the verified job title is “Technician II” **and** the employer or graduate confirm that the job responsibilities are substantively the same.

Verified but Different

The third-party verifier finds:

- ✓ A start date that is more than 45 days different from the start date in the school's employment record; or
- ✓ A substantively different job title from that in the school's employment record (i.e., any job title that is verified to be different from the school's employment record and is not an obvious match or confirmed match as described above)

Unable to Verify

The third-party verifier is:

- ✓ Unable to obtain verification of the school's employment record from either the employer or the graduate.

NOTE: the school must use this category if the employer uses a third-party company (i.e. The Work Number)

Verified as Incorrect

This happens when the third-party verifier finds any of the following:

- ✓ The graduate is not found in employer's records;
- ✓ The graduate's initial employer is different than the employer listed in the school's employment record;
- ✓ The graduate denies having worked in the position as stated in the school's employment record;
- ✓ The position listed in the school's employment record is unpaid or an intern/externship

Step Five - Report

The school must provide the full report from the independent third-party verification of employment data to the ACCSC on-site evaluation team, as directed by Appendix B of the SER.

Independent Third-Party Initial Employment Verification Reported Institutional Rates			
Report Date on Graduation and Employment Chart		Name of Company	
Total Number of Students Sampled	Total Number of Available Students to Sample	Sample Size Percentage	
Verified as Correct	Verified but Different	Unable to Verify	Verified as Not Correct

PROVIDE THIS CHART IN THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Lessons Learned

Maximize your relationship with the third party

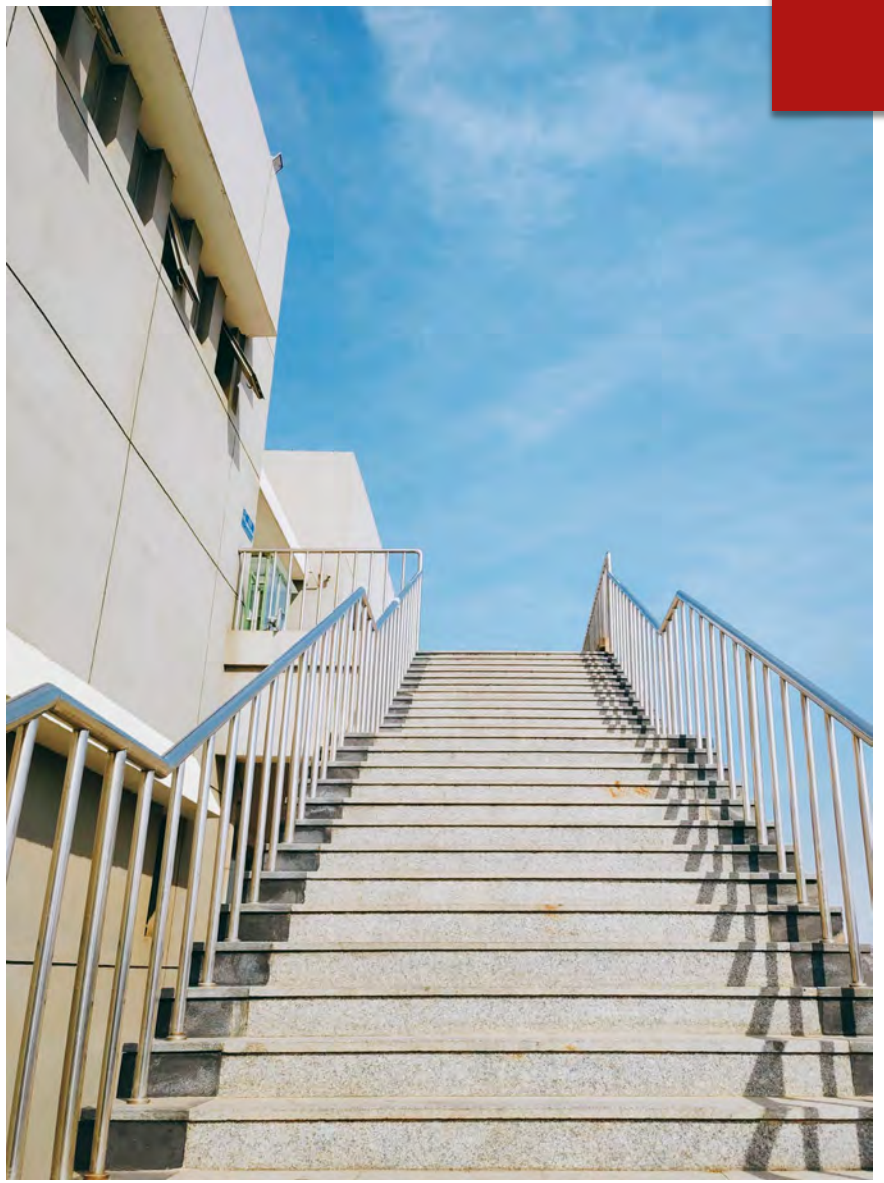
- Get weekly reports while the project is underway
- Ask for the option to update incorrect emails or wrong telephone numbers while the project is underway
- Ask the third-party about the number of calls/emails and the pacing of outreach as to not frustrate your employers/graduates

Polish your Processes

- Have students sign a release form that permits the school to obtain employment information
- Signed and dated upon graduation, not start, as frequently employers that require a signed release want it to be signed within 12 months of the request
- Verify the employment AFTER the graduate started work.

Set Expectations with Students

- Begin on the first day of Orientation and continue throughout the program
- Accreditation Resources: New Student Letter / Graduation Letter



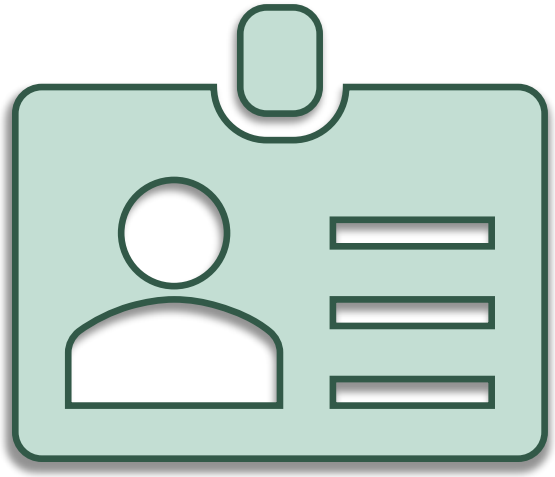
Set Expectations with Staff

Use the Form

Complete the form

Employment Record

- ✓ Graduate Name
- ✓ Program Name
- ✓ Job Title
- ✓ Descriptive Job Responsibilities
- ✓ Date of Initial Employment
- ✓ Employer Email Address
- ✓ Employer Contact Person
- ✓ Employer Direct Dial
- ✓ Graduate Phone Number
- ✓ Graduate Email (not the school's assigned email address)



Miscues to Avoid

- ✓ Incomplete forms
- ✓ Poor description of job duties
- ✓ Insufficient information that demonstrates the connection between the educational objectives of the program and the vocational outcomes.

Example: Pharmacy Technician Program

Pharmacy Technician…!

Designated Hitter…?

Include Employers

- Work proactively with employers
- Set expectations, get feedback
- Batching Verification
- Avoid the temptation to “scrub” data
- Accreditation Resources:
  Employer Letter – (English / Spanish)

Resources

The Guidelines for Independent Third Party Verification

The Independent Third-Party Employment Verification FAQ is available for download at www.accsc.org.

ACCSC

Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

Crossing the Finish Line!

Process Overview – First Leg

March 2024
Workshop

March 2025
Application Acceptance Letter

December 2025
Orientation Evaluation

Application Part I
September 2024

Self-Evaluation Report + Application Part II
September 2025

Orientation Report
February 2026

Process Overview – Crossing the Finish Line

April 2026

Final Materials for the On-Site Evaluation (revised Application Part II and Self-Evaluation Report)

On-Site Evaluation

June 2026

August 2026

On-Site Evaluation Report

Commission Review

November 2026

December 2026

School Action Letter

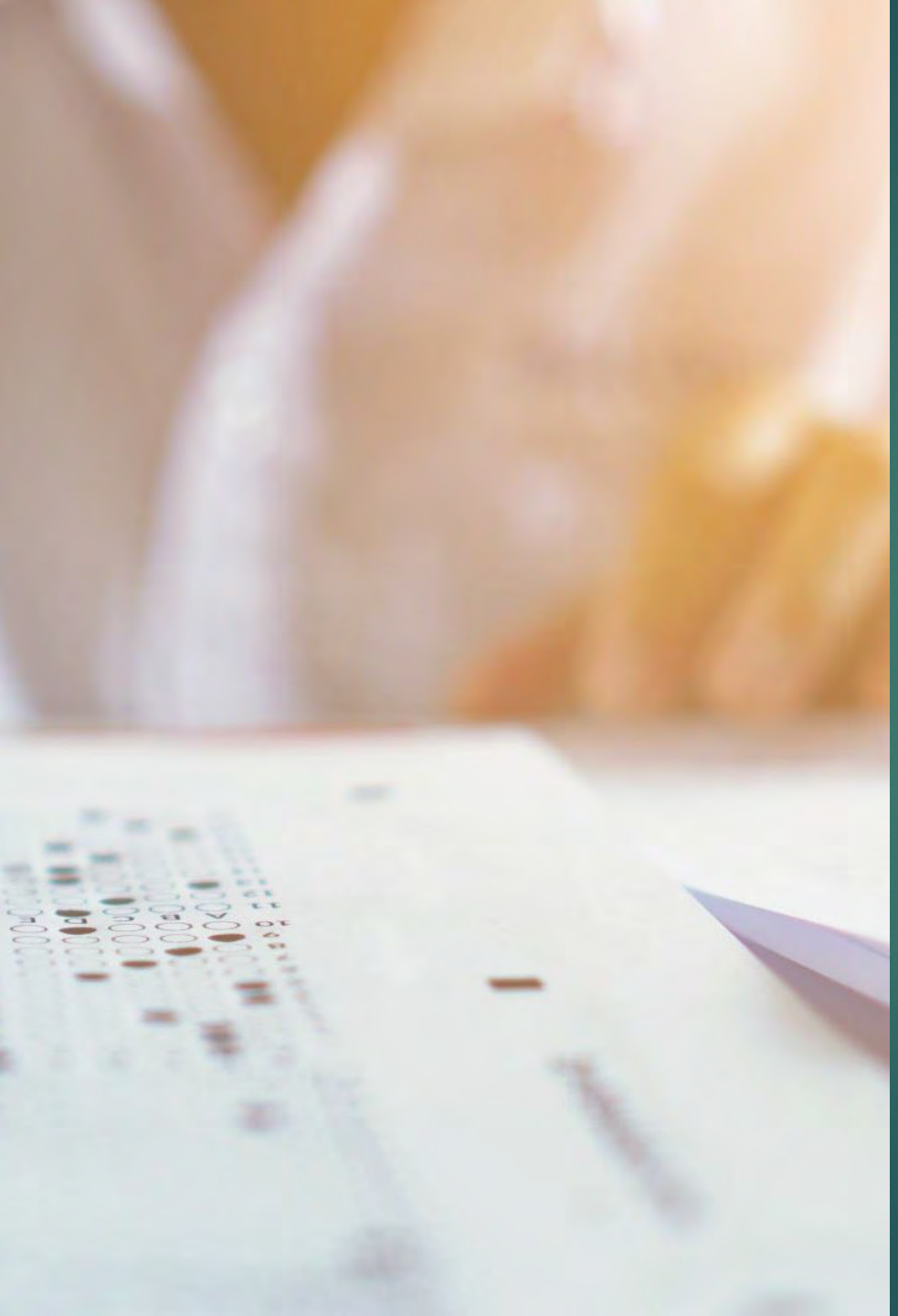
ON-SITE EVALUATION

Purpose of the On-Site Evaluation

Verify	Verify data in the school's reports, applications, responses, and any other information
Develop	Develop an understanding and perform an assessment of how well the school meets its objectives
Determine	Determine the extent to which the school complies with the Standards of Accreditation

The school is evaluated according to:

- Documentation included in the school's reports, applications, responses, and any other information submitted to the Commission required for the specific on-site evaluation;
- Information provided by the school to demonstrate compliance with accreditation standards;
- Interviews and surveys of the administration, instructors, other school employees, students, graduates, and employers of graduates;
- Observations of classes, management, and administration of the school; and
- Documentation of the student achievement data reported to the Commission.



SCHEDULING

- A Commission representative will contact you to schedule the on-site evaluation
- Typically required for two days
- Regular “School Day”
  - Not exam week
  - Majority of students in class
  - Administrators and faculty present

Composition of the Team

Team Leader/Management Specialist *(administration / management)*

Education Specialist *(education delivery / curriculum / faculty)*

ACCSC Staff Member *(technical assistance / interpretation of Standards)*

Occupation Specialist *(equipment / facilities)*

Distance Education Specialist *(if required)*

State Observer *(invited)*

Evaluation Team Members

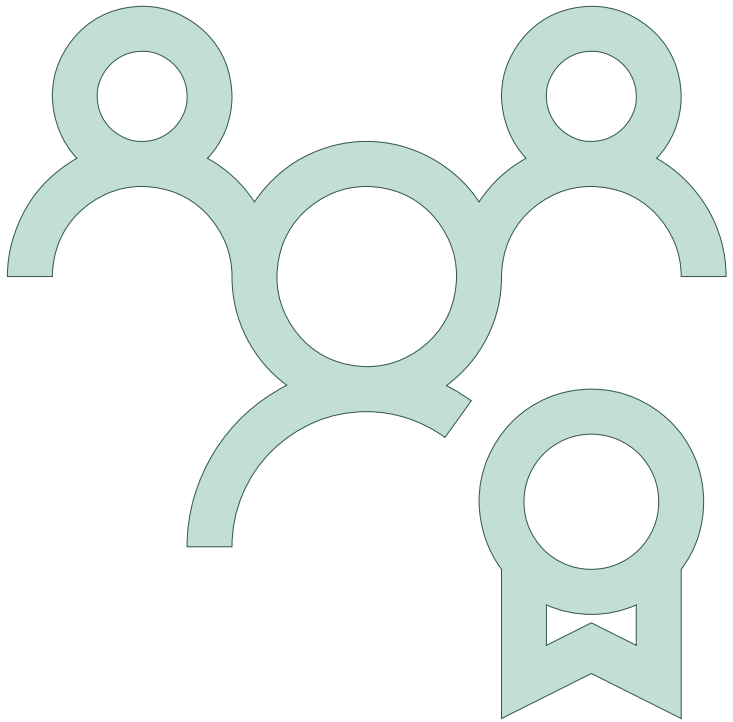
Evaluation team members do not recommend action to the Commission; this function is reserved to the Commission.

Team members volunteer as experienced professionals, not as representatives of their institutions or businesses.

Evaluate independently and to verify: the information submitted by the school, the school's success in meeting announced objectives and demonstrating successful student achievement, and the school's compliance with the *Standards of Accreditation*.

Clearing the Team

- The school will be promptly provided with the names of appointed team members
- If any conflicts of the types prohibited by the ACCSC Evaluator Code of Conduct exist, the school must notify ACCSC's Executive Director in writing.
- If the Executive Director determines good cause exists, the team member will be replaced.



Preparation

THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL ON-SITE EVALUATION

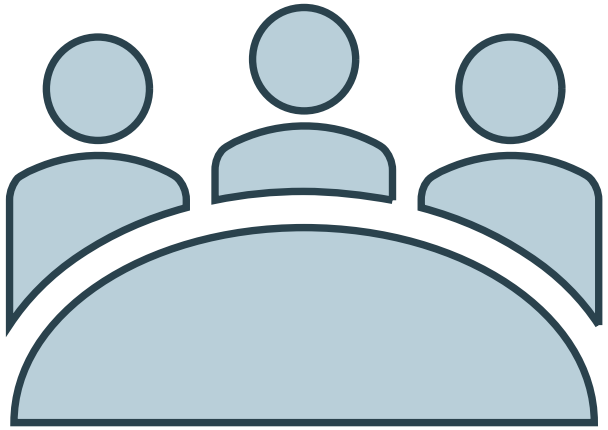
Prepare YOUR Team

Meet with all faculty and staff to explain the purpose of ACCSC's on-site evaluation, identify the roles of the team members, and general expectations of the on-site evaluation

Your team should be aware of ACCSC's *Standards of Accreditation*, particularly as those standards pertain to their roles within the organization

Familiarize your team with the Application for Accreditation and Self-Evaluation Report that will be the foundation of the on-site evaluation team's review

Prepare a Workspace for the Team



- ✓ Set aside a secure room that will provide a comfortable workspace for the number of team members that will be reviewing your institution
- ✓ The room/space must afford privacy in which the team may conduct its review and deliberations
- ✓ Ensure there are adequate outlets or power strips, and Internet access (provide required access codes)

Prepare Documentation

- Use Appendix B as a guide for furnishing the work room with required documentation
- Label the materials in the room in an organized and understandable fashion
- Documentation is the basis of the on-site evaluation team's verification of the accuracy and compliance of the self-evaluation report
- Prepare by having documentation readily available and organized in a manner that allows prompt response to team requests

Outcomes Documentation

- For each Graduation and Employment Chart, prepare a list of students (grouped by cohort start) in the format of the table provided
- Have documentation for each student categorized as unavailable for graduation, graduates classified as “further education” and “unavailable for employment”

Employment Records

- ✓ Graduate name and contact information
- ✓ Program name
- ✓ Date of graduation
- ✓ Date of initial employment
- ✓ Place of employment
- ✓ Employer address and phone number
- ✓ Employer contact person/supervisor
- ✓ Descriptive job title and duties

Student Files

- Documentation of admissions requirements
- Fully executed enrollment agreements
- Satisfactory progress evaluations
- Advising sessions
- Transcripts for graduate files
- Refund calculations
- Evidence refunds were made

Student Survey

ACCSC's Student Survey is a crucial part of gathering student input

The Commission aims for surveying at least 25% of the current student population

ACCSC uses an app-based survey form to facilitate student participation

About one week prior to the on-site evaluation, the Commission staff person will send the school liaison a link to the student survey.

Please distribute this to your whole current student body

And… action!

Day One - Arrival

- ✓ The team leader, education specialist and Commission representative will arrive at 9:00 a.m.
- ✓ If parking is limited, please have spots available for the on-site evaluation team
- ✓ Have a member of the school staff at the front door ready to greet the team

Day One – Setting Up

Guide the team to the room that you have set aside. They will need 5-10 minutes to set up.

Provide a **brief** tour of the school - an overview of the physical space so the team can get a feel for the location of key areas

Identify one or two key staff members that can serve as liaisons to the on-site evaluation team. The review will go more quickly when information can be obtained efficiently.

Day One

Team Leader conducts the entrance interview and sets expectations with the school

The team will select files for review from the lists of students required by Appendix B of the SER

Day One – The Work

- ✓ Review student survey results and survey additional students, as necessary
- ✓ Review documentation
- ✓ Observe classes
- ✓ Meet with staff and faculty
- ✓ Verify student achievement data
- ✓ Review curriculum and supporting resources
- ✓ Evaluate equipment and facilities
- ✓ Review all advertising

Day One

- Occupation Specialists depart after the completion of their reviews
- Throughout the day, team members communicate with school officials regarding the team's progress and potential findings
- For evening programs, the team will stay to survey students and observe the operation of the school in the evening
- At the conclusion of Day One, the Team Leader will meet with school officials to provide a "debrief" of the day's activities and to outline areas of focus for Day Two

Day Two

- The team leader, education specialist and Commission representative will return at 9:00 a.m.
- Team members address outstanding issues and complete their notes and observations
- At the conclusion of the on-site evaluation, the team conducts a Summary Review
- A summary of its preliminary report in relation to the school's compliance with accreditation standards

On-Site Evaluation Report

THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE ON-SITE EVALUATION

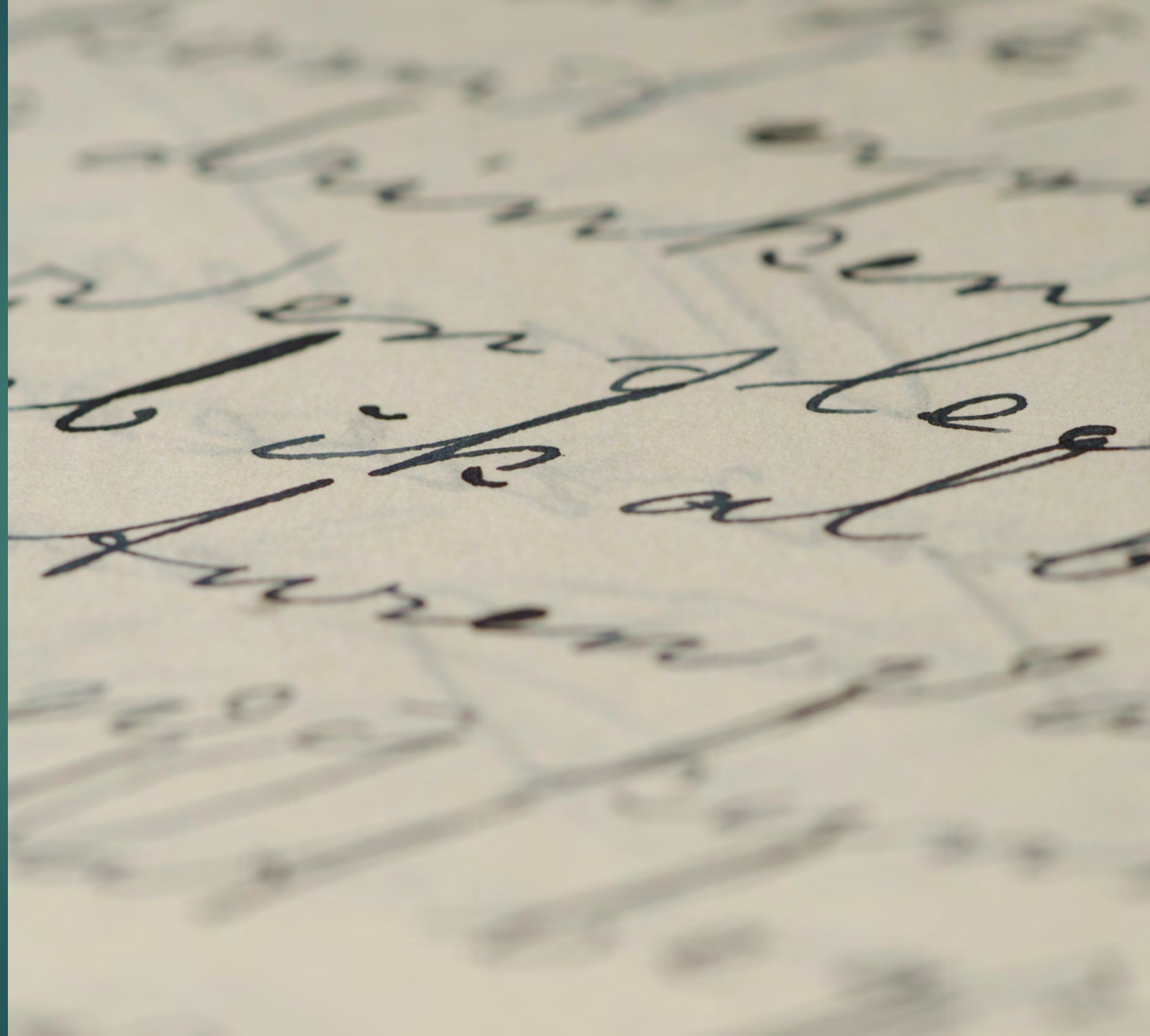
On-Site Evaluation Report (OER)

Factual report and summary of the on-site evaluation team's findings as to the school's compliance with accrediting standards

Serves as the **official written record** of the on-site evaluation

Commission Review

ACCREDITATION DECISIONS ARE BASED ON THE WRITTEN RECORD



The Written Record Consists of

- Application for accreditation
- Self-Evaluation Report
- On-Site Evaluation Report
- School's response
- Team Leader comments and the school's response if any
- Additional information collected about the school, which may include reports from government and private agencies

Responding to the OER

It is **NOT** the number of findings in the OER

It **IS** whether the response demonstrates current compliance with standards

Narrative

Explain

Explain circumstances that impacted the school's ability to demonstrate compliance

Act

Describe corrective action and provide documentation to show current compliance

Plan

Describe the school's plan to ensure compliance in the future

Documentation

- Shows consistent execution of policies
- Demonstrates systematic compliance over time

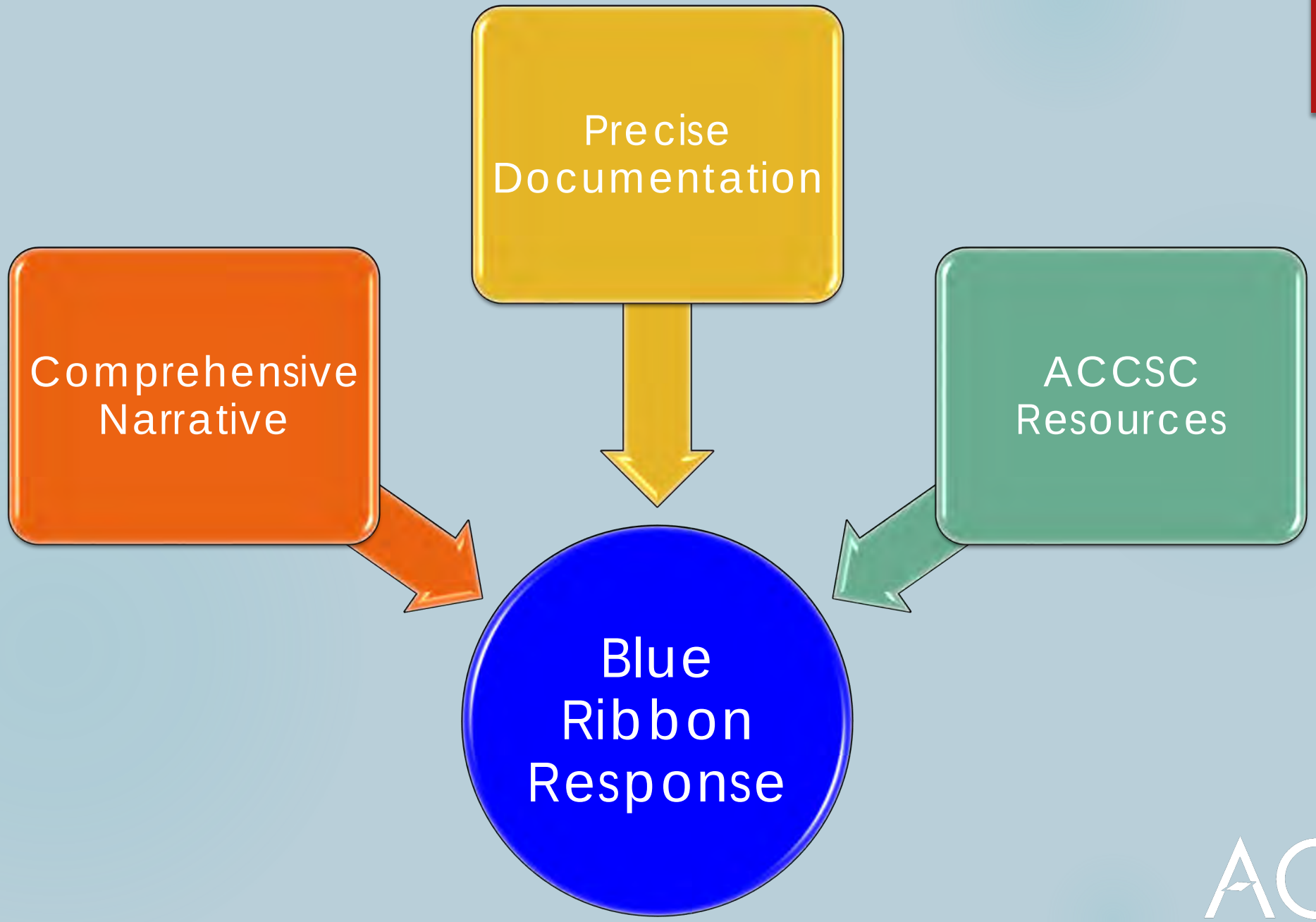
This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

Avoid

Don’t simply respond with a **“<u>will do</u>”** response that promises future action; answer with a **“<u>have done</u>”** response

Don’t just provide exhibits with no narrative to **explain** what the exhibits are intended to demonstrate.

Don’t simply provide copies of newly created blank forms.



ACCSC
Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges

Commission Review

ACTIONS

Denial

Following the due process required by the *Rules of Process and Procedure*

The Commission may deny a grant of accreditation to an initial applicant

When the Commission determines from the record that the school does not meet the requirements specified in the *Standards of Accreditation*

Deferral

Additional information is required from the school to **demonstrate compliance**. Generally, in reaching a decision to defer action, the Commission will consider:

- The extent to which the school can make **significant progress** towards demonstrating compliance within a short period of time;
- Whether the necessary **information** for the Commission to render a decision is lacking.

Accredit - Maximum Grants

3	Years Initial
5	Years for Renewal
5	Years for Institutions Accredited by another Accrediting Agency
6	Years for Institutions Recognized as an ACCSC School of Excellence

Accredit

- ✓ The response demonstrates compliance with accrediting standards
- ✓ Applicants for initial accreditation will be granted accreditation for up to three years

Accredit with Stipulations

Stipulations are generally those questions that can be answered with **documentation** within a relatively short period of time, such as:

- ✓ Copy of revised catalog
- ✓ Copy of revised advertisement
- ✓ Documentation to show implementation of a compliance initiative.

All stipulations must be met before a Commission decision to grant renewal of accreditation becomes effective.

Accredit with Reporting

The Commission grants accreditation to a school but requires the submission of an **Interim Report** in order to demonstrate compliance with accrediting standards, such as:

- Outcomes Reporting: Student Achievement
- Refund Reporting
- Management Retention Reporting
- Program Advisory Committee Reporting

School Action Letter

- The Commission's decision is articulated in a letter
- The official record of the Commission's consideration
- Issued approximately 30 days after the conclusion of the Commission meeting
- Contains detailed information regarding the school's accredited status and any response requirements

The Finish and the Start!

- Obligations of an accredited member of ACCSC
- Maintain compliance
- Continuous operation
- Fulfill reporting requirements
- Maintain state authorization
- Pay all fees

Getting Off to a Great Start

DO THIS!

- ✓ Contact ACCSC staff with any and all questions you may have
- ✓ Utilize ACCSC website resources
- ✓ Read and familiarize yourself with the *Standards of Accreditation* prior to preparing and submitting the application
- ✓ Have your independent CPA read ACCSC's *Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Financial Statements and Related Information* prior to preparing your school's financial statements.

Don’t Do This!

- ✓ Submit incomplete applications
- ✓ Submit compiled or reviewed financial statements
- ✓ Have only one person at the school do all things ACCSC
- ✓ Be afraid to contact ACCSC with a question, ESPECIALLY if you think you may not be in compliance
- ✓ Rely solely on a consultant

Common Miscues on the Application for Initial Accreditation Part I

- Application fails to show graduates from longest programs
- Application fails to show at least one 300 clock hour program
- Application fails to show continuous enrollment/operation
- Financial statements not audited
- Financial statements not prepared in a comparative format
- Financial statements do not meet all three tests for eligibility

Tool Kit

- ACCSC Staff
- Webinars
- Monographs
- Blueprints
- Training Center

Key Concepts

- Student Success is at the Center
- Standards = Best Practices
- Ongoing Assessment
- Strong Infrastructure/Resources
- Continuous Improvement

Assessment – where are we now and where are we going?

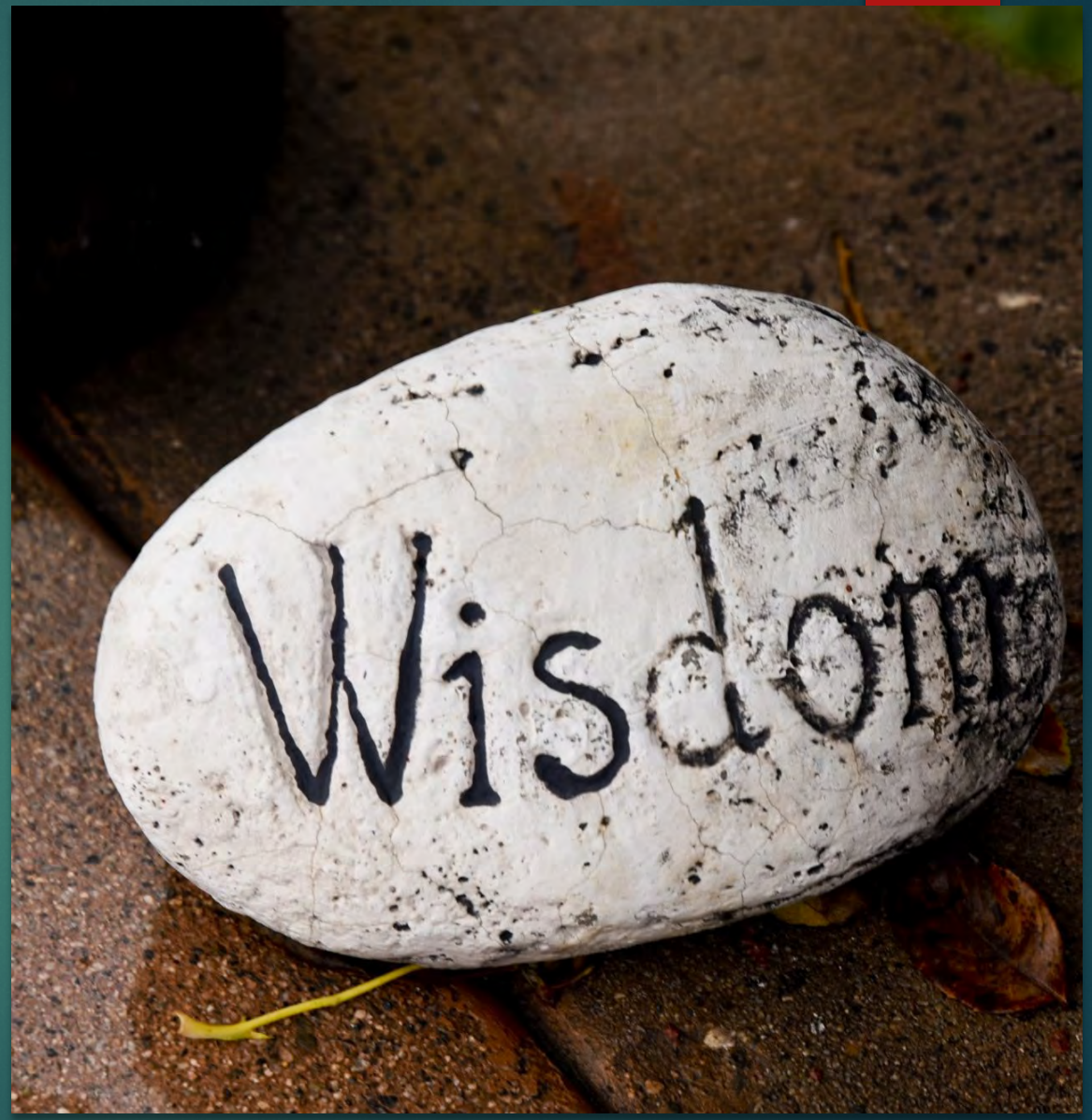
How do we get there from here?

Do we have enough fuel and snacks (infrastructure, resources)?

Who is going to drive? Who is checking the map?

Parting Thoughts

If you could say one thing to a school considering ACCSC accreditation, what would it be?



Real World

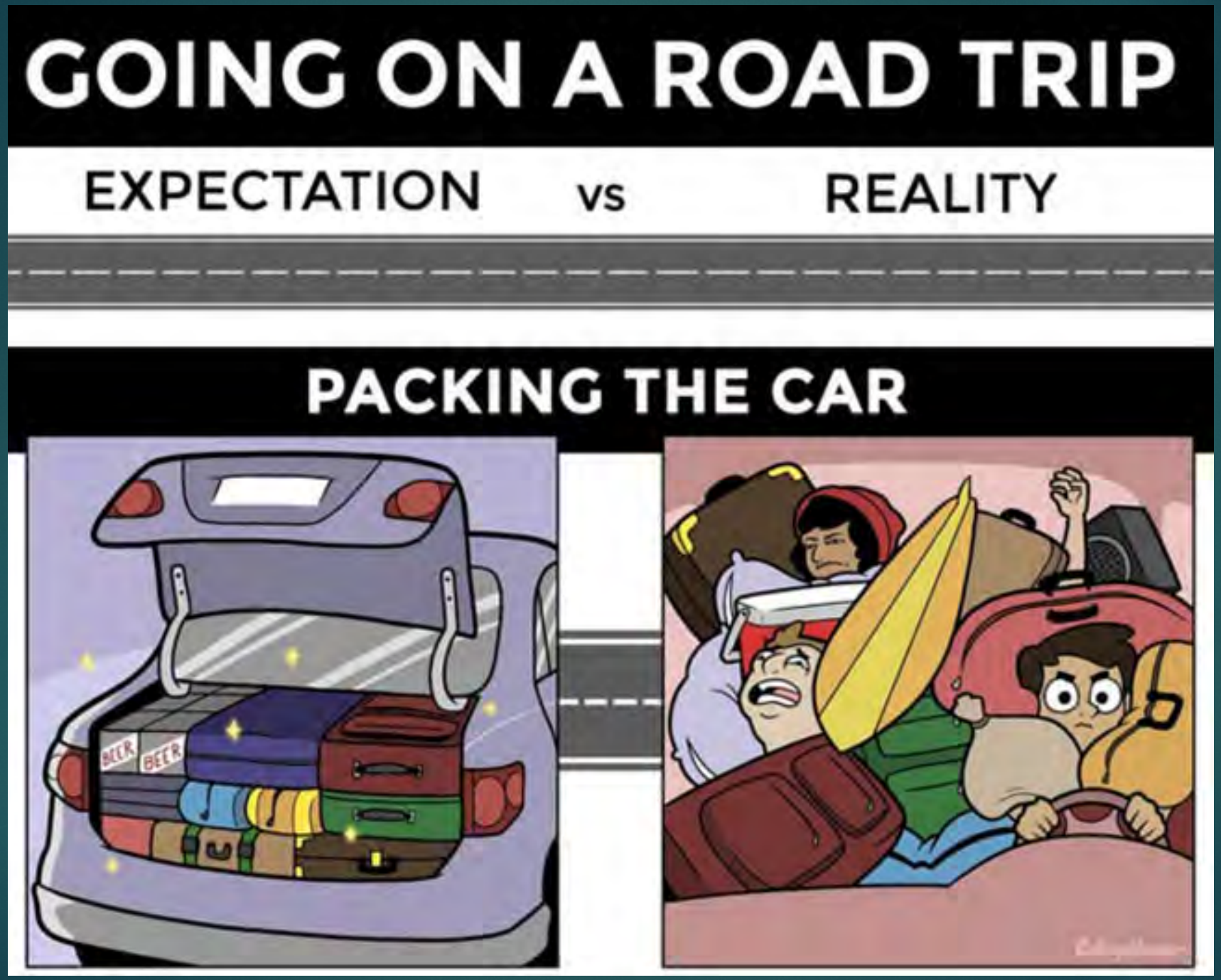
Be prepared to constantly use the system you design

Don’t Guess!

Pick up the phone… or keyboard

Transformation

Understand that accreditation involves a transformation to the accredited school paradigm


GOING ON A ROAD TRIP
EXPECTATION
vs
REALITY
PACKING THE CAR
BEER
BEER

Focus on Excellence

Rather than just “jumping through hoops,” understand the spirit of the standard

More than a Survival Badge

LEARN AND GROW THROUGH THE PROCESS

SLOW DOWN!

Building the Airplane

In the Air