

ACCSC
STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION
APPENDICES

ACCSC STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION

APPENDIX I – ACCREDITATION FEES

ACCREDITATION FEES

Revised July 1, 2016 & July 1, 2017

Sustaining Fees (from Section 3.01 of the AACSC Bylaws):

Members of the Corporation shall pay dues annually in accordance with the following:

- i. If the gross tuition of the member is \$1,000,000 or less, the dues shall be \$1,500 plus .00286 times gross tuition over \$200,000;
- ii. If the gross tuition of the member is greater than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$3,000,000, dues shall be \$3,500 plus .0011 times gross tuition over \$1,000,000; and
- iii. If the gross tuition of the member is greater than \$3,000,000, dues shall be \$5,500 plus .000165 times gross tuition over \$3,000,000.

Sustaining Fees are due within six months of a school’s fiscal year end along with the school’s audited financial statements and Sustaining Fee Calculation Worksheet.

Application and Report Fees:

<u>Activity / Application / Report</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Accreditation Workshops	
• Member Rates	
• 1 st Member	\$550
• Each Subsequent Member	\$500
• Non-member	
• 1 st Non-Member	\$650
• Each Subsequent Non-Member	\$550
• Consultants	\$1,200
Annual Report Processing Fee ¹	\$150
Appeals Transcript	Actual Cost
Application for Appeal of Commission Decision	\$6,000
Application for Approval of a Degree Program	\$1,500
Application for Approval of a Degree Program-Affiliated Schools	
• 1 st School	\$1,500
• Each Affiliated School	\$750
Application for a Branch Campus	
• Part I	\$1,250
• Part II	\$2,000
Application for a Change of Location	
• Part I	\$750
• Part II	OSE Fee
Application for a Change of Mission or Educational Objectives	\$1,000
Application for a Change of Name	
• Part I	\$250
• Part II	No Fee
Application for a Change of Ownership	
• Part I Transactions \$5 million or Less	
• Main School	\$4,000

¹ To be paid with a school’s Sustaining Fee.

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• Branch Campus.....	\$2,500
• Part I Transactions Greater than \$5 million	
• Main School.....	\$6,000
• Branch Campus.....	\$2,500
• Part II.....	OSE Fee
Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion.....	\$500
Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion-Affiliated Schools.....	\$500*
Application for Continuing Education and Avocational Courses.....	\$500
Application for a Distance Education Facility.....	\$1,000
Application for Initial Distance Education Approval.....	\$1500
• Application for Expansion of Distance Education Approval.....	\$500
Application for Initial Accreditation	
• Part I.....	\$750
• Part II.....	\$2,250
Application for a New Non-Degree Program	
• Related Program.....	\$1,250
• Unrelated Program.....	\$1,250
Application for a New Non-Degree Program-Affiliated Schools	
• Related Program	
• 1 st School.....	\$1,250
• Each Affiliated School.....	\$750
• Unrelated Program	
• 1 st School.....	\$1,250
• Each Affiliated School.....	\$750
Application for Renewal of Accreditation.....	\$2,250
Application for a Satellite Location.....	\$1,000
Application for a Substantive Program Modification.....	\$750
Application for a Substantive Program Modification-Addition of a Concentration.....	\$750
Application for a Substantive Program Modification-Affiliated Schools.....	\$750*
Change of Ownership Report.....	\$250
Consortium/Partnership Report.....	\$500
Facility Expansion Report.....	\$500
Late Fee.....	\$750
Program Modification Report for Non-Substantive Changes.....	\$250
Program Modification Report for Non-Substantive Changes-Affiliated Schools.....	\$250*
Request for Good Cause Showing.....	\$250
Request for a Waiver of a Standard or Policy.....	\$250

*Each School/Each Program

Fees Related to Commission Actions:

At the Commission’s discretion, the fees set forth below will be assessed for the processing of the following types of Commission actions:

Probation.....	\$1,000
Warning.....	\$500
Reporting.....	\$250

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Fees Related to On-site Evaluations:

On-Site Evaluation Fees:

The Commission assesses a fee for required on-site evaluations as follows:

- Team Leader, Education Specialist, and Commission Representative: \$1,500 per evaluator for the first day and \$450 per evaluator for each day thereafter.
- Occupation/Subject Matter Specialist:
 - Local: \$200 per day.
 - Non-local: \$1,500 for the first day and \$450 per day thereafter.

Unannounced On-site Evaluation Fees:

The Commission assesses a fee for an unannounced on-site evaluation as follows:

- Regular Unannounced: \$2,500.00 for the first day and \$450.00 for each day thereafter.
- Commission Directed Unannounced:
 - First Assigned Evaluator: \$2,500.00 for the first day and \$450.00 for each day thereafter.
 - Each Subsequent Assigned Evaluator: \$1,500 per evaluator for the first day and \$450 per evaluator for each day thereafter.

International On-site Evaluation Fees:

On-site evaluation fees for schools outside of North America and the Caribbean will be assessed on a direct cost basis if the cost of the evaluation exceeds the fees collected as described above. Additional fees may also be assessed to schools outside of the United States or its territories to accommodate language translation needs.

Pass-Through Fees:

The Commission applies a pass-through fee for stipends to be paid to Education Specialists and Occupation/Subject Matter Specialists. The following fees are applied:

- Education Specialist: \$175 per day/review.
- Occupation/Subject Matter Specialist: \$100 per day/review.

Late Fees:

Late fees will apply to all reports and applications, responses to on-site evaluation reports, and any other Commission directed report or response that has a specific deadline. The \$750 late processing fee is assessed and due the day following the due date of a report, application or response. A late fee may be reduced to \$350 if the school requested and received an extension grant prior to the due date. A list of schools which have not paid fees in accordance with established requirements will be reported to the Commission at each regularly scheduled meeting and may constitute reason for a Warning to be issued.

Other Fees and Obligations:

The AACSC *Bylaws* describe other fees and obligations required of Members of Corporation under Section 3.02.

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APPENDIX II – APPLICATIONS, REPORTS, FORMS, & INSTRUCTIONS

APPLICATIONS, REPORTS, FORMS, AND INSTRUCTIONS

Below are the applications, reports, and forms that schools must submit to inform the Commission of any changes that affect the educational purposes, programs, administrative functions, or management of the school as well as instructions as to how the school is to engage in a particular function. These applications, reports, forms, and instructions are considered part of the *Standards of Accreditation* and are critical to the Commission's ability to determine compliance with accrediting standards. A school is responsible through these applications, reports, forms, and instructions for demonstrating continuing compliance with accrediting standards. A school is responsible for monitoring when appropriate applications, reports, and forms need to be filed and for ensuring that applicable instructions are followed. Applications, reports, and forms submitted for Commission review must be complete, accurate, signed by the school's chief executive officer, and filed in a timely manner. Applicable fees must accompany the application, report, or form. At its discretion, the Commission may prescribe a specific time frame that is different from the customary period for the submission of school applications or reports. *The applications, reports, forms, and instructions are available on the Commission's website – www.accsc.org*

- Allocation of Hours for Clock-Hour Programs
- Annual Report
- Application for Appeal of a Commission Decision
- Application for Approval of a Degree Program
 - Occupational Associate Degree
 - Academic Associate Degree
 - Baccalaureate Degree
 - Master's Degree
 - Affiliated Schools
- Application for a Branch Campus-Part I
- Application for a Branch Campus-Part II
- Application for a Change of Location-Part I
- Application for a Change of Location-Part II
- Application for a Change of Mission or Educational Objectives
- Application for a Change of Name-Part I
- Application for a Change of Name-Part II
- Application for a Change of Ownership-Part I
- Application for a Change of Ownership-Part II
- Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion
- Application for Clock Hour to Credit Hour Conversion-Affiliated Schools
- Application for Continuing Education and Avocational Courses
- Application for a Distance Education Facility
- Application for Initial Distance Education Approval
- Application for Expansion of Distance Education Approval
- Application for Initial Accreditation-Part I
- Application for Initial Accreditation-Part II
- Application for a New Non-Degree Program
 - Affiliated Schools
- Application for Renewal of Accreditation
- Application for a Satellite Location
- Application for a Substantive Program Modification
- Application for a Substantive Program Modification-Affiliated Schools
- Application for a Substantive Program Modification-Addition of a Concentration
- Catalog Checklist
- Complaint Review Process Form
- Complaint Form
- Graduation and Employment Chart
- Change of Ownership Report
- Consortium/Partnership Report
- Enrollment Agreement Checklist
- Facility Expansion Report
- Faculty Personnel Report
- Instructions for Arbitration
- Instructions for Disclosure and Advertising of Accredited Status
- Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Financial Statements and Related Information
- Instructions for Electronic Submission
- Outline of a Non-Degree Program
- Outline of a Degree Program
- Pre-Workshop Application for Initial Applicant Schools
- Program Chart
- Program Modification Report for Non-Substantive Changes
- Program Modification Report for Non-Substantive Changes-Affiliated Schools
- Retention Chart
- Request for a Waiver of an Accrediting Standard or Policy
- Request to Show Good Cause
- Self-Evaluation Report
- Staff Personnel Report
- Sustaining Fees Calculation Worksheet
- Teach-Out Forms
 - Teach-Out Agreement Approval Form
 - Institutional Teach-Out Plan Approval Form
 - Programmatic Teach-Out Plan Approval Form

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APPENDIX III – DEFINITION OF A CREDIT HOUR

In accordance with *Section II (A)(3)(b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*, this appendix sets forth criteria for establishing credit hour measures.

A credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for academic activities as established by the institution comprised of the following units: didactic learning environment; supervised laboratory setting of instruction; externship; and out-of-class work/preparation. The following are the measures of these units for establishing credit hour awards:

Credit Hour:

One semester credit hour equals 45 units (and one quarter credit hour equals 30 units) comprised of the following academic activities:

- One clock hour in a didactic learning environment = 2 units
- One clock hour in a supervised laboratory setting of instruction = 1.5 units
- One hour of externship = 1 unit
- One hour of out-of-class work and/or preparation for the didactic learning environment or supervised laboratory setting of instruction that are designed to measure the student's achieved competency relative to the required subject matter objectives = 0.5 unit

Glossary of Terms:

- A **didactic learning environment** is one which is led by a qualified faculty member for the intention of teaching and learning and can be in a classroom or laboratory setting of instruction.
- A **supervised laboratory setting of instruction** is one where students engage in discussion and/or the practical application of information presented in the didactic portion of the program or discovered through out-of-class work/preparation (e.g., practical application settings, clinical settings, etc.) under the supervision of a qualified school faculty member.
- **Out-of-class work/preparation** is that which students engage in as a means to prepare for the didactic learning environment or supervised laboratory setting of instruction and must be articulated through a course syllabus. An institution must be able to justify the number of hours estimated for that outside-of-class work. The student's work outside of class must be consistent with course educational goals and objectives; documented, assessed/graded; and serve as an integral part of the structured, sequenced educational program as described in the syllabus.
- An **externship** is a component of a program that meets the Commission's externship standards and is offered in a bona fide occupational setting for which training and education are provided, the externship component may occur throughout the course of a program or as a capstone requirement. The objectives and goals of an externship must be to allow students to apply practically the knowledge and skills taught in didactic and laboratory settings of instruction.

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APPENDIX IV – RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS PERSONNEL CODE OF CONDUCT

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS PERSONNEL CODE OF CONDUCT

This appendix sets forth the items that, at a minimum, are to be included in the Code of Conduct required by *Section IV (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*. The school may choose the specific language to be used in its Code of Conduct so long as the language conforms to the spirit and intent of the items below. The school may also include other elements to the Code of Conduct as it deems appropriate. The Code of Conduct must be in writing and signed, minimally, by all school personnel whose primary duties include student recruitment and admissions functions.

1. Student recruitment, enrollment, and admissions duties will be conducted in an ethical and professional manner and in keeping with organizational policies and procedures as well as relevant accreditation requirements.
2. Student recruitment, enrollment, and admissions duties will be geared toward the enrollment of qualified applicants who are likely to complete and benefit from the training provided by the school and not geared toward enrolling students simply to obtain enrollments.
3. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will only provide truthful and accurate statements, descriptions, and explanations regarding the school and its personnel, training, facilities, equipment, services, and accredited status.
4. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will work to ensure that students are fully informed and able to make considered enrollment decisions without undue pressure.
5. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will only assist prospective students in the areas that fall within the purview of their position and will not assist prospective students in admissions testing or alter or falsify any enrollment documents or required test scores.
6. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will not make explicit or implicit promises of employment or exaggerated statements regarding employment or salary prospects to prospective students.
7. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will participate in relevant training provided by the school to enhance their skills as school representatives.
8. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will not assist prospective students in providing false or misleading information on any application.
9. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will not recruit prospective students in or near welfare offices, unemployment lines, food stamp centers, homeless shelters, or other circumstances or settings where such persons cannot reasonably be expected to make informed and considered enrollment decisions.
10. Student recruitment and admissions personnel will not discredit other schools or influence any student to leave another school by: falsely imputing to another school dishonorable conduct, inability to perform contracts, or questionable credit standing; making other false representations; falsely disparaging the character, nature, quality, value, or scope of another school's program of instruction or services; or demeaning another school's students.
11. Student recruitment and admissions personnel acknowledge having received a copy of the ACCSC *Standards of Accreditation* and having read the sections pertaining to recruitment, advertising, and admissions.

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APPENDIX V – ADMISSIONS DOCUMENTATION

ADMISSIONS DOCUMENTATION

Section V (A)(4)(b), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation requires that a school “secures documentation to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admission requirements” prior to enrollment. Because of the importance of admissions requirements and the role those requirements play in allowing schools to make informed admissions decisions, the Commission believes that a school’s diligence in requiring documentation is a key component to institutional success. Therefore, the Commission does not consider a self-certification by a student that he or she has a high school diploma or equivalent to be “documentation” that the student has met this admissions requirement. The standard contemplates that a school will support its admissions decisions with independent documentation such as transcripts and copies of diplomas or other documentation of equivalency. Admissions documentation for students from foreign countries is to be translated and 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). In all cases, it is the responsibility of the school to determine whether the credential is appropriate and meets the school’s admissions criteria.

Moreover, the Commission believes that it is the responsibility of each school to make a determination that a student meets the school’s admissions criteria prior to that student beginning a program of study as a means to ensure that the student can perform the level of work required by the program curricula. The fundamental rationale is that admissions criteria are a key and front-line indicator of a potential student’s ability to be successful in a program and as such a school should not admit students to a program of study until the potential students can show that those qualifications have been met. The Commission also concluded that requiring admissions documentation prior to enrollment aligns with *Section V, Statement of Purpose, Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation* which states:

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 must be 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.

As such, the Commission has interpreted that “prior to enrollment” in the context of *Section V (A)(4)(a-b)* means prior to the acceptance of the student through the full execution of the enrollment agreement (e.g., signed by the accepting school official) and before allowing a student to start classes. As a practical matter, the Commission concluded that a student may sign an enrollment agreement and a school may communicate conditional or provisional acceptance of a student prior to receipt of documentation that admissions criteria have been met. However, a school may not consider a student fully enrolled and may not allow a student to start classes without the requisite documentation. Thus, each school must have a policy and procedure for ensuring that admission documentation is secured prior to fully executing the enrollment agreement and allowing the student to start class. The Commission also concluded that this interpretation applies equally to “conditional” or “trial” periods of enrollment.

For those ACCSC-accredited institutions that require that an applicant must possess a high school diploma or its equivalent for admission, the Commission recognizes that in rare instances students may not be able to provide documentation required by a school’s admissions criteria due to issues beyond their control (e.g., loss of records due to fire or flood, inability to obtain records, home schooled students, etc.). In these rare cases, a school may use an admissions test in lieu of documentation of a high school diploma or its equivalent. Under these circumstances, the student must sign a statement attesting that he or she in fact obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent and state the reason(s) why documentation of the earned credential cannot be provided. The admissions test used under these circumstances must be reviewed by a qualified, independent, third party and certified as to the appropriateness of the instrument

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APPENDIX V – ADMISSIONS DOCUMENTATION

and required score levels (i.e., equivalent to a high school diploma). If a school chooses to use such a test for these unusual circumstances, this should be stated in the school's admissions policies.

The Commission understands that other regulatory agencies may have different requirements. Please be advised that in instances where these differences exist, the more stringent requirements shall apply (*Section I (B)(1)(e)(iii), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation*).

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APPENDIX VI – STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATES

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATES – GRADUATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Revised July 1, 2016

The Commission determines the established benchmark rates of student graduation and graduate employment for its accredited schools from information collected in Annual Report submissions.¹ Schools should set goals to exceed not only the benchmark rates, but also the average rates of graduation and employment.

The following student achievement rates are in effect for all Graduation and Employment Charts that use a Report Date of July 1, 2016 and later. These rates remain in effect until further notice.

Established Benchmark 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%

* If a school reports a lower graduation rate for a program, that program will be subject to additional monitoring or reporting as deemed appropriate. Prolonged failure to meet a benchmark rate will result in a programmatic or institutional action as deemed appropriate by the Commission (see *Section VII (B)(2)(a-c), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).

Established Benchmark Employment Rate			
	Average Rate of Employment	Standard Deviation	Established Benchmark Employment Rate*
All Programs	78%	8%	70%

* If a school reports a lower employment rate for a program, that program will be subject to additional monitoring or reporting as deemed appropriate. Prolonged failure to meet a benchmark rate will result in a programmatic or institutional action as deemed appropriate by the Commission (see *Section VII (B)(2)(a-c), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*).

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATE – LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION EXAM PASS RATE

For those programs where a governmental entity requires the attainment of a passing score on a licensure/certification exam in order to work in a particular field, the Commission determines a program's licensure/certification exam pass rate to be acceptable when at least **70%** of the students that take the exam attain a passing score.²

¹ Generally, the Commission establishes the benchmark rate at one standard deviation below the average (mean) aggregated graduation and employment rate data collected in the Annual Report.

² If another entity or agency requires a higher examination pass rate, the higher standard shall apply and the Commission will take into consideration any action taken by another entity or agency with regard to a school's failure to meet an examination pass rate requirement (see *Section I (B)(1)(e)(iii), Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation*).

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APPENDIX VII – GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

The school must be able to justify the classification of each graduate as employed in a training related field and maintain verifiable employment records using the following guidelines. In accordance with *Section I (A)(1)(d) Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation*, the school should have and adhere to policies or protocols in regard to these guidelines (reasonable time period, sustainability, relatedness, etc.).

1. The employment classification is appropriate and reasonable based on the educational objectives of the program.
2. The employment is for a reasonable period of time, is based on program objectives, and can be considered sustainable (e.g., not a single day of employment).
3. 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.
4. The employment classification is verified by the school (and verifiable by third parties such as the Commission) as follows:
 - a. Regular Employment:
 - i. The school secures written documentation from the employer verifying the employment and that the employment is related to the student's program of study at the school; or
 - ii. The school secures written documentation from the graduate verifying the employment and that the employment is related to the student's program of study at the school; or
 - iii. In cases where a school can show diligent efforts have been made to secure such written documentation without success, the school maintains employment verification records that include:
 1. The graduate's and employer's name and contact information;
 2. A signature of school staff attesting to verbal employment verification with the employer and the date of verification; and
 3. A signature of school staff attesting to verbal employment verification with the graduate and the date of verification.

- b. Self-Employment:

The school secures written documentation from the self-employed graduate verifying that the employment is valid including, at a minimum, a statement signed by the graduate which includes the following:

- The graduate's name and contact information;
- An attestation that the self-employment is aligned with the individual's employment goals, is vocational, and is based on and related to the education and training received;
- An attestation that the graduate is earning training-related income; and
- In cases where licensure is required for employment, an attestation that such licensure has been achieved.

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APPENDIX VII – GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

c. Career Advancement:

Students that are already employed in the field of study at the time of graduation¹ can be considered employed when completing the program of study as follows:

- i. The school shows with written documentation from the employer or the graduate that the training allowed the graduate to maintain the employment position due to the training provided by the school; or
- ii. The school shows with written documentation from the employer or the graduate that the training supported the graduate's ability to be eligible or qualified for advancement due to the training provided by the school.

5. A verifiable employment record includes the following information:

- Graduate Name and Contact Information (e.g., home phone number, mobile phone number, e-mail address, etc.);
- Date of Initial Employment;
- Place of Employment;
- Employer Address;
- Employer Contact Person/Supervisor and direct contact information (e.g., phone number, e-mail address, etc.); and
- Descriptive Job Title and Duties.

In addition to these guidelines, the Commission expects that schools will regularly gather information from employers as a means to assess the preparedness of graduates for employment and make program modifications as may be necessary based on that feedback.

¹ The intent of this provision does not apply in cases where a student secures 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).

ACCSC STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION APPENDIX VIII – STATEMENT FOR WORKING WITH EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

ACCSC STATEMENT FOR SCHOOLS WORKING WITH EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The following statement is provided to assist an institution undergoing the process of accreditation to understand the perspective of the Commission regarding the utilization of external consultants in the accreditation process.

A cornerstone of the accreditation process is self-evaluation. Self-evaluation aids the staff and faculty of an institution in analyzing and verifying that it is effectively accomplishing its stated objectives according to its established policies and procedures as well as the established policies and procedures of federal and state agencies and of an accrediting body. The process helps the staff and faculty to develop the knowledge and skills that enable the institution to continuously monitor and maintain quality throughout its organization.

It is important to recognize that an institution must demonstrate to the Commission that it is capable of offering programs and services of quality to its students and that the institution has the internal infrastructure, management and administrative capacity, and educational staff and faculty to provide and sustain those efforts.

ACCSC does not take a position with regard to whether institutions should seek the assistance of an external consultant while undergoing any part of the accreditation process, particularly the self-evaluation process. Furthermore, ACCSC does not recommend specific individuals or consulting firms to any institution seeking external assistance.

If an institution chooses to use an external consultant in the accreditation process, the external consultant may not be present at the institution during any part of an on-site evaluation. The on-site evaluation team will expect to communicate directly with management and employees of the institution and not with a consultant employed solely for the purpose of completing the accreditation process.