

# ACCSCCT Alert!

Information for  
our member schools

**To:** *ACCSCCT Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties*  
**From:** *Elise Scanlon, Executive Director*  
**Date:** *March 17, 2005*  
**Subject:** *Interpretative Guidance for the Standards of Accreditation*

---

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology has reviewed its practices, policies and standards and has promulgated guidance in the following areas:

- *Section V – Admissions Documentation (page 2)*
- *Definition of Gross Tuition (page 3)*
- *Submission of Materials in English (page 4)*

The full text of the Accreditation Alert can also be found on the Commission's website at: [www.accsct.org](http://www.accsct.org). Go to "*Staying Accredited*" and then "*Accreditation Alert.*" Accredited institutions and others maintaining complete, up-to-date copies of the Standards of Accreditation should add this notice to their current standards book under the Accreditation Alerts tab.

For additional information related to the Commission's interpretative guidance in the areas contained in this Accreditation Alert, please contact Michale S. McComis, Associate Executive Director, at (703) 247-4520.

## **Section V – Admissions Documentation**

Section V of the Standards of Accreditation requires accredited institutions to admit only those students who are capable of successfully completing the training offered and admission decisions to 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. Admission requirements are therefore meant to provide evidence that a student has acquired the requisite knowledge and skills for success in a school's educational program. Accordingly, Section V (2) of the Standards of Accreditation states that "documentation must exist, covering the last five years, that demonstrates that admissions standards have been met..."

A common admissions policy in ACCST accredited institutions is that an applicant must possess a high school diploma or its equivalent in order to be considered for enrollment. Because of the importance of admissions requirements and the role they 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. In addition, documentation for students from foreign, non-English speaking countries must be translated and certified to be at least the equivalent of a U.S. high school diploma. It is the responsibility of the school to determine whether the credential is appropriate and meets the school's admissions criteria.

In rare instances when a student may not be able to provide documentation due to issues beyond their control (e.g., loss of records due to fire or flood, inability to obtain records, home schooled students, etc.), 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 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 (D)(3), Standards of Accreditation).

## **Gross Tuition Revenue and the Payment of Sustaining Fees**

Each school accredited by ACCSCT is assessed an annual sustaining fee. The fee, as stated in the ACCSCT Bylaws, is calculated as follows:

***Amount: 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 \$900 plus .0026 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 \$3,000 plus .0010 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 \$5,000 plus .000150 times gross tuition over \$3,000,000.***

In order to accurately determine a school's annual sustaining fee, it is necessary for each school to record gross tuition on its financial statements. Accordingly, a definition of gross tuition has been added to the ACCSCT *Instructions for the Submission of Financial Statements and Financial Reporting* as follows:

***Each school must include Gross Tuition either as a line item on the income statement or in the notes to the financial statements for the purposes of calculating the annual sustaining fee due to the Commission. Gross Tuition is defined as revenues from all tuition and fees assessed against students (net of refunds and discounts and allowances) for all educational purposes provided by an ACCSCT accredited institution. If Gross Tuition is not included as a line item on the income statement or in the notes to the financial statements, the Commission will use Total Revenue to calculate the school's annual sustaining fee obligation.***

As a reminder, schools with a fiscal year end between January 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> are required to submit their fiscal year-end financial statements and sustaining fees on or before December 31<sup>st</sup> of that same year. Schools with a fiscal year end between July 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> are required to submit their fiscal year-end financial statements and sustaining fees on or before June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. So, for example, if a school's fiscal year-end is June 30<sup>th</sup>, the school's June 30, 2005 financial statements and annual sustaining fees would be due no later than December 31, 2005. As another example, if a school's fiscal year-end is December 31<sup>st</sup>, the school's December 31, 2004 financial statements and annual sustaining fees would be due no later than June 30, 2005.

In addition, ***each school*** is required to pay its sustaining fee using the calculation stated above. If a school is organized as a corporation and the corporation is part of a consolidated group, supplemental data must be included in the consolidated financial statements showing a breakout of all corporate subsidiaries including a balance sheet and income statement for the individual schools. This is used to calculate each school's required sustaining fee separately.

A copy of the Commission's *Instructions for the Submission of Financial Statements and Financial Reporting* and the Commission's *Sustaining Fees Calculation Worksheet* can be obtained from the Commission's website at [www.accsct.org](http://www.accsct.org)

### **The Submission of Materials to the Commission in English**

The Commission has within its membership a number of schools that offer educational programs and conduct their affairs in a language other than English. While the Commission has made certain accommodations to facilitate the accreditation process for these schools, the Commission is no longer able to accept information presented in any language other than English. A school may submit an un-translated catalog and enrollment agreement to the Commission, however, the areas of those documents which relate directly to the disclosure requirements of the ACCSCT Catalog Checklist and Enrollment Agreement Checklist must be translated into English. This is to ensure an accurate and fair analysis of the school's compliance with accrediting standards.

If the Commission receives information in any language other than English, the information will be returned to the school and as applicable, a late fee will be assessed or when necessary, the Commission will take other appropriate action. In the event that the Commission is required to review an institution using information that has not been translated, the Commission will have the information translated and the cost will be borne by the institution under review.