Renewal Accreditation Virtual Workshop

October 1 – 2, 2020
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome from the Commission</td>
<td>Michale McComis</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1:00pm – 2:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Standards of Accreditation</td>
<td>Chris Lambert</td>
<td>2:45pm – 4:30pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alanna Marx</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Application and SER</td>
<td>Alicia DeMartini, Maurya Scanlon-Sorokes</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<td>1:00pm – 2:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-site Evaluation and Response to the Report</td>
<td>Alicia DeMartini, Maurya Scanlon-Sorokes</td>
<td>2:15pm – 3:45pm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Attend Accreditation Virtual Workshop
• October 1 – 2, 2020

Upload Application for Renewal Accreditation
• November 16, 2020

Upload revised Application and SER
• March 31, 2021
Welcome from the Commission
Virtual Workshop Break
Back in 15 minutes
The Standards of Accreditation
Standards of Accreditation

- **Describes** the accreditation process
  - *Rules of Process and Procedure*

- Sets forth the **base of essentials** against which an institution evaluates itself
  - *Substantive Standards*

- Each institution determines its own **educational objectives**

- Each institution is evaluated based on how well it accomplishes its **announced objectives**
The Standards of Accreditation ensure that each institution properly prepares students for employment in their chosen field.

ACCSC emphasizes educational quality by focusing on outcomes:

- Student Graduation Rates
- Rates of Graduate Employment
- Licensure / Certification Pass Rates

The Importance of Infrastructure
Call for Comments / Accreditation Alerts

Call for Comment
• Opportunity to offer comments on proposed changes to the Standards of Accreditation

Accreditation Alert
• Notice regarding the final adoption and revisions to the Standards of Accreditation
• Provides interpretative guidance pertaining to the Commission's rules and standards.
Key Areas of the Standards of Accreditation

Example Compliance Findings
Section II, Substantive Standards
Program Requirements
Program Requirements

• Development and delivery of viable, quality programs that lead to students’ successful attainment of knowledge, skills, and vocational objectives;

• Careful design process and rigorous ongoing assessment of programs;

• Establishing an appropriate program length;
Program Requirements

• Furnishing detailed and organized course outlines and syllabi;

• Identifying clear learning objectives; and

• Resourcing the programs with adequate instructional materials, equipment, and learning resources materials.
Program Requirements

ESTABLISH THE PROCESS:

• Consider timeline

• Required approvals (state, board)

• Input from internal and external resources

• Determine the need and viability of a program

• Consider elements: instruction, resources, assessment and method of delivery

• Clock and credit hour allocation

• Appropriate program length
FOR EACH PROGRAM:

• Detailed and organized instructional outline and course syllabi for EACH course

• Program design and awarded credits conform to generally accepted practices

• Appropriate number of didactic, supervised lab, and other hours, including outside work and externship

• Enable students to achieve objectives and acquire expected skills and knowledge (gain employment!)
Program Requirements

Clock and Credit Hours:

- A clock hour is defined as 50 minutes of instruction in a 60 minute period of time.
- A credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes.
- Definitions can vary by state

Systematic and Evidence Based Process:

- Consider internal and external feedback
- Ongoing assessment at set intervals
- Employment needs
- Competition and viability
FOR EACH PROGRAM:

- Instructional materials are comprehensive and reflect current occupational settings and skills
- Equipment is similar to that found in the related field
- Sufficient number of equipment and learning stations
- All machinery and equipment in working order
- Survey your students!
Program Requirements

Program Advisory Committee Meeting

- Written minutes – detailed
- Twice Per year (one on-site)

- At Least 3 Employers or Practitioners: representatives from the employment community, practitioners, and others from the field of education, regulators, etc. as appropriate.
- Masters program: PAC must include TWO members with graduate level education.
- At least one member to review distance education (if DE is offered)
- PAC Meetings Minutes: External to school, description of members, details and commentary
- Review program, LRS, G&E rates, licensure exam outcomes
- Consider feedback and input – implement change
Learning Resource System

- Libraries
- Access to texts and databases
- Electronic Resources
- Library Consortia and Interlibrary Loan Agreements
- Sufficient in quantity and scope to meet educational objectives and adequately serve the student body (population and education level)
- Integrate LRS into program curriculum
- Managed by Qualified School Personnel: training and experience
- Schools with a Baccalaureate = LRS supervisor must have Master’s degree in library science or information specialist.
- Written training plan for staff
Program Requirements

Externships
• Bona fide occupational setting – have several sites available
• Written Training Plan: Details the evaluation process and criteria to be used to evaluate competency and skill attainment (*specific to area of study and credential*)
• Established Timelines – don’t make your students wait
• Onsite Supervision and Externship Supervisor

Independent Study
• Offered within a credit hour program and must include comprehensive educational objectives
Consortium, Partnership or Contractual Arrangements

• A portion of a program is offered by an entity other than the ACCSC-accredited institution via any consortium, partnership, or contractual arrangement
  ➢ Submit the ACCSC Consortium/Partnership Report with a signed contractual agreement

• Distance Education or Residential Consortium Arrangements: Between ACCSC accredited institutions
  ➢ Submit the ACCSC Distance Education Consortium Arrangement Application

• Host school may not award more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours required in a program via a consortium

• A school may enter into contractual arrangements with business, industry, or government agencies for group training purposes.
Program Requirements

Transfer of Credit
• May accept transfer credit for courses completed in other postsecondary institutions when comparable
• Communicate the criteria and process for evaluating and accepting credits earned
• Have an official policy; publish and document the policy

Allowance
• 25% of the credits required for non-degree and undergraduate degree programs must be earned from the school awarding the credential.
• 50% of the credits required for a graduate degree program must be earned from the school awarding the degree.

Prior Learning Experience
• A school may award credit based on an assessment of experience acquired outside of formal instructional or educational settings
• Settings such service in the armed forces, employment and on-the-job training, apprenticeships, or other similar learning sources
• No more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours
Non-Degree Programs

- **80% of program** should be technical and occupationally related courses/20% other – gen ed, career prep

Degree Programs

- General Requirements (credit hours; course numbering)
- Technical course and gen ed course requirements
- Associate Degrees
  - Occupational Vs. Academic (gen eds)
- Baccalaureate Degrees
- Master’s Degrees

Secondary Educational Objectives

- Continuing Education/Avocational Courses
- English as a Second Language (front loaded / integrated)
The school must demonstrate that it conducts Program Advisory Committee ("PAC") meetings in accordance with accrediting standards (Section II (A)(6), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation). Specifically, based on a review of the PAC meeting minutes, the onsite evaluation team noted the following:

• The school **did not have any** PAC meetings for the Welding program in 2019; **hosted one** PAC meeting for the Welding program in 2020; however, **only two employers** were in attendance at the meeting;
Section II, Substantive Standards

Program Requirements
Section III, Substantive Standards
Educational Administration & Faculty Qualifications
Educational Administration

- On-site person (DOE) – lead and manage programs, assessment, faculty
  - Non-Degree: DOE has education equal or exceeding
  - Degree: DOE has degree one level higher
- Program Chair: possess education background equal or exceeding the max credential offered

Educational Background

- Verify prior work experience
- Verify academic credentials
  - Maintain Documentation (written, verbal)
  - Keep transcripts on file
- Ensure ongoing assessment and professional development – document!
- Ensure retention of staff – have a retention plan, offer training, and avoid high turnover. Also ensure sufficient number of staff
Faculty Qualifications

Faculty teaching technical courses in a Non-Degree program or Occupational Associates
3 years of related practical work experience in the subject area(s) taught

Faculty teaching Applied General Education in a Non-Degree
3 years work experience or college-level coursework in the subject area(s) taught or an appropriate mix thereof that aligns with the curriculum content being taught.

Faculty teaching Applied General Education in Occupational Degree (Associates)
Baccalaureate degree with appropriate coursework or 8 years related practical work experience and college-level coursework
Faculty Qualifications

Remember!

• “College-level coursework,” and “appropriate academic coursework and preparation” means a minimum of 15 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) in related subject areas that support the curriculum content.

• “Practical Work Experience” is professional experience in the field related to the program/course that the faculty member teaches.

• Teaching experience is NOT considered practical work experience.
Faculty Qualifications

Faculty teaching **Academic General Education** in a **Non-Degree or degree program**:

A master’s degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject area(s) taught.

Faculty teaching **Technical and Occupationally Related Courses** in an **Academic Associate or Baccalaureate Degree Program**:

4 years of related practical work experience in the subject area **and** possess a degree at least at the same level.
Faculty Qualifications

Graduate Level Faculty:

Graduate Level Courses in a Master’s Degree

50% must be taught by faculty members who possess a minimum of 4 years of related practical work experience and an earned doctorate degree in a related field of study.

The remaining 50% must be taught by faculty who possess minimum of 4 years of related practical work experience and an earned a Masters degree in a related field Or A masters degree in an unrelated field with 18 semester in the subject area taught.
Though the school has a written plan regarding professional development of faculty, the school must document that faculty members engage in ongoing faculty professional development activities (Section III (A)(2), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).

Specifically, based on documentation reviewed by the on-site evaluation team, no faculty members engaged in professional development in 2018 or 2019; and less than 30% of faculty have participated in professional development activities to date in 2020.
The school must provide documentation demonstrating that it verifies prior work experience of all faculty members and administrators (Section III (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).

Specifically, in reviewing faculty personnel files, the team noted that the school does not maintain documentation to demonstrate that it verifies faculty prior work experience.
Section III, Substantive Standards
Educational Administration & Faculty Qualifications
Section IV, Substantive Standards
Student Recruitment, Advertising, and Disclosures
Recruitment
• Describe the school fully and accurately
• Permit prospective students to make informed enrollment decisions without undue pressure
• Recruitment is not simply “obtaining enrollments”
• Codes of Conduct

Advertising, Promotion, Statements, and Claims
• Truthful & avoid leaving any misleading or exaggerated impression
• Education, and not employment, is being offered

Disclosures
• Catalog & Enrollment Agreement
The school is unable to demonstrate that it has established and enforces an acceptable code of conduct for all school personnel whose primary responsibilities are to engage in recruiting and admissions functions prior to and during admission and matriculation.

Specifically, based on a file review, the school does not current maintain a code of conduct in writing that includes, minimally, all elements set forth in Appendix IV, Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation, as required by Section IV (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).
Section IV, Substantive Standards
Student Recruitment, Advertising, and Disclosures
Section V, Substantive Standards
Admission Policies and Practices
Admissions Policies and Practices

General Requirements

Prior to enrollment a school:

- Determines that an applicant meets the school’s admissions requirements;

- Secures documentation to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admission requirements

- A school may not consider a student fully enrolled and may not allow a student to start classes without the requisite documentation.

(SEE ACCSC March 2020 Guidance)
International Students

- Admissions documentation for students from foreign countries is to be translated and certified.

ESL Courses

- Students enrolled in ESL courses must meet all other admission requirements applicable to students enrolled in the school’s career or occupational programs.
Non-Degree Programs
Determine ATB for students who do not possess a high school diploma or recognized equivalency certificate

Degree Programs - Undergraduate
Must have earned at least a high school diploma or recognized equivalency

Degree Programs – Graduate
• Must possess an earned baccalaureate degree
• For graduate level courses or master’s degree programs, standardized examinations may be required (e.g., GRE)
The school must demonstrate that it **secures documentation** to demonstrate that each applicant meets all admission requirements prior to enrollment.

Specifically, the on-site evaluation team found that the school’s practice of allowing students to “conditionally” begin classes **without having first secured documentation** (e.g., copies of high school diploma/GED) that all admissions criteria have been met does not meet the requirements set forth in **Section V (A)(4)(b) and Appendix V, Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation**.
Section V, Substantive Standards
Admission Policies and Practices
Section VI, Substantive Standards
Student Services
Student Services

Advising and Counseling
- Coordinated by individual with appropriate professional and educational qualifications
  - Counseling Services When Necessary

Documentation of Advising Sessions
- Coping skills (e.g., life, career development, budget);
- Student retention strategies
- Academic advising;
- Testing and tutoring services;
- Monitoring of attendance records and LOAs;
- Graduate employment assistance; and
- Information concerning housing, transportation, and child care.
Student Services

**Student Records**
- Permanent educational record
  - Admissions, Academic, and Financial records;
- Official Transcripts
  - Maintained Indefinitely
- Refunds for a minimum of 5 years.

**Graduate Employment Assistance Records**
- Maintain verifiable records of each graduate’s initial employment for 5 years

**Student Complaints**
- Maintain a complete record of all written student complaints for at least the last 5 years.
The school must demonstrate that it remains attentive to student needs (Section VI, (A)(1), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).

The results of student surveys conducted during the onsite evaluation showed that 70% of the students surveyed did not feel good about their decision to attend the school and 75% would not recommend the school to a friend.
Section VII, Substantive Standards
Student Achievement Standards
### ACCSC Student Achievement Standard

#### Established Benchmark Graduation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Length in Months</th>
<th>Average Rates of Graduation Demonstrates Acceptable Student Achievement</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Established Benchmark Graduation Rates*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-23</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24+</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Established Benchmark Employment Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Length in Months</th>
<th>Average Rate of Employment Demonstrates Acceptable Student Achievement</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Established Benchmark Employment Rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Programs</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Licensure/Certification Pass Rate Benchmark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Programs</th>
<th>Licensure/Certification Pass Rate Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Programs</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of Employment Rates
2005-2015

- 11 Years
- 32,273 Programs
- 78% Avg
- 70% Benchmark

How do your program offerings compare?
Our Goal is to be the best, minimally compliant, below average institution we can be.

Average Employment Rate: 78%
ACCSC Benchmark: 70%
ACCSC expects that schools conduct a realistic assessment of the viability of program offerings and identify the factors impacting student achievement.

ACCSC expects that schools will take appropriate and responsible action regarding any program offering that is not meeting expectations.

• At what rate are students graduating?
• At what rate are graduates passing licensure exams?
• At what rate are graduates getting a job in a training related field?
ACCSC Accreditation
Ensuring Quality Education that Enhances Student Success in the Workforce
End of Day One!
The Accreditation Process
Attend Accreditation Virtual Workshop
• October 1 – 2, 2020

Upload Application for Renewal Accreditation
• November 16, 2020

Upload revised Application and SER
• March 31, 2021
• **Cornerstone** of ACCSC’s ability to continually ensure the high quality of education in accredited member institutions.

• Provides an opportunity for an institution to conduct a **comprehensive review of all activities** that support an institution’s mission and educational objectives.

• While ACCSC employs its own fact-finding methods to determine an institution’s compliance with accrediting standards, **the burden rests with the institution** to establish that it is meeting ACCSC’s standards.
Accreditation Process

To evaluate each institution’s compliance with accrediting standards

To ensure consistency in institutional operations

To provide for public accountability
Other Deadlines
Must be submitted no later than 6 months following the end of the school’s fiscal-year:

**EXAMPLE**

June 30, 2020 Year-End

DUE December 31, 2020

• Accrual basis of accounting (not cash basis);
• Comparative format
• Audited
Calculated by the institution via the **ACCSC Sustaining Fee Calculation Sheet**

- Due each year with the submission of the school’s fiscal year-end financial statements
Disclosures and Material Events
Has any owner or manager been directly or indirectly employed or affiliated with any school which has lost or been denied accreditation?

Been directly or indirectly employed or affiliated with any school which has closed or entered into bankruptcy?

Is any action pending (e.g. court action, audit), or has action been taken, by any court or administrative body?
**Material Events**

**Examples**
- Petitions for bankruptcy;
- Destruction of the school or its facilities;
- Any sanction (e.g., probationary status), suspension, or revocation of a school’s license;
- Cessation of teaching;
- Any grant of accreditation, Show Cause Order, Probation or Adverse Action by another agency

Must notify ACCSC, in writing, **within 10 calendar days** of the event’s occurrence.
- Or Late fee of $750 applies
Best Practice: Consistency
**Best Practices**

**Consistency in Documentation** to Demonstrate that Policies and Procedures are being followed is **Critical to Success** in the Accreditation Process.

- Refund Policies
- Student Services / Advising & Counseling
- Grades and Attendance
- Admissions

**Every. Student. Enrolled.**
ACCSC will also evaluate the **consistent documentation** of the implementation of a school’s policies and procedures throughout the most recent term of accreditation:
Ensure the **consistent disclosure** of programs, program names, program length, clock hours, credit hours as reported on:

- Application and SER
- State License
- Advertising / Catalog / Enrollment Agreement
Application for Renewal of Accreditation: Application Attachments
# Application for Renewal of Accreditation: Application Attachments

1. Application Processing Fee - $2,250
2. Workshop Certificate
3. Ownership of School (10% or More)
4. Certification Statement: Third Party Verification
5. OPEID # / 3 Years of Cohort Default Rates (campus specific)
6. Corporate Affiliations with Other Schools
Application for Renewal of Accreditation: Application Attachments

7. Copy of All Current State Licenses
8. State Program Approvals (clock / credit hour)
9. Other Accreditations (Notices)
10. Programmatic or Other Regulatory Approval Required for Employment
11. State Authorization for Distance Education Programs
Application for Renewal of Accreditation:
Application Attachments

12. Consortium Agreements
13. ACCSC Program Chart
14. ACCSC Clock Hour / Credit Hour Forms
15. Discontinued Programs (Since Last Accreditation) with Notices to ACCSC.
16. Organizational Chart (all employees)
17. Listing by Program of Faculty
Application for Renewal of Accreditation:
Application Attachments

18. List of Program Advisory Committee members for Each Program
19. Documentation that physical facilities meet fire, safety and sanitation standards
20. Certificate of Insurance
21. URL of Website; Current Advertisements
22. PDF of cross-referenced Catalog

23. PDF of cross-referenced Enrollment Agreement
Homework Assignment
Go to www.accsc.org
Click on Directory
Search for your School

Review Institutional Contact Information
If contact information needs to be updated, go to the ACCSC Annual Report Portal and make change

Review Program Information
(name, clock hours, credit hours)
The program listed on the directory are pulled directly from the ACCSC program database.
Assessment of the Complete School
The self-evaluation process should involve the entire school

Improvements due to internal efforts
Improvements within a school should be due primarily to its internal efforts rather than an on-site evaluation by an outside team.

Significant and on-going process
A permanent part of the institution’s operation.
The Self-Evaluation Report is comprised of 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.
• Does the SER response **answer the question** being asked?

• Is the SER **complete and clear**?

• Is the SER **realistic** to reflect day-to-day operations?

• Is **necessary documentation** available to support the SER?
The Self-Evaluation Report

Section I (F) (3)

- Explain the requirements for fire, safety, and sanitation for all facilities owned or controlled for administrative, instructional, and housing purposes.

- Provide documentation from the appropriate regulatory authorities, demonstrating current compliance with the stated requirements.
Describe how school personnel train and orient the on-site supervisor at the externship site on the externship processes and criteria.

Also, describe how this ensures appropriate and fair measurement of demonstrated competency and skill attainment.
What is the average tenure (expressed in years) of the current faculty members?

What impact has this level of tenure had on educational delivery?
The on-site evaluation team includes an Occupation Specialist for each program, or groups of related programs, offered by the school.

A complete Appendix A for each distinct program or group of closely related programs offered at the school is required.

- The Application Acceptance letter will provide specific requirements for the submission of Appendix A.

Appendix A includes information relevant for the Occupation Specialist review.
Visit Preparation

• Set aside a separate secure room for the Commission team.

• Have students in regular attendance avoiding scheduled breaks, special exams, and field trips.

• Have as many instructional and administrative staff present as possible.

• Have driving directions and parking information available for the team prior to arrival.
Appendix B: Preparing for the Renewal of Accreditation Onsite Evaluation

Visit Materials - Virtual

37 Numbered Items (Ready for Team)
- Catalog
- Enrollment Agreement
- Organization Chart
- Faculty Listing
- Class Schedules

Other Materials (Ready Access is Required)
- Student Files
- Faculty Files
- Staff Files
- Current Budget
ACCSC on-site evaluation teams are required to include 1 OS to review each training program or group of related training programs.
- No more than 2 programs per OS

Appendix C requires schools to submit an O.S. Contact Sheet for 3 to 5 candidates per program (or group of related programs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAINING PROGRAM NAME</th>
<th>NAME OF OCCUPATION SPECIALIST CANDIDATE</th>
<th>TITLE OF OCCUPATION SPECIALIST CANDIDATE</th>
<th>TYPE AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD</th>
<th>EMPLOYER OF OCCUPATION SPECIALIST CANDIDATE</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER OF OCCUPATION SPECIALIST CANDIDATE</th>
<th>E-MAIL ADDRESS OF OCCUPATION SPECIALIST CANDIDATE</th>
<th>DATE SCHOOL CONTACTED PROPOSED CANDIDATE</th>
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Appendix C: Occupation Specialist (OS) Information Package

- Must be a current working professional with 5 years of hands-on experience in the field
- Must hold the necessary required certification/license to represent the industry

- The OS cannot be a current or former student or employee of the school;
- The OS cannot be affiliated with the school and has no conflict of interest with the school (i.e., PAC)
Graduation and Employment Chart
A Graduation and Employment Chart is required for each program offered.

• **Cohort Reporting** - Individual Students By Program By Start Date

A separate Graduation and Employment Chart will be required for F/T and P/T program.

• Reporting periods will differ among individual programs with different program lengths given the impact of SAP.
“Graduates - Unavailable for Employment” 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*
For the purpose of the G / E Chart, **International Students** are defined as being enrolled on the basis of a student or work visa and are ineligible for sustainable employment in the United States.

If international students as defined here represent a majority (more than 50%) of the Total Starts for the program (Line 5), then the school may not use the “international student” exclusion.
Guidelines for Employment Classification
Guidelines for Employment Classification

Justification

- justify the classification of each graduate as employed in a training related field
- maintain verifiable employment records

P & P

- adhere to policies or protocols in regard to employment guidelines
  - reasonable time period,
  - sustainability,
  - relatedness, etc.
Guidelines for Employment Classification

The employment:

- is for a **reasonable period** of time
- is based on **program objectives**
- is **directly related** to the program from which the individual graduated
- can be considered **consistent & sustainable**, and
- is a **paid position**.
Guidelines for Employment Classification

- Documentation verifying employment and that employment is related to program of study
- Aligns with a majority of the educational and training objectives
- Diligent Efforts w/o Success

Regular Employment
Guidelines for Employment Classification

Self-Employment

Written Documentation (Statement) from Graduate

Attestations: Aligned with Employment Goals; Vocational; Related to Training; Making Training Related Income; Licensed

Graduate Name, Contact Info.
Guidelines for Employment Classification

Career Advancement

Students that are already employed at time of graduation

Written Doc
Maintain Employment

Written Doc
Eligible for Advancement
• Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification
The school must engage an independent third-party to verify the employment data in the Graduation and Employment ("G&E") Chart(s) submitted in the most recently submitted Annual Report at the time of the due date of the SER as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinar</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>SER</th>
<th>Annual Report to be Third Party Verified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>November 16, 2020</td>
<td>March 31, 2021</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The independent third-party must select **minimally a 50% sample of employed graduates from each program offered as reported via Graduation and Employment Charts** and must report the results from that sample.

- Once the **50% sample** has been selected by the independent third-party, for the purposes of this application, the independent third-party may not alter the sample in an effort to get better results.
Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification

Is the data **reliable**?

Does the school maintain **verifiable** documentation?

Can the school provide **justification** for the graduate’s employment?
Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification

How Often?
- Every Year (by ACCSC)

How Many?
- 10% of ACCSC-Accredited Schools
Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification

**How Often?**
- Once Every Renewal Cycle
  - (1-6 Years)

**How Many?**
- 50% Sample of all Programs
Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification

- Independent from the School
- Verbally from the Employer or Graduate
- In writing from either Employer or Graduate
- Results to the Team / ACCSC
Independent Third-Party Employment Data Verification

a. The total number of students in the sample; and

b. The number of students in each of the categories below and the percentage in each category listed.
The school must provide the following chart with aggregate institutional results across all programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Third Party Initial Employment Verification</th>
<th>Reported Institutional Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report Year</td>
<td>Name of Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students sampled</td>
<td>Total number of available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>students to sample*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample size percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verified as Correct</td>
<td>Verified but Different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to Verify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verified as Not Correct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Students classified as Graduates - Employed in Field across all programs for Annual Report year

**Placements Verified by a Different Independent Third-Party***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Number of Graduates Verified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Graduates that were unable to be verified by the school's chosen vendor but were verified by a different third-party company like “The Work Number.”
6,683 Records

Verification Results

- Verified as Correct
- Verified But Different
- Unable to Verify
- Verified as not Correct
Same Employer
as listed in school record

 Exact Match

 Start Date
within 45 days of verified start date

 Obvious Match

 Confirmed Match
Different Title but Responsibilities Substantively the Same
A completed employment record for a graduate from the Automotive Technology program indicates the graduate as being employed in field as a **Mechanic**.
Verified but Different

Start Date is MORE THAN 45 Days Different

Verified but Different

Substantively Different Job Title

Not an Obvious Match or Confirmed Match
Unable to Verify

Unable to obtain verification of the school’s employment record

From either the Employer

Or the Graduate

Work Number
Verified as Not Correct

- Different Employer
- Graduate Record Not Found in Employer’s Records
- Grad denies working in position
- Position is unpaid/intern
- Other Discrepancies
Additional Resources
FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)
Provides additional guidance on the Independent Third-Party Employment Verification requirements.

- Which Annual Report will my school need to have verified by the independent third-party as part of my application for accreditation and submission of my Self Evaluation Report?
- What does my school need to have ready for the on-site evaluation team?

Guidelines for Independent Third-Party Employment Verification
Provides the framework to ensure that the institution’s records can be relied upon in making decisions about a school’s compliance with the Commission’s student achievement standards.
Appendix VII

ACCSC-accredited schools must be able to justify the classification of each graduate as employed in a training related field and maintain verifiable employment records using these guidelines.

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 2.3.0.3.0 Standards of Accreditation, the school should have a method to verify graduates have obtained employment in a training related field, including, but not limited to:

1. The employment classification is appropriate and reasonable based on the educational objectives of the program.
2. The employment (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 paid position.
4. The employment classification is verified by the school and verifiable by third parties such as the Commission or others.
   a. Regular Employment:
      i. The school submits written documentation from the employer verifying the employment and that the employment is related to the student’s program of study at the school;
      ii. The school submits written documentation from the graduate verifying the employment and that the employment is related to the student’s program of study at the school;
      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 document those efforts;
         i. The graduate’s and employer’s names and contact information;
         ii. A signature of school staff assisting in verbal employment verification with the employee and the date of verification; and
         iii. A signature of school staff assisting in verbal employment verification with the graduate and the date of verification.
   b. Self-Employment:
      The school submits written documentation from the self-employed graduate verifying that the employment is valid including, at minimum, a statement signed by the graduate, which includes:
         i. The graduate’s name and contact information;
         ii. An affirmation that the self-employment aligns with the individual’s educational goals, is vocational, and is based on and related to the education and training received;
         iii. An affirmation that the graduate is earning training-related income; and
         iv. In cases where licensure is required for employment, an affirmation that such licensure has been achieved.
Virtual Workshop Break
Back in 15 minutes
The Evaluation
Evaluators
Team Leader/Management Specialist

Responsible for leading the evaluation and ensuring that each team member performs the assigned functions:

- Management and Administrative Capacity
- Qualifications of Management and Administrative Personnel
- Institutional Assessment and Improvement Planning
- Physical Facilities
Evaluates the educational administration, faculty qualifications and professional development.

Evaluates the various program elements that enable a school to meet its objectives:

- Program Length
- Course Outlines
- Learning Objectives
- Instructional Materials and Equipment
- Availability and Integration of Learning Resource Materials
An ACCSC staff member will accompany the team during all evaluations in order to:

• Ensure consistency

• Provide technical assistance and interpretive guidance on accreditation standards and rules

• Serve as the liaison between the on-site evaluation team and the Commission
Evaluates whether instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive and reflect current occupational knowledge and practice.

- **Instructional equipment** is similar to that 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 used whenever the machinery and equipment is operated.
Evaluates equipment, technology, and other resources and infrastructure associated with distance education in such areas as:

- Admissions
- Student progress
- Student achievement
Observers

State Licensing Agency
A person with direct interest in the licensure or accreditation of ACCSC-accredited schools is invited to accompany an evaluation team as an observer.

ACCSC Observers
ACCSC Commissioners, staff, and team members will be permitted to accompany an evaluation team as an observer for training purposes.
The Evaluation
Scheduling the Evaluation

1 – 3 months following SER Due Date

- Regular School Day
- Key School Personnel
- Clearing the Team
- Changes may incur additional cost
- Unusual Circumstances
The evaluation provides an opportunity for discussion among the evaluator(s) and school officials, faculty, staff, and students.

The function of the evaluators is to evaluate and to verify:

- the information submitted by the school,
- the school’s success in meeting announced objectives and demonstrating successful student achievement, and
- school’s on-going compliance with the Standards of Accreditation.
The school will be evaluated according to all available information, including:

- **Documentation** included in the school’s Application and SER;
- **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
Visit Preparation

• Have students in regular attendance avoiding scheduled breaks, special exams, and field trips.

• Have as many instructional and administrative staff present as possible.
Appendix B: Preparing for the Renewal of Accreditation Evaluation

Visit Materials

37 Numbered Items (Ready for Team)
• Catalog
• Enrollment Agreement
• Organization Chart
• Faculty Listing
• Class Schedules

Other Materials (Ready Access is Required)
• Student Files
• Faculty Files
• Staff Files
• Current Budget
The Evaluation Begins!

- Curricula, Equipment, and Facilities
- Survey Students
- Observe Classes
- Interview Staff and Faculty
- File Review
At the conclusion of an evaluation, the team will convene with the school’s leadership team, and will present its preliminary findings in relation to the school’s compliance with accreditation standards.

The Evaluation Report serves as the factual report and summary of the evaluation team’s findings as to the school’s compliance with accrediting standards.
Virtual Visit General Information and Timeline
• **Virtual Visit General Information and Timeline**
  - Training Highlights
  - Prior to Virtual Visit
  - During Virtual Visit

• **Tips and Hints**
  - Dropbox
  - Zoom
  - General Information

• **Additional Questions and Answers**
I missed the training, what were the highlights?

ACCSC conducted a pilot of 10 schools and will be doing Virtual Visits on a go forward basis until travel restrictions and safety allow for on-site evaluations again.

Is a Virtual Visit all that is needed for reaccreditation?

No, the Department of Education still requires ACCSC to complete an on-site evaluation within a reasonable period of time.
Prior to the Visit

What does a school need to do to schedule a Virtual Visit? Does the school need to contact ACCSC?

There are 100+ visits that need to be rescheduled. ACCSC will contact the school with a potential week for the visit.

How far ahead of the visit will my school be contacted?

ACCSC is trying to contact schools a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the visit but for most schools it will be approximately 30 days prior.
Prior to the Visit

Where do I upload materials? Is there a due date?

Once the virtual visit dates are confirmed, the Commission Representative will send Dropbox links to upload the materials. All materials need to be uploaded no later than the week before the visit.

What about student files and faculty files? Will I need to upload those?

If your school already has electronic files, we will utilize the share screen within Zoom to review them. If you have paper files, we will ask that you upload those items that are required for Admissions.
I know the Virtual Visit is on the Zoom platform but what will each day include?

It will still be similar to a standard on-site evaluation and include an entrance meeting, interviews, daily debrief, and summary review.

Ok, but what does the schedule for that really include?

It will be a little different for every school (just like an on-site evaluation). Here’s a sample schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day One</th>
<th>Day Two</th>
<th>Day Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:30</td>
<td>Breakfast Meeting for Team</td>
<td>Breakfast Meeting for Team</td>
<td>Breakfast Meeting for Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:30</td>
<td>Entrance Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30-12:00</td>
<td>Interview-Director</td>
<td>Interview-Program Lead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:30</td>
<td>Interview-Admissions</td>
<td>Interview-Faculty</td>
<td>Additional Interviews (as necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Interview-Student Services</td>
<td>Interview-Career Services</td>
<td>Summary Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-4:00</td>
<td>Daily Debrief</td>
<td>Daily Debrief</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tips and Hints
Do you have any hints or tips for Dropbox and uploading materials?

• Start uploading materials as soon as they are ready rather than waiting
• Use only your initials in the name box
• Of note, there is no way to edit a file once it has been uploaded – if it’s incorrect, it will need to be uploaded again
• Upload lists for current students, drops, and graduates at least one week prior so that the random selections can be made
• Consider sharing the links with multiple people to divide the uploading work
Do you have any hints or tips for Zoom and interviews?

- Have everyone who will need to use Zoom attend the pre-meeting with the Commission Representative and check webcams and microphones
- Consider having a shared computer in a closed room set aside for interviews
- Let faculty know that the Education Specialist will observe in real-time, if possible
- We will use the breakout room feature for interviews
- Zoom works from computers, tablets, and cellphones
- Sometimes conference room webcams do not work
Is there anything else schools should know?

• Technology issues happen, have a backup plan
• Keep your materials from the Virtual Visit to update for the Corresponding On-Site Evaluation
• There may be a variety of observers during the Virtual Visit – training staff, state representatives, etc.
• However, we ask that the school or corporate group not observe as that would not happen during a standards on-site evaluation
• Items being reviewed during the COSE are team decisions and not school decisions
• We did a variety of schools in the pilot with success
Findings by Topic:
2018/2019

ACCSC
244 Total Team Findings in 70 On-Site Evaluation Reports

February 2019 Commission Meeting
213 Total Team Findings in 64 On-Site Evaluation Reports

May 2019 Commission Meeting
117 Total Team Findings in 49 On-Site Evaluation Reports (2.4 per)

August 2019 Commission Meeting
163 Total Team Findings in 49 On-Site Evaluation Reports (3.33 per)

November 2019 Commission Meeting
Best Practices: Pre-Visit

Use Appendix B as a Guide

Internal File Review

Electronic Material

Get Organized!
Best Practices: Pre-Visit

Prepare Your Team

- Key Faculty and Staff
- Application and SER
- Ready Access
- Standards of Accreditation

- Staff Involvement
- Implementation Policies and Procedures
- Appendix B
- Documentation
Best Practices: Ready Access to Files

Admissions

Enrollment Agreement

Refunds

Transcripts

Grades

Attendance
Best Practices: Student Achievement

- Students
- Graduates
- Documentation
- Independent 3rd Party Verification
- Guidelines for Employment
- Graduation and Employment Charts
Best Practices: Responding to the Evaluation Report

- Often, the difference between a full grant of accreditation a short cycle is the **clarity** and **comprehensive nature** of the response.

- An institution’s response must demonstrate, with supporting documentation, **compliance**.
Best Practices: Responding to the On-site Evaluation Report

• Include an **introductive and narrative** summary of the school’s response.

• Give a **serious, thorough description** of the school’s compliance efforts.

• Explain how the **documentation** demonstrates compliance
A school should always provide documentation that shows consistency in the school’s compliance initiatives.

Submit documentation that demonstrates systematic compliance over a period of time identified by the school.
Best Practices: Responding to the Evaluation Report

• Don’t simply respond with a “will do” response that promises future action; answer with a “have done” 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.
Best Practices: Responding to the Evaluation Report

- **Explain the circumstances** that impacted the school’s ability to demonstrate compliance with a specific accrediting standard.

- Demonstrate to the Commission that the school **has taken corrective action** and **include documentation** available to support that position.

- Identify the school’s **plan** to ensure that this area of non-compliance will not be a repeat finding going forward through the school’s term of accreditation.
Best Practices: Practical Examples
Example: Section IV (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation

The school is unable to demonstrate that it has established and enforces an acceptable code of conduct for all school personnel whose primary responsibilities are to engage in recruiting and admissions functions prior to and during admission and matriculation.

Specifically, based on a file review, and as confirmed in conversations with school officials during the on-site evaluation, the school does not currently maintain a code of conduct in writing that includes, minimally, all elements set forth in Appendix IV, Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation, as required by Section IV (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation).
Response A
Attached is a BLANK copy of the school’s newly established Code of Conduct that includes all elements required by ACCSC.

Questions that remain:
• How many staff have the responsibility to engage in recruiting and admissions functions prior to and during admission and matriculation, thus requiring a signed code of conduct?
• This is just a blank form. Is it being used?
• What is the school’s policy for maintaining signed codes of conduct?
Response B
Attached are 3 signed Codes of Conduct.

Questions that remain unanswered:
• How many staff have the responsibility to engage in recruiting and admissions functions prior to and during admission, thus requiring a signed code of conduct?

• Do we have signed codes of conduct for ALL staff that engage in recruiting and admissions functions?

• What is the school’s policy for maintaining signed codes of conduct?
Response C

Since the on-site evaluation, the school created a Code of Conduct that includes all of the required elements.

• See Exhibit A for a Copy of the Code of Conduct.

On DATE, the school facilitated a all-staff meeting to review ACCSC’s recruitment standards and to distribute the Code of Conduct to all staff that are involved in the recruitment process.

• See Exhibit B for a Copy of the Meeting Minutes from the All Staff Meeting
• See Exhibit C for a Roster of All Staff that are involved in the recruitment process
• See Exhibit D for copies of signed Codes of Conduct for all staff captured under Exhibit C.
• See Exhibit E for a Copy of the New Policy on Employee Orientation/Codes of Conduct
Example: Section II (A)(6), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation

Finding

The school did not have two (2) Program Advisory Committee meetings in 2019 as required by Section II (A)(6), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation. Specifically, based on a review of the minutes from the school’s PAC meetings in 2019, the school only hosted one meeting for the Culinary PAC in 2019.
Since the on-site evaluation, the school:

- Established a new internal policy regarding scheduling Program Advisory Committees
  - See Exhibit A for a copy of this policy

- Created and filled a new administrative position that is responsible for the coordination of all PAC meetings on a go-forward basis
  - See Exhibit B for a position description and Staff Personnel Report
Since 2019, the school hosted (3) three Program Advisory Committee meetings for the Culinary program on January 4, 2020 and July 5, 2020 respectively. Attached are copies of the minutes from those meetings which include a description of each member in attendance (i.e., titles and affiliations) the date, time, and location of the meeting; comprehensive and clear description of the review of and commentary made by the PAC members on all areas outlined in **Section II (A)(6), Substantive Standards**

- See **Exhibit D** for copies of meeting minutes.

- See **Exhibit E** for tentative agenda for the next Culinary PAC meeting scheduled for December 7, 2020
Commission Actions
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
Stipulations are generally those items that can be corrected with **documentation** within a relatively short period of time.

- 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 initial or renewal of accreditation becomes effective.
The Commission grants accreditation to a school but requires the submission of an **Interim Report** in order to demonstrate compliance with accrediting standards.

- Outcomes Reporting: Student Achievement
- Refund Reporting
- Management Retention Reporting
- Program Advisory Committee Reporting
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 there is insufficient information about the school; and
- Whether the necessary information for the Commission to render a decision is lacking.
In cases where the Commission has reason to believe that a school is not in compliance with accreditation standards and other requirements, the Commission may at its discretion, place the school on **Warning**.

- A school that receives a **Warning** will be required to demonstrate corrective action and compliance with accrediting standards.
- No substantive changes while the school is under a **Warning**.
- Commission has the discretion to direct the school to notify students of **Warning** status.
As part of the **Probation**, the Commission may, at its discretion, direct the school to **show cause** as to why the school’s accreditation should not be withdrawn.

- The Commission will not consider substantive changes, a change of location/relocation, or additions to a school or its separate facilities while the school is on **Probation**.

- The **Probation** Letter is made public in accordance with Section X, Rules of Process and Procedure, Standards of Accreditation.

- A school subject to a **Probation** must inform current and prospective students in writing that the school has been placed on **Probation**
The Commission may, at its discretion, deny an application for accreditation (initial or renewal), deny the transfer of accreditation in conjunction with a change of ownership application, or withdraw a school’s accreditation and remove the school from the list of ACCSC-accredited schools without first issuing a Warning or Probation Order.

This action is subject to appeal.
Parting Thoughts

Recognize the Deadlines

• Application for Renewal of Accreditation  November 16, 2020
• Self-Evaluation Report & 3\textsuperscript{rd} Party Verification  March 31, 2021
• Financial Statements & Sustaining Fees  December 31, 2020
  
  \textit{no later than 6 months following the end of the school’s fiscal-year}
Parting Thoughts

Establish a Realistic Plan

• Make Staff Assignments
• Establish Realistic Deadlines
• Keep the Work Moving Forward
• Take Advantage of Every Opportunity to Show Your Success
Engage in the Accreditation Process

• Reference the Standards of Accreditation

• Use ACCSC’s Resources

• Contact Your Designated Staff Liaison

• Be Realistic, Be Ready
Renewal Accreditation Virtual Workshop

October 1 – 2, 2020