



ACCREDITATION MAINTENANCE

As a condition of continuing their accreditation during the term granted by the Commission on Elementary Schools and/or the Commission on Secondary Schools, accredited institutions are expected to meet all requirements as outlined in MSA-CESS Policy: Expectations of Accredited Institutions.

Section 1: General

Failure to Meet Accreditation Maintenance Requirements. Failure to meet Expectations of Accredited Institutions may lead to the issuance of a show cause action, the assessment of additional fees, and/or removal of the institution's accreditation by the Commission on Elementary Schools and/or the Commission on Secondary Schools.

Reports During the Term of Accreditation. Accredited institutions must submit all reports required by the Commission(s) during the institution's term of accreditation.

Special Reports and/or Special Visits. In addition to the accreditation maintenance requirements required by this policy and MSA-CESS Policy: Expectations for Accredited Institutions, the Commission(s) may require special reports and/or special visits for cause at any time during the institution's term of accreditation, such as when a signed complaint (see MSA-CESS Policy: Complaints) has been presented to the Commission(s) alleging that an institution is not meeting one or more of the Commissions' Standards for Accreditation. Causes prompting a special visit or special report include but are not limited to the following conditions or events in an institution:

- a. Significant health or safety issues;
- b. Significant financial problems;
- c. Significant decline in student enrollment;
- d. Substantive changes;
- e. Verification of actions taken to resolve stipulations or monitoring issues included in the Commission's accreditation action;
- f. Abrupt and/or unplanned/unanticipated change in the head of the institution;
- g. Need to verify actions taken by an institution to resolve issues that led the Commission(s) to grant Accreditation with Stipulations or Probationary Accreditation.

Fees are charged for special visits and the travel costs for any visit shall be borne by the institution.

Section 2: Accredited Institutions with Expired Term of Accreditation.

When an Accredited institution allows its term of accreditation to expire and the institution wishes to regain its accreditation, the institution will be returned to the status of a Candidate for Accreditation.

In the case of postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology institutions, a return to Candidate status will occur only if an onsite visit verifies that the institution meets the Standards for Candidacy.

Section 3: Accreditation Maintenance Requirements for Postsecondary Institutions

General. As a condition of continuing their accreditation during the term granted by the Commission on Secondary Schools, accredited institutions are expected to meet all requirements for maintaining their accreditation during the term of accreditation.

General Expectations for Accredited Institutions.

- a. Accreditation is the education community's means of self-regulation through quality assurance and continuous improvement. The accreditation process is intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of education, making it worthy of the public's confidence and minimizing the scope of external control.
- b. In order to be deserving of this public trust, accredited institutions must affirm their accreditation by abiding by the following expectations. Accredited institutions:
 - 1) Operate in the public interest and in accordance with ethical practice and the Middle States Standards for Accreditation for Career and Technical Institutions.
 - 2) Recognize that the extent to which each institution accepts and fulfills the responsibilities inherent in the accreditation process is a measure of its concern for freedom, independence, and quality in education and its commitment to striving for and achieving excellence in its endeavors.
 - 3) Demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in student learning and the institution's capacity to produce the levels of learning desired and expected by its community of stakeholders.
 - 4) Promote honest and open analysis in this collegial activity by receiving Middle States evaluators with openness and candor and by providing access to institutional documents and records.
 - 5) Respond appropriately to any monitoring issues and stipulations that might be included with the institution's accreditation.
 - 6) Maintain, in writing, clearly specified objectives that are consistent with the institution's mission and are able to demonstrate progress in achieving those objectives.

Expectations for Meeting Requirements of the Commission. Accredited institutions:

- a. Are in compliance with and continue to be in compliance with the Middle States Standards for Accreditation for Career and Technical Institutions on which their accreditation is based.
- b. Fulfill all requirements of the accreditation protocol used for self-study and accreditation.
- c. File written reports in a timely manner as required by the Commission.
- d. Host special visits and comply with special requirements of the Commission.
- e. File special reports as required by the Commission.
- f. Submit an Annual Profile to update the institution's statistical data and contact information.
- g. Pay annual membership dues and applicable fees in a timely manner.
- h. Request approval of substantive changes.
- i. Comply with the policies of the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools' policies.

Expectations for Participation in the Work of the Commissions. Accredited institutions:

- a. Submit annually nominations of members of the institution's professional staff recommended for and willing to serve on accreditation visiting teams.
- b. Release at least one staff member per year, when requested, to serve on an accreditation visiting team to another member institution.
- c. Involve administrators, members of the faculty and staff, students, and other appropriate members of the institution's community of stakeholders in the self-study and accreditation processes.

Expectations for Relationships with Constituencies and the Public. Accredited institutions:

- a. Employ accreditation practices that are ethical and respect the rights and responsibilities of the faculty and staff, students, administrators, board members, and all others related to the institution.

- b. Under the leadership of the head of the institution, distribute reports of accreditation activities and other correspondence from the Commission regarding the institution's accreditation status to the institution's governing body and to other appropriate parties.

Failure to Meet Accreditation Maintenance Requirements. Failure to meet Expectations of Accredited Institutions may lead to the issuance of a show cause action, the assessment of additional fees, and/or removal of the institution's accreditation by the Commission on Secondary Schools.

Special Reports and/or Special Visits. In addition to the accreditation maintenance requirements required by this policy the Commission may require special reports and/or special visits for cause at any time during the institution's term of accreditation. Causes prompting a special visit or special report include but are not limited to the following conditions or events in an institution:

- a. A complaint made against an institution;
- b. Significant health or safety issues;
- c. Significant financial problems;
- d. Significant decline in student enrollment;
- e. Significant increase in enrollment;
- f. Substantive changes;
- g. Verification of actions taken to resolve stipulations, monitoring issues, and/or probationary issues included in the Commission's accreditation action;
- h. Abrupt and/or unplanned/unanticipated change in the head of the institution;
- i. Fees are charged for special visits and the travel costs for any visit shall be borne by the institution.

Section 4: Monitoring and Reevaluation of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions

Monitoring Reports for Compliance with the Requirements for Accreditation. The purpose of the required monitoring reports is to enable the Commission to confirm an institution's continued compliance with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and other requirements for accreditation.

- a. Annual Report. After each academic year, accredited career and technical institutions will submit an Annual Report to the Commission in which the institution provides evidence of its continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, the other requirements for accreditation, and the general status, condition, and viability of the institution. In the annual report, institutions are required to provide the following information and data:
 - 1) Career and technical programs offered during the reporting year
 - 2) Enrollment in all career and technical programs offered by the institution
 - 3) Indicators of significant growth in enrollment
 - 4) Career and technical programs deleted in the reporting year
 - 5) Career and technical programs added during the reporting year
 - 6) Completion rates for all career and technical programs
 - 7) Completer job placement rates for all career and technical programs
 - 8) Licensing examination pass rates for all applicable career and technical programs
 - 9) Student loan default rate for all career and technical programs participating in Title IV programs
 - 10) Financial data for the reporting year
 - 11) The most recent audit of the institution's finances
 - 12) Report of any USDE audits conducted in the reporting year
 - 13) Assurances by the head of the institution and the head of the institution's governing body regarding—
 - a) Recruiting and admissions practices
 - b) Identification of distance education students
 - c) Employment demand for program completers
 - d) The financial information in the annual report

- e) Financial viability and stability
 - 14) Assurance of continuing compliance with the Standards for Accreditation for Career and Technical Institutions
- b. Five-Year Report. In the fifth year of the accreditation term, accredited career and technical institutions will submit a Five-Year Report to the Commission in which the institution provides evidence of its continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, the other requirements for accreditation, and the general status, condition, and viability of the institution. This Report, when verified by an onsite visit, will be used by the Commission to determine whether the institution's accreditation should be renewed for an additional five years. In the Five-Year Report institutions are required to provide the following information and data:
- 1) Enrollment in all career and technical programs offered by the institution
 - 2) Indicators of significant growth in enrollment
 - 3) Career and technical programs deleted in the reporting year
 - 4) Career and technical programs added during the reporting year
 - 5) Completion rates for all career and technical programs
 - 6) Completer job placement rates for all career and technical programs
 - 7) Licensing examination pass rates for all applicable career and technical programs
 - 8) Student loan default rate for all career and technical programs participating in Title IV programs
 - 9) Financial data for the reporting year
 - 10) The most recent audit of the institution's finances
 - 11) Report of any USDE audits conducted in the reporting year
 - 12) Assurances by the head of the institution and the head of the institution's governing body regarding—
 - a) Recruiting and admissions practices
 - b) Identification of distance education students
 - c) Employment demand for program completers
 - d) The financial information in the annual report
 - e) Financial viability and stability
 - 13) Progress in achieving the student performance and organizational capacity objectives in the institution's Plan for Growth and Improvement.

Reviews of Monitoring Reports.

- a. Upon receipt of the required reports, the Commission's staff shall conduct an analysis of key data and indicators including, but not limited to, fiscal information and measures of student achievement.
- b. If, as a result of this review, an institution falls out of compliance with one or more of the Commission's Standards for Accreditation and/or other accreditation requirements, the Commission shall initiate actions prescribed in MSA-CESS Policy: Enforcement of the Standards for Accreditation.

Reevaluation of Accredited Institutions. As a minimum, the Commission shall reevaluate the accreditation of accredited institutions at the following times:

- a. Prior to the expiration of an institution's term of accreditation. (MSA-CESS Policy: Accreditation Actions)
- b. At any time during an institution's term of accreditation when the Commission has verified information that the institution is not in compliance with one or more of the requirements for accreditation and/or requirements for Accreditation Maintenance.

Unannounced Site Visits. The Commission may conduct unannounced onsite visits at any time for the purpose of determining whether the institution continues to be in compliance with the Standards for Accreditation of Career and Technical Institutions and/or the other accreditation requirements.

- a. After each academic year, accredited career and technical institutions will submit an Annual Report to the Commission in which the institution provides evidence of its continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, the other requirements for accreditation, and the general status, condition, and viability of the institution.
- b. In the fifth year of the accreditation term, accredited career and technical institutions will submit a Five-Year Report to the Commission in which the institution provides evidence of its continued compliance with the Standards for Accreditation, the other requirements for accreditation, and the general status, condition, and viability of the institution. This Report, when verified by an onsite visit, will be used by the Commission to determine whether the institution's accreditation should be renewed for an additional five years.