## Workshop Agenda

### Day 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session time (Eastern Standard!)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 am - 10:15 am</td>
<td>Welcome from the Commission</td>
<td>Theresa Miulli-Hotham Lisa Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Application Process and Forms</td>
<td>Theresa Miulli-Hotham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm – 12:45 pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 pm – 2:15pm</td>
<td>Management Standards</td>
<td>Alicia DeMartini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 pm – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>Program Standards</td>
<td>Lisa Miles Kendra Kohanski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 pm – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Faculty Qualifications</td>
<td>Theresa Miulli-Hotham</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Workshop Agenda

### Day 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session time (Eastern Standard!)</th>
<th>Session Topic</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 am – 9:45 am</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Lisa Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 am – 10:30 am</td>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>Lisa Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 am – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>Student Achievement and Third-Party Verification</td>
<td>Sean Forman, Lisa Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm – 12:45 pm</td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45 pm – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>Lisa Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 pm – 3:00 pm</td>
<td>On-site Evaluation &amp; Commission Review</td>
<td>Theresa Miulli-Hotham, Lisa Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 pm – 3:45 pm</td>
<td>Parting Thoughts and Starting Shots</td>
<td>Michale McComis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access direct links for forms and instructions related to the accreditation process. It is the school’s responsibility to [download the most current form or instructions](#) where applicable.

### FIRST STEPS

**ACCSC Staff Listing**

**Initial Applicant College360 Contact Information Worksheet**
Complete this form prior to uploading any documents to the College360 portal.

**Instructions for Electronic Submission**
All forms and reports must be prepared in accordance with the requirements in these instructions.

### FORMS AND REPORTS

**Applications for Initial Accreditation** *(revised July 1, 2023)*

- **Part I** due 6 months after attending the accreditation workshop
- **Part II** due 6 months after acceptance of Application Part I

**Self-Evaluation Report** *(revised July 1, 2023)*

- Due 6 months after acceptance of Application Part I

**Graduation and Employment Chart**
Includes instructions and glossary of terms on separate tabs

**Faculty Personnel Report**

**Staff Personnel Report**

### INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

**Catalog Checklist**

**Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Financial Statements**

**Guidelines for Employment Classification**

**Enrollment Agreement Checklist**

**Guidelines for Independent Third Party Verification**

**Instructions for the Advertising of Accredited Status** *(Appendix IV, Standards of Accreditation)*
Welcome from the Commission

Michale McComis
Executive Director

Alicia DeMartini
Director, Accreditation

Karen Marcinski
Director, Commission Affairs

Maurya Scanlon
Manager, Accreditation
Introductions

Theresa Miulli-Hotham
Accreditation Coordinator

Sean Forman
Senior Analyst, IRD

Lisa J. Miles
Special Projects
Ground Rules

Agenda – Fluid!

Ground Rules – Be Curious and Considerate!

Instructional Materials
Getting to Know You

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

- ACCSC mission and values
- Principle steps in the accreditation process
- Institutional Success
  - Standards are a blueprint
  - Outcomes measure success
  - Strong leadership is critical
  - Assessment and Improvement... to infinity and beyond!
Mission

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

Integrity
Accountability
Continuous improvement
Community
Principles

- Peer Review
- Self-Evaluation
- Continuous Improvement
- Quality
- Accountability
Intentions

- Mission, Vision, Values
- Students First
- Excellence
- Member Support
- Leadership
Structure

• 13-member board / 4-year terms
  - 5 Public Commissioners (appointed)
  - 7 School Commissioners (elected by membership)
  - 1 School Commissioner (appointed by the Commission)
• Professional staff of 24
Scope

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

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

Career oriented and provide graduates with the necessary competencies, skills, and level of education for employment in their fields of study.
Limitations of Scope

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

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

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

All Programs Within the Commission’s scope

Must be approved by the Commission

Through the accreditation application or program approval process
Questions to Consider

Is ACCSC a good fit for my school?

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

Do I have the resources to be successful in the accreditation process?
Starting the Process
Process Overview – Crossing the Finish Line

- **July 2025**: Final Materials for the On-Site Evaluation (revised Application Part II and Self-Evaluation Report)
- **September 2025**: On-Site Evaluation
- **November 2025**: On-Site Evaluation Report
- **February 2026**: Commission Review
- **March 2026**: School Action Letter
Plan for
18-33 months in the process
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Workshop Application</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Accreditation Workshop</td>
<td>$650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application for Initial Accreditation – Part I</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application for Initial Application – Part II</td>
<td>$2,250 + Program Fees</td>
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</table>

Costs associated with Initial Accreditation Process
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th># of Active Programs</th>
<th>Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Degree Programs</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
<td>No Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 to 9</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 to 20</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Programs – Occupational Associate,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Associate, and Baccalaureate</td>
<td>2 to 3</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 to 9</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 to 20</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Master’s Degree                                  | Each Program will require a separate Application for Approval of a Master’s Degree Program | $1,500/each
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation Evaluation</td>
<td>$2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-Site Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with three or fewer active programs</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with four to nine active programs</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with ten to fifteen active programs</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with sixteen to twenty active programs</td>
<td>$14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with greater than twenty active programs</td>
<td>$15,000 and $500 for each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>additional program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions with more than 500 students</td>
<td>Additional $2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Costs associated with Initial Accreditation Process**
Additional Fees

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

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

- If an evaluation requires additional evaluators based up institutional and/or programmatic circumstances the institution will be assessed an addition $2,000 per evaluator.
How much is this going to cost me?

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

GROWING IN THE PROCESS
Workshop

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

Attend an accreditation workshop prior to submission of the application for accreditation
Within Six Months...
Application for Initial Accreditation – Part I

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

- **Section II:**
  Information about the main campus, if the school applying for renewal of accreditation is a branch

- **Section III:**
  Information about any additional locations (branch, satellite, facility expansion) associated with the school applying for renewal of accreditation
Section IV – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

- Eligibility Criteria
- State licensure
- Other accrediting body/regulatory agency
- Programmatic accreditation
Section V
REQUIRED EXHIBITS
Application Exhibits

1. Application Processing Fee - $2,250

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

3. Accreditation Workshop

4. Ownership of the School and list of current owners

5. Outline all changes of control in the previous two years
6. Three Years of Cohort Default Rates (Campus Specific)

7. Corporate Affiliations with Other Schools

8. Current Organizational Chart

9. Current state license

10. State Program Approvals (Clock / Credit Hour)

11. State Authorization for Distance Education

Licensure, Approval, & Accreditation
16. Application for a Satellite Location (if applicable)

17. Financial Statements
Attestations

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

- The school has every opportunity to present itself in its best light and to respond to any concerns
- The school is postsecondary with vocational objectives
- The school is voluntarily seeking accreditation
- School officials have read the standards and attended a workshop
- School officials fully accept and support the concept of accreditation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disclosures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have owners or managers been directly or indirectly employed or affiliated with any school during the individual’s period of employment or affiliation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Disclosures

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

Has any owner or manager served in a similar capacity in any other school where either that individual or the school has been charged or indicted in a civil or criminal forum or proceeding alleging fraud, misappropriation, or any criminal act?
If the answer is “YES” to any disclosure, the school is given the opportunity to provide an explanation of the facts and circumstances surrounding the situations reported in the disclosure section.
Acknowledged that the school must be consistently described to all agencies.

Grant permission for ACCSC to contact other agencies appropriate to the review of the application.

Acknowledged the requirement for a third-party audit of employment records.

Certified that the information herein and attached hereto is correct.
The ACCSC Financial Review Committee evaluates the financial statements submitted with Applications for Initial Accreditation to determine whether the school has sufficient resources.
Financial Review Committee

Red:
• Financial statements indicate the institution’s financial structure is not sound

Yellow:
• Financial statements may not provide sufficient information to demonstrate financial viability

Green:
• Financial statements indicate that the institution’s financial structure is sound
Within Six Months
Application has been accepted, school may proceed into the next part of the process

Effective date of institution’s compliance with accrediting standards

Recommendations and observations
Within Six Months
Application Part II

Updated snapshot of the institution

Longer list of attachments, providing opportunity for more in-depth analysis of the institution
A narrative response to a series of questions, guiding the school through an assessment of its effectiveness in achieving educational objectives and status of compliance with accreditation standards.
Self-Evaluation Report

- Involve the Entire School
- Improvements due to internal efforts
- Significant and on-going process
Self-Evaluation Report

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

- Quantitative data, such as number of managers, faculty qualifications, student achievement rates

- Qualitative reflection: what does the data mean? Are the policies and procedures effective? Is the school successfully meeting its mission?

- External and internal validation
Sample SER Prompts
• List all individuals responsible for full-time on-site management of the school (including campus-based and corporate oversight) and include as an exhibit a Staff Personnel Report for each individual listed.

• Provide a detailed description of how each member of the management team is qualified for his or her particular role, including education, training, experience, and demonstrated ability to lead and manage a post-secondary educational institution.
Section III (A)(3)

• What is the average tenure (in years) of the current faculty members?

• What impact has this level of tenure had on educational delivery?
Review your SER responses and ask...

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

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

- Update processes
- Implement new procedures
- Secure documentation
- Revised Materials
Standards of Accreditation
BLUEPRINTS FOR SUCCESS
Introduction
Rules
Substantive
Appendices
By-Laws
Standards of Accreditation

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

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

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

Interested parties are advised of proposed standards

A minimum of 30 days to file written comments
Accreditation Alert!

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

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

A school must supply the Commission with complete documentation of the school’s compliance with all accrediting standards if it is to be granted and maintain accreditation.
The burden **rests with the school** to establish it is meeting the standards.

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

The **integrity and honesty** of a school are fundamental and critical to the process.
In cases where accrediting standards and federal or state government requirements differ, the more stringent will apply.
Adequate
- As much as is good or necessary for some requirement or purpose

Sufficient
- Adequate for the purpose; enough

Appropriate
- Suitable or fitting for a particular purpose

Reasonable
- Agreeable to reason or sound judgment; logical
Standards of Accreditation

SECTION I - MANAGEMENT
The purpose of this section is to describe the fundamentals of leadership, management, and administrative elements essential to an institution dedicated to student success.
Statement of Purpose

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

Section 1 (A)
What is adequate management?

Full-time on-site supervision by an individual or team with the appropriate combination of education, experience, and Demonstrated ability to lead and manage a post-secondary educational institution in compliance with accrediting standards.
Qualified for their particular roles and who possess the appropriate education, training, and experience commensurate with the level of their responsibilities.

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

Appropriate administrative and operational policies and procedures to which the school adheres and reviews and updates.
Past Records that Show Commitment to:

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

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

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

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

- Ongoing development and training activities
- Continuity of Management through Reasonable retention
Section I (B)

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT
Key Concepts

- Significant
- Ongoing
- Appropriate to the size and scale of the school operations
- Support the management
- Enhance the quality of the education
Analyze the Effectiveness and Compliance of Each Area of School Operation

ACCSC Self Evaluation Report

Ask what is our current process, is it working, do we need to change anything?
With the understanding that results from a thorough assessment, the school can then move forward with improvement activities.
Best Practices Footnote

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

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

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

**PLANNING** that includes goal setting, establishing timelines, and benchmarking is a useful practice in institutional assessment and improvement activities and is encouraged.
By examining its annual report outcomes data, the school finds that its graduation rates for this year are lower than last year. The school then engages in assessment and improvement activities designed to improve retention rates.
**Assessment**: The school conducts a study of the reasons for student withdrawals and finds that most students drop due to academic reasons.

**Strategy**: The school decides to implement more rigorous admissions criteria in order to identify applicants that are more academically capable of being successful.
Measuring Effectiveness

✓ Comparing the academic progress of students who were admitted under the old and new criteria.

✓ Over time, the school can also use retention data to determine the effectiveness of the new admissions criteria.
Documenting the Process

- Helps the school make the necessary adjustments to ensure that its resources are expended on the most effective strategies.
- Creates a historic record that provides valuable insight for future managers.
- Demonstrates compliance with ACCSC standards.
Documenting the Example

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

- Management
- Fiscal condition and budget
- Administrative policies and practices
- Emergency preparedness
- Student support services
- Faculty and staff development
- Educational program curricula
- Learning resource system, equipment, and supporting materials
- Facilities
- Student achievement outcomes
Section I (C) FINANCIAL STABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
Key Requirements

- The financial structure of the school is sound, with resources sufficient for the proper operation of the school and the discharge of obligations to its students
- Financial statements prepared in accordance with ACCSC’s instructions
- Financial budget for each fiscal year AND monitors budgetary projections in relation to actual income and expenses
- Insurance that provides adequate protection
Section I (D)

TUITION
CANCELLATION
REFUND
PAYMENT
Tuition Policies

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

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

**GRANT OR SCHOLARSHIP**
- Funds are applied toward a qualified student’s costs
- Be issued for recognized and acceptable purposes
- Include specified criteria that a student must meet in order to be eligible for and receive the grant or scholarship
Cancellation Policies – Before Class Start

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

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

**More than three days** after signing the enrollment agreement and **before school starts** = return all monies paid minus a registration fee of 15% of the contract price of the program, but in no event may the school retain more than $150
Determines how much tuition to charge when a student ceases enrollment before completing a program or payment period.

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

In the absence of such requirements, the school must follow a policy that aligns with generally accepted practices.
How refunds are calculated (e.g., pro rata);
The date from which refunds will be calculated; and
The time frame within which refunds will be made
Refund Policies

Written notification of withdrawal from the student shall not be required for refund payment.

A school may not make required refunds in excess of 90 days from the student’s withdrawal or termination date.

In instances where state or third-party requirements and accrediting requirements conflict, the more stringent requirement shall apply.

The refund policy must be disclosed consistently in the catalog and enrollment agreement.
Payment Policies

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

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

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

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT
What’s the Why?

Accredited schools have an obligation to encourage and facilitate repayment of financial obligations, including guaranteed loans, used to finance students’ education and training.
Factors Schools CAN address

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

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

The school must document implementation of the program and conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the school’s efforts.
Review the annual cohort student loan default rates of its accredited institutions to determine if those rates are at a high level or have increased significantly in relation to standards established by law or regulation.

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

INSTITUTIONAL NAME
Use of “University” in the School Name

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

PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
Physical Facilities

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

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

SECTION II - PROGRAMS
Statement of Purpose

Establishes the fundamental requirements for the development and delivery of viable, quality programs that lead to students’ successful attainment of knowledge, skills, and vocational objectives.
Programs v. Courses
Careful Design

Clear learning objectives

Appropriate program length

Detailed and organized course outlines and syllabi

Adequate instructional materials, equipment, and learning resources materials

Rigorous ongoing assessment of programs
General Program Requirements

SECTION II (A)
Approval and Accreditation

Schools must have each program reviewed and approved by the Commission before the program is offered to students.

If specialty/programmatic accreditation of the program is a condition for employment or licensure, the school must obtain that accreditation within four years of the date of the Commission’s approval.
The school has an established **process** to design and develop courses, course learning materials and resources, curricula, student learning outcomes and competencies, and student assessment.

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

Examples of external resources include subject-matter specialists; the teaching and learning professional community; independent Program Advisory Committees; employers, technicians, and practitioners representing industry and the employment community; professional societies; and trade associations.
Program Design and Development

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

- Detailed and organized instructional outlines and course syllabi
- Showing a scope and sequence of subject matter
- Sufficient to achieve the program objectives
Program Length is Generally Measured in Clock and/or Credit Hours
Clock Hours

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

A credit hour is defined as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes 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
• Out-of-class work/preparation
Appendix III
Glossary of Terms

Didactic learning environment: led by a qualified faculty member in a classroom or laboratory setting of instruction

Supervised laboratory setting of instruction: where students engage in discussion and/or the practical application of information 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

Externship is a component of a program that is offered in a bona fide occupational setting to allow students to apply practically the knowledge and skills taught in didactic and laboratory settings of instruction
Credit Hours

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 = 0.5 unit
Program Name and Length

- The name accurately aligns with stated objectives
- The program is an appropriate length to enable students to achieve the program objectives (e.g., initial employment in the field)
- The program length is aligned with the program objectives and neither too short nor too long in relation to those objectives
- Program length conforms to regulatory requirements or state, federal, or national standards.
Program Composition

- Technical and Occupationally Related Courses:
- Applied General Education Courses:
- Academic General Education Courses
- other types of courses that support a student’s educational experience such as orientation, career services, health and wellness, and life skills
Out of Class Work

Generally, in order for the Commission to recognize a program in credit hours, the program must be comprised of a majority of courses that require out-of-class work/preparation. Programs that do not have an out-of-class work/preparation component are considered clock-hour programs.
The estimated number of hours (clock or credit) awarded per course must conform to generally accepted practice in higher education.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluate</th>
<th>Evaluate curriculum and course content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Assess the adequacy of program equipment and supporting resource materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Assess student achievement outcomes and program viability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make</td>
<td>Make revisions to the curriculum as deemed necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The school’s program evaluation process is:

- Comprehensive,
- Conducted by faculty and educational administrators
- Regular
- Uses input from internal and external sources
Sources of Input

- Program Advisory Committee
- Student and alumni input
- Other external sources, such as
  - Subject-matter specialists
  - Employers, independent technicians, and practitioners representing industry
  - The teaching and learning professional community
  - Externship, practicum, and clinical sites
  - Professional societies and trade associations
An independent and diverse Program Advisory Committee for each program area

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

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

- School must conduct at least one meeting of each PAC annually
- At least three members must be in attendance
- Written and detailed minutes must be maintained
  - Description of all members in attendance
  - Date, time, and location of the meeting
  - Comprehensive and clear description of the review of and commentary made by the school representatives and the Program Advisory Committee members
Other PAC Requirements

- There must be a PAC review and comment on new programs.
- If the PAC meeting is not held at the physical campus of the school, then the school must provide the committee with a sufficiently detailed description and virtual tour of the equipment and facilities representing current conditions.
- The school must provide evidence that it gives consideration to Program Advisory Committee input.
More (!) PAC Requirements

- For programs or courses of study that include content delivered via distance education, PACs must include at least one additional individual with experience in the delivery of distance education programs who is qualified to review and comment on the school’s distance education platform, methods, processes, procedures, and infrastructure.

- For each master’s degree program/program area, the Program Advisory Committee must also include at least two individuals with graduate level education experience such as graduate students, alumni, graduate faculty from other institutions, etc. as appropriate.

- Multiple affiliated schools may use a single Program Advisory Committee to review the same established curricula of a program area and student achievement outcomes across the system of schools, however, the review of a school’s learning resources, facilities, and equipment must be fulfilled for each individual campus.
Instructional Materials and Equipment

Sufficiently comprehensive and reflect current occupational knowledge and practice

Similar to that found in common occupational practice and includes teaching devices and supplemental instructional aids appropriate to the subject

Sufficient equipment and learning stations are provided to allow each student adequate scheduled time for practice and the school requires the use of safety equipment where applicable

All machinery and equipment is properly maintained and provided with proper safety devices, which are in working order and used whenever the machinery and equipment is operated.
A learning resource system includes all materials that support a student’s educational experience and enhance a school’s educational program such as libraries; texts; electronic resources; learning resource laboratories and centers; library consortia and interlibrary loan agreements; computers; internet access; research databases; and other similar resources and equipment.
Materials commensurate with the level of education provided and appropriate to the courses of study in sufficient quantity and scope to meet the educational objectives of each program

Resources must be easily and readily accessible to students and faculty during and beyond classroom hours, regardless of location or means of delivery

ensure that its student body is adequately served and has ready access to sufficient and appropriate learning resource materials
Must be managed by qualified school personnel with sufficient experience to provide oversight and supervision (individual holding a master’s degree in either the library science or information specialist fields for baccalaureate degree or higher)

Use of the learning resource system materials must be integrated into a school’s curriculum and program requirements

Qualified school personnel orient, train, and assist students and faculty

Written policies and procedures for the ongoing development of its learning resource system as part of its institutional improvement program. A school must demonstrate sufficient support and budgetary allocations
Externships

- Component of a program that is offered in a bona fide occupational setting
- Written training plan that specifies the goals, educational objectives, and specific experiences and applications to be accomplished
- Supervised by a designated school employee who has the appropriate practical work experience qualifications for instructors
- Training plan must designate an on-site supervisor from the occupational setting
- Appropriate balance among didactic, supervised laboratory, outside work/preparation, and externship activities. Any externship that is greater than one-third of the total length of the program requires review and approval by the Commission
Where the school has entered into a consortium, partnership, or contractual agreement to offer a portion of a program,

- The school retains responsibility for the quality of the courses of study and programs offered as well as the achievement of expected and acceptable outcomes irrespective of any such agreement.

- A school may not award more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours required in a program via a consortium, partnership, or contractual agreement, with the exception of an approved teach-out plan or agreement.
Independent Study

Necessitates a high level of self-directed learning

May only be offered in a credit-hour program

Independent study must be relevant and appropriate to program objectives

Students engaged in independent study must meet regularly with the qualified independent study faculty

Must demonstrate that students engaged in independent study have acquired the knowledge, skills, and/or competencies that are at least equivalent to those acquired by students enrolled in traditional courses

No more than 10% of any program can be offered via independent study.

Students awarded 75% of required credits through transfer of credit or prior learning experience may not be awarded credit for independent study in the remaining 25% of the curriculum
A school may accept transfer credit for a postsecondary course completed at another institution when comparable in scope and content to the school’s own coursework.

Appropriate criteria (e.g., comparability, applicability, source, and age of the previously earned credit; academic preparedness of the student at the time of credit transfer; grade earned for the credit to be transferred; etc.)

Applies a systematic, consistent process for determining whether to accept credit earned at other institutions for transfer.

Transfer-of-credit policy published in the catalog as well as any types of institutions or sources from which the institution will not accept credits.
Transfer of Credit

- Acceptance of credit is primarily based on the competencies achieved by the student in previously completed coursework and whether the competencies reasonably align with the coursework and the program into which the credit is to be transferred.

- Accreditation of the institution or program from which the student is seeking to transfer credits is a consideration for credit transfer decisions; however, the source of accreditation of the institution or program from which the student is seeking to transfer credits is not the sole basis for accepting or denying credit for transfer.

- The school must document in the student record from what school and on what basis transfer credit was accepted.

- The school must provide students with a list of institutions that the school has an established articulation agreement.
Prior Learning Experience

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

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

No more than 50% of the total number of clock or credit hours.
Non-Degree Composition

Non-degree programs are generally expected to be comprised of at least 80% technical and occupationally related courses. The remainder of the courses may be a combination of applied general education, general education, or other courses as appropriate and necessary to achieve the program objectives.
Degree Programs

- Degree programs are measured only in semester credit hours or the equivalent quarter hours.

- Degree programs must use a course numbering system that differentiates between lower-level courses required at the associate degree level (e.g., 100 and 200 level courses); upper-level courses required at the baccalaureate degree level (e.g., 300 and 400 level courses); and graduate level courses at the master's degree level (e.g., 500 level courses and above).
Associate Degrees

- Comprised of a minimum of 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours
- Two classifications of associate degree programs – occupational and academic.
- General Education
  - An occupational associate degree program must include a minimum of 9 semester hours or 13.5 quarter hours in academic general education courses or applied general education courses that support the program objectives
  - An academic associate degree program must include a minimum of 15 semester hours or 22.5 quarter hours in academic general education courses
Associate Degrees

- Technical and Occupationally related courses
  - An occupational associate degree program must include a minimum of 45 semester hours or 67.5 quarter hours in technical and occupationally related courses that are directly associated with the field for which the degree is
  - An academic associate degree program must include a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours in the technical field
Baccalaureate Degrees

- Baccalaureate degree program must be a minimum of 120 semester hours or 180 quarter hours.

- A baccalaureate degree program shall include a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours in academic general education courses.

- A baccalaureate degree program shall include a minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours that represent courses in the occupational field.

- Concentrations must consist of 18-24 semester credit hours (27-36 quarter credit hours) of occupationally specialized course work of which, at a minimum, nine semester credit hours (13.5 quarter credit hours) represent upper-level coursework.
Master’s Degrees

- Master’s degree-granting institutions must place emphasis on higher-level coursework, including research and analytical skills, and independent and critical thinking skills.

- Master’s degree programs must include a minimum of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours.

- At least 24 semester hours or 36 quarter hours must be in the technical field for which the degree is awarded. Within the master’s degree, a school may offer one or more concentrations, which provide a focused area of training and establish specialized learning experiences beyond the generalist level. Concentrations must consist of 6-12 semester credit hours (9-15 quarter credit hours) of occupationally specialized course work.
Applied, integrated, or culminating experience required for program completion (e.g., capstone experience, comprehensive examination, research project, or thesis).

3.0 grade point average or better (assuming the traditional 4.0 grade point scale) required for graduation

Only graduate level courses for which a student earned a 2.0 or better may be applied toward the total number of credits required for graduation.
Secondary Educational Objectives

- To be included in scope, less than 300 clock hours and related to ACCSC-approved/vocational programs
- offered in a manner that delivers the education as promised to students
- in the school’s institutional improvement planning activities
- Catalog and enrollment agreement
- Recordkeeping
- Not required to track student achievement outcomes
- Track and maintain documentation of enrollment to demonstrate that continuing education courses and avocational courses represent secondary educational objective
English as a Second Language

- Objective of the ESL courses must be to aid in the employability of the student
- Front-loaded: ESL completed prior to vocational training
- Integrated: ESL and vocational training occur concurrently
- Minimal of 600 clock hours/must justify over 900
- Instruction must be conducted primarily in English
- Students must be tested in English proficiency prior to and upon completion
Don’t Run Away Just Yet...
Standards of Accreditation
SECTION III EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS
Statement of Purpose

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

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

- At least one person on-site at the school
- Manages the school’s instructional programs
- Educational administration experience and competence
- Non-degree granting: educational background equal to or exceeding
- Degree-granting: earned degree at least one level higher than the highest offered by the school
- Overall educational experience in such areas as: curriculum development; educational effectiveness assessment and improvement; and faculty development and performance appraisals
Program Head

- For each program or group of related programs
- Manages the occupational elements of the program/s
- Manages the school's instructional programs
- Educational background equal to or exceeding the maximum credential offered in that program area
- Qualifications for technical faculty teaching in a degree program
- The ability to administer the occupational components of the program
Graduate Level Education

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

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

Each master’s degree program must be appropriately managed by an individual with a minimum of a graduate degree in the same field for which training is provided.
Faculty Assessment and Development Activities

- Ongoing
- Appropriate to the size and scope of the school’s educational programs
- Support the quality of education provided and enhance student achievement
- Professional development activities include elements such as
  - Teaching skill development
  - Instructional methodology development
  - Continuing education in the subject area(s) taught
  - Membership in trade and professional organizations
Continuity of Instruction

The school must ensure the continuity of instruction by the reasonable retention of the educational administrative staff and faculty.
Verify Prior Work Experience

The terms “verify prior work experience” and “maintain documentation of academic credentials” of all faculty members and administrators in Section III (A)(4), Substantive Standards, Standards of Accreditation means that the school has a documented process to demonstrate that the school:

• Has secured from previous employers written or verbal verification of prior work experience when prior work experience is a qualification requirement
  ▶ and/or

• Has secured and keeps on file academic transcripts when an academic credential is a qualification requirement.
The faculty must be sufficient in number to serve the number of students enrolled.

Must maintain a satisfactory working relationship with students.

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

Able to teach in a manner that permits announced educational objectives to be achieved.

All faculty must be able to demonstrate a command of theory and practice, contemporary knowledge, and continuing study in their field.
Faculty members must have prior training or receive training before assuming primary instructional responsibilities in any classroom, curriculum, laboratory, or program related training.

A school’s faculty must engage in ongoing development of teaching skills as part of its plan for faculty improvement.
In-house resources or resources outside the institution

- Formal education
- Workshops/seminars presented by an appropriate individual focusing on areas related to instructional methods and teaching skill development
- Formal in-house mentoring programs with appropriately qualified and experienced faculty.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Technical/Courses</th>
<th>Occupationaly Related</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)</td>
<td>Three years practical work experience in a related field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Associates Degree</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Associates Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate Degree</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field of study may be substituted for a formal degree.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Type of Course Applied General Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma)</td>
<td>• Three years practical experience OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• College-level coursework* OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate mix of experience and coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Associates Degree</td>
<td>• Baccalaureate degree with appropriate coursework* OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Eight years practical experience and college-level coursework*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Associates Degree</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baccalaureate Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Appropriate coursework and preparation,” “college-level coursework,” and “appropriate academic coursework and preparation”

A minimum of 15 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) in related subject areas that support the curriculum content.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Type of Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Non-Degree (Certificate or Diploma) | *For terminal non-degree programs: a baccalaureate degree with appropriate academic coursework and preparation in the subject(s) taught.  
• For non-degree programs that articulate into degree programs, see requirements for degree programs below |
| Occupational Associates Degree | Master’s degree with appropriate academic coursework* and preparation in the subject area(s) taught. |
| Academic Associates Degree    |                                                                                 |
| Baccalaureate Degree          |                                                                                 |
### Master’s Degree Programs

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

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

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

Justify and document on an individual basis the outstanding professional experience and contributions to the occupational field.
Faculty teaching other courses (e.g., electives, orientation, career services, health and wellness, and life skills, etc.) must be appropriately qualified based upon the type of course content offered and upon criteria established by the school that relies upon necessary experience and/or educational background requirements.

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

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

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

ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES OR USING PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS OR PRESENTATIONS TO ATTRACTION AND ENROLL STUDENTS.
Ethical Recruitment Practices

Focus on attracting students who are qualified and likely to complete and benefit from the education and training provided by the school and not simply obtaining enrollments.
Describe the school to prospective students fully and accurately and follow practices that permit prospective students to make informed and considered enrollment decisions without undue pressure.
A school only uses its own employees to conduct student recruiting activities and is prohibited from engaging employment agencies to recruit prospective students.
A school is responsible to its students and prospective students for the actions and representations of its recruiters and representatives and, therefore, selects these individuals with the utmost care and provides adequate training and proper supervision.
Code of Conduct for recruitment/admissions personnel

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

- A school’s personnel are trained and qualified to engage in recruiting activities and may only use a title that accurately represents the individual’s primary duties.
- Comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations
A school approves all promotional materials used by school personnel in advance and accepts full responsibility for the materials used.
Ethical Recruitment Practices

Ensures that its personnel do not make false, exaggerated, or misleading statements about the school, its personnel, its training, its services, or its accredited status.

Ensures that its personnel do not make explicit or implicit promises of employment or salary prospects to prospective students.
A school internally reviews and evaluates its recruiting policies and procedures and the performance of personnel involved in recruiting activities for compliance with accrediting standards and applicable law and regulation at least once annually, and maintains documentation of the review and evaluation.
The Commission, at its discretion, may require a school to audit its recruiting activities for compliance with accreditation standards or applicable law and regulation using a qualified independent third-party that is approved by the Commission prior to the verification review being conducted.
Personnel Whose Primary Responsibilities Include Recruiting and Admissions Activities

Cannot assist prospective students in completing application forms for financial aid.

Cannot become involved in admission testing or admission decisions, including signing and accepting the enrollment agreement.
Ethical Recruitment Practices

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

Provide the applicant with a receipt for any money collected
Ethical Recruitment Practices

Do 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.
SCHOOLS MUST OBSERVE ETHICAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES WITH REGARD TO ADVERTISING, PROMOTION, STATEMENTS, AND CLAIMS AND MUST ADHERE TO THE STANDARDS
A school's advertising and promotional materials are truthful and accurate and avoid exaggerating impressions with any false or misleading, or inaccurate, and act to the school's location, its name, its personnel, its training, its services, and its accredited status.

Accurate

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

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

References to employment or salary prospects must be accurate and sourced.

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

Written and verbal statements given by an individual giving explicit approval or support for the school, its programs, or outcomes.

Only use endorsements with the written consent of the authors.

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

May not use endorsements from currently enrolled students in promotional activities or advertisements.
Images and Publicly Shared Media

- Images may be used in advertising only with the written consent of the subjects.
- The school may use/share an individual’s publicly shared media regarding the school
  - The media must originate with the individual and is bona fide
  - The media is actually and contextually accurate, and unadulterated
- Schools may not compensate or provide any or other consideration for such use
Salary Information

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

Salary information must also include the source of the information, which is valid.
A school may only use the term “accredited” if it indicates by what agency or organization it is accredited. Publication of accreditation must comply with the Advertising of Accredited Status form.
Advertising of financial aid and scholarships includes an eligibility phrase (e.g., financial aid available for those who qualify).
School is responsible and must approve all advertising.

All advertising must be truthful and accurate.

Advertising school name.

Advertising affiliation with ACCSC.

Advertising separate facilities.

Advertising occupational degrees.
APPENDIX IV – Guidelines for Advertising

Item #12
Distinction between “endorsements” and “publicly shared media” is origination
If a school solicits an endorsement for its advertising and the endorser gives such written or verbal statements, then the school must obtain written consent. The standards prohibit the use of currently enrolled students for such endorsements.
If “an individual” – including current students – chooses of their own volition to post a comment using publicly shared media (e.g., a social media site), then the school can use/share that post in its own social media and advertising so long as “the media originated with the individual and is bona fide, factually and contextually accurate, unadulterated, and a faithful representation of the shared information or image.”
APPENDIX IV – Guidelines for Advertising

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

Ensure social media posts reflect current conditions at the school.

Remove/discontinue use of the content at the author’s request.
Scenarios
Disclosures

- Catalog
- Enrollment Agreement
- Achievement Rates
- Accreditation/Approval
Accurately portrays the school; its educational programs, resources and facilities; and policies and procedures

Includes, at a minimum, all items listed on the ACCSC Catalog Checklist
# CATALOG CHECKLIST

## CATALOG CHECKLIST

**For the benefit of our faculty and students:**

- Checking completeness and accuracy of course offerings.
- Ensuring compliance with institutional and regulatory requirements.
- Facilitating the smooth operation of the academic department.

## Checklist:

### General Information

1. The title of the program.
2. The number and duration of the courses.
3. The total number of credit hours.
4. The requirements for graduation.
5. The admission requirements.
6. The tuition and fees.

### Course Description

7. The course description.
8. The prerequisites.
9. The co-requisites.
10. The grading criteria.
11. The use of technology.

### Schedule

12. The schedule of classes.
13. The dates of examinations.
14. The policies on attendance.

### Other Information

15. The contact information of the department.
16. The availability of support services.
17. The availability of financial aid.

---

**Note:** This checklist is a template and needs to be customized for each program. It is recommended to consult with the appropriate academic and administrative staff to ensure that all necessary information is included and accurate.
REPRESENTATION

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

- Narrative and any illustrations and photos pertain directly to the school and sources of illustrations and photos are clearly identified.
BASIS OF AN INFORMED DECISION

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

A printed and bound copy of the catalog

A read-only format electronic copy that cannot be altered (e.g., portable document format (PDF), etc.)

All versions of the catalog are identical

A printed and bound copy of the catalog upon request.
Enrollment Agreement

Clearly states the obligations of both the student and school

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

**Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC)**

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

### REQUIRED ITEMS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Enrollment Agreement Checklist Item</th>
<th>Page Number(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Title of agreement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Name and address of school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Negotiation.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Submission of written offer (in writing, if applicable), including a summary of costs or services required for graduation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Types of licensure, certification, diploma, or degree awarded upon graduation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Duration period that the agreement covers (e.g., quarter, semester, etc.) and the number and length of periods required for graduation must be clearly disclosed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Career and student charges related to the enrollment, such as deposits, fees, books, supplies, travel, equipment, transportation, and any other &quot;extras&quot; e.g., make-up, travel, special testing, equipment, field trips, or other school services for which a student can be responsible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Payment method and terms of payment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Date of program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Specific terms of class attendance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Orders for cancellation/termination by the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Provision of information by the school (see also Section 7.1, “No Limitation Standard,” Standards of Accreditation).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CONDITIONAL ITEMS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Enrollment Agreement Checklist Item</th>
<th>Page Number(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Discussion of opportunities for students to develop other skills and competencies.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Description of opportunities for students to develop other skills and competencies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Description of the school’s equipment, resources, and facilities available to students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Enrollment Agreement Checklist is intended to ensure that the student has read and understood the terms of the enrollment agreement. A copy of the Enrollment Agreement Checklist must be included in the enrollment agreement. The school should provide a copy of the checklist to the student and the student should sign it. The checklist must be dated the date the student signs it. This document is used to ensure that the student has read and understood the terms of the enrollment agreement.
A school executes an enrollment agreement for all enrolled students.

A school ensures that each applicant has an opportunity to review the enrollment agreement and is fully informed of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the school under the enrollment agreement before it is signed by the applicant.
A school furnishes a copy of the enrollment agreement to the applicant at the time the applicant signs.

A school must furnish to the student prior to the student starting class a final copy of the enrollment agreement signed by both parties.
No enrollment agreement is binding until it has been signed by the student and accepted by the appropriate school official.
Graduation and Employment Rates

As last reported to the Commission

Public notice of a graduate employment rate is accurate, not intended to mislead

Includes the school’s graduate population base and time frame upon which the rate is based
A school discloses its ACCSC institutional accreditation and the Commission’s contact information (i.e., address, phone number, and website address).
ACCREDITATION/ APPROVAL REQUIRED FOR LICENSURE/ EMPLOYMENT

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

SECTION V ADMISSIONS
The purpose of this section is to ensure that schools only admit those students who are capable of successfully completing the training offered. Admission decisions are based on fair, effective, and consistently applied criteria that enable the school to make an informed judgment as to an applicant’s ability to achieve the program’s objectives.
A school develops admissions criteria to admit only those students who are reasonably capable of successfully completing and benefiting from the training offered.

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

The school consistently and fairly applies the admissions criteria.
Prior to Enrollment

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

- Admissions requirements are critical to student success, particularly as reflected in graduation rates.
- Diligence in requiring documentation is a key component.
- Self-certification by a student that he or she has a high school diploma or the equivalent is NOT considered to be “documentation” that the student has met this admissions requirement.
Documentation from Foreign Countries

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

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

- Maintain documentation that admissions requirements were met
- The reason for denial
The school does not deny admission or discriminate.
Reasonably accommodate applicants and students with disabilities.
The school does not admit any person of compulsory school age or attending a school at the secondary level if the pursuit of training will be detrimental to the student’s regular schoolwork.
An assessment of the student’s *technical* skills, competencies, and access to technology necessary to succeed in a distance education environment prior to their enrollment in the program or course of study.

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

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

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

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION
Graduate Degree Programs

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

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

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

SECTION VI STUDENT SERVICES
Statement of Purpose

- Fundamentals of assessing and addressing students' educational and other needs
- Ensuring an appropriate and safe learning environment
- Mechanisms for ongoing attentiveness to student needs and directing appropriate resources to address those needs
Advising and Counseling

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

Adequate services and resources to support students

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

Coordinated by an individual with appropriate qualifications
Student Services Program

- Relevant coping skills (e.g., life, career development, budget, and personal financial planning skills)
- General development appropriate to higher education students
- Student retention strategies suited to the school’s programs
- Academic advising
- Testing and tutoring services
- Supervision and monitoring of attendance records and leaves of absence
- Graduate employment assistance
- Information concerning housing, transportation, and childcare
Counseling Services

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

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

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

Unless so qualified, an advisor may not perform the functions of a counselor and may not be referred to as a counselor.
Maintain comprehensive documentation of student advising sessions

Continually monitors and addresses the students’ needs for services as a means to assist students achieve successful educational and student achievement outcomes
Student Records
Records for Currently Enrolled Students

- Admissions
- Transcript
- Academic Progress
- Tuition and Fee Payments
- Refunds
- Financial Aid
- Information upon which a student’s initial and continued enrollment is based
How long to keep records for currently enrolled students?

During the student’s enrollment

For five years post the student’s, withdrawal, or termination date
Official Transcript
Withdrawn/ Graduated/ Terminated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s name and unique identifier;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name and address of the school;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program of study;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and date/term of courses taken;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock or credit hours and grades earned for each course;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits accepted for transfer;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative grade point average;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of program entry; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of graduation, termination or withdrawal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Official Transcripts

- Made available to students upon request and in accordance with the school's policies
- Maintained Indefinitely
- Physical or electronic
- Securely maintained and protected against damage or loss
Maintain student financial records for a minimum of five years

- Financial aid
- Tuition and fee payments
- Tuition refunds
Graduate Employment Assistance

Graduate employment assistance available to students

Extent and nature aligns with claims made by the school
Graduate Employment Records

Verifiable records are maintained for five years.

Statements regarding employment rates must be based on these records.
Student Complaints – School Policy

Policy and procedure

Inform students in writing of the policy and procedure

Published in the school’s catalog and include a reference to the school official(s) responsible for the complaint policy and procedure
Publishes the ACCSC Student Complaint/Grievance Procedure contained in the ACCSC Complaint Review Process Form.

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

SECTION VII STUDENT LEARNING, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRESS
Student Learning Outcomes

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

Reflect the necessary occupational and academic knowledge, skills, and competencies.
Be sure student learning outcomes for each program are consistent with the program objectives as defined during the institution’s program design and development phase.
Example:

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

A graduate must successfully complete 10 consecutive welds using the backhand and forehand technique. The welds must meet the minimum standards as defined by American Welding Society.
Reminder – share objectives; outcomes; competencies with your students- don’t leave them guessing!
Student Assessment

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

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

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

- Define successful progress, including the intervals of evaluation
- Have processes and procedures for placing students on Probation or Termination if not meeting successful academic progress
- Include processes and procedures for notifying students of probation
- Include the school’s policies and procedures for how a student can return to normal status or re-enter school if terminated
Not using the 4.0 Scale?

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

• The school publishes in its catalog and enforces a policy of acceptable student attendance. The policy must promote sufficient levels of student attendance such that the required knowledge, skills, and competencies can be reasonably achieved.

• If the school terminates a student due to lack of attendance – publish the policy.
Leaves of Absence...

IF!

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

• Publish in the catalog the normal duration of each program based on regular and required course loads and schedules – i.e., 18 months, 2 years, etc.

• Publish the implications if a student does not complete the program within the maximum timeframe (e.g., loss of financial aid eligibility and program enrollment termination)

• Clock hour program - the maximum time frame shall not exceed 1.5 times the normal duration of the program

• Credit hour program - the credit hours attempted cannot exceed 1.5 times the credit hours required to complete the program
The school is not required to terminate the enrollment of a student who is unable to complete the program within the maximum timeframe unless the school has determined that the student has failed to meet school policies that would otherwise warrant termination (e.g., academic progress or attendance policies).

**BUT**

For the purposes of reporting student achievement, the school may not classify students who do not complete the program within the maximum timeframe as graduates.
What is on the Diploma?

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

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

SECTION VII STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
How Does a School Demonstrate Successful Student Achievement?
By maintaining acceptable rates of:

- Student graduation
- Graduate Employment in the Field
- Pass rates on licensure/certification exams where required to work in the field
And What is Acceptable?
Benchmarks

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

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

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

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RATES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Length in Months</th>
<th>Average Rates of Graduation</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>
<tr>
<td>Program Length in Months</td>
<td>Average Rates of Employment</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Established Benchmark Employment Rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Licensure/Certification Exam Pass Rates

- For programs where a governmental entity requires the attainment of a passing score on a licensure/certification exam in order to work
- The pass rate is acceptable when at least 70% of the students that take the exam attain a passing score
So how do I calculate these graduation and employment rates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number Started</th>
<th>Transfers to Another Program/Cohort</th>
<th>Transfers from Another Program/Cohort</th>
<th>Total Starts Plus/Minus Transfers</th>
<th>Unavailable for Graduation</th>
<th>Students Available for Graduation</th>
<th>Graduates within 100% of Program Length</th>
<th>Graduates - Further Education</th>
<th>Graduates - Unavailable for Employment</th>
<th>Graduates - Available for Employment</th>
<th>Graduates - Employed in Field</th>
<th>Graduates - Unrelated Occupations</th>
<th>Graduates - Unemployed</th>
<th>Graduates - Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Class Start Date (month/year)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Number Started</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Transfers to Another Program/Cohort</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Transfers from Another Program/Cohort</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Total Starts Plus/Minus Transfers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Unavailable for Graduation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Students Available for Graduation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Graduates within 100% of Program Length</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Graduates - Further Education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Graduates - Unavailable for Employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Graduates - Available for Employment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Graduates - Employed in Field</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Graduates - Unrelated Occupations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Graduates - Unemployed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Graduates - Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there is a value other than zero in any of these cells, there is an error in the data.
Instructions for activating the self-calculating beginning and ending dates into the Graduation & Employment ("G&E") Chart:

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

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

c. Once in the G&E Chart tab, calculate the Reporting Period:
   - Enter the required Report Date as provided or directed by the Commission in the following format: July 2021, then
   - Enter the Program Length in Months (round up to the nearest whole number). The Beginning and Ending dates of the 12-month Reporting Period will automatically be filled in on the chart.

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

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

For any questions or additional information, please contact Sean Forman at 703-247-4505 or sforman@accsc.org.
Glossary of Terms Used on the ACCSC Graduation and Employment Chart

All Data Included in the Graduation and Employment Chart Must Be Verifiable Through Appropriate Documentation.

1. **Class Start Date**: The month and year each student cohort or group of student cohorts, including a group of student cohorts occurs when there are multiple class starts within a single month.

2. **Enrollment Status**: The number of students who started in the program for each start date in the period, including students entering with substandard placement. Students are considered to have been in attendance for the required purpose(s) (a "start") if, as a result of their attendance, they incur a tuition or other financial obligation as specified by the institution’s refund policy.凡是 other obligations (i.e., uniforms, tools, etc) are only those associated with actual attendance, not those considered part of the application for admission or enrollment process. In any event, any student recorded in the enrollment status for the program must be classified as a “start” for the purpose of reporting students on the Graduation and Employment Chart.

3. **Transfers in Another Program/College**: The total number of students who transferred out of this program and into another ACCSC approved program at the college. This is the number of students for the program who are excluded from an approval of degree or certificate. The total number of students for the program who are excluded from an approval of degree or certificate. The total number of students for the program who are excluded from an approval of degree or certificate. The total number of students for the program who are excluded from an approval of degree or certificate. The total number of students for the program who are excluded from an approval of degree or certificate.

4. **Transfers from Another Program/College**: The total number of students who transferred into this program from another ACCSC approved program at the school, and whose program in this program is concurrent with the student’s class start date and the total number of students for this program who return fees for an approval of degree or certificate or for the "Transfer to Another Program/College" purposes.

5. **Total Students Enrolled**: The total number of students who started, minus those who transferred out, plus those who transferred in. This is the total number of students on which graduation rates will be based.

6. **Unavailable for Graduation**: This category refers to the graduation rate calculation students who fall into one of the following classifications: death, incarceration, parole, military service, in the event of a medical condition that prevents continued enrollment.

7. **Available for Graduation (Line 7-9)**: The total number of students available for graduation from the program.

8. **Withdrawn (Terminal):** The number of students who withdrew or were terminated, within 10% of the program length, from the program. This number does not include the student classified as "Unavailable for Graduation" (Line 6).

9. **Graduate: within 10% of Program Length**: The number of students who graduated from the program within 10% of the stated program length.

10. **GRADUATION RATE**: The school's official graduation rate for each cohort and for the program for the reporting period (Line 10 = 12).

11. **Graduate: Further Education**: The number of graduates that continue on with education at an accredited postsecondary institution at least a half-time basis.

12. **Graduate: Transferable for Employment**: This category refers to the employment rate calculation students who fall into one of the following categories: death, incarceration, parole, military service, the event of a medical condition that prevents employment, or international students who are required by the terms of their student visa and are eligible for the employment rate or international students as defined above, are counted toward the international student enrollment.

13. **Available for Employment (Lines 13 = 17)**: The total number of students available for employment.

14. **Graduate: Employed in Field**: The number of graduates employed in jobs for which the program trained them. NOTE: Graduates classified as employed must be supervised by documentation showing a supervisor, date of employment, and employer contact, address, and phone number.

15. **EMPLOYMENT RATE**: The school's official rate of graduate job placement for each cohort and for the program for the reporting period (Line 13 = 17). The school's official rate of employment is their cohort number proportionality with graduation requirements.
For any program that has a graduation or employment rate that is lower than the Commission’s established benchmark rates, a school may still demonstrate with supporting documentation the successful achievement of its students in that program by providing other reliable indicators of successful student learning.
Mitigating Circumstances

- Economic conditions
- Location
- State and national trends
- Student population
- Program length

Students who withdraw and are employed in field
Appendix VII

Guidelines for Employment Classification
Guidelines for Employment Classification

Justification of “Employed in Field”

Documentation of Verification
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Verifiable Employment Record</strong></th>
<th>Include</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Name</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of Graduation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date of Initial Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employer Address</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employer Contact Person/Supervisor and direct contact information</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Job Title</strong> (please also provide job duties if the job title is insufficient to demonstrate alignment with program name)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The employment classification is appropriate and reasonable based on the educational objectives of the program.

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

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

- Regular
- Self-Employed
- Career Advancement
The school secures written documentation from the employer verifying the employment.

OR

The school secures written documentation from the graduate verifying the employment.
The school demonstrates diligent efforts to obtain written documentation AND

Signature of school staff attesting to verbal verification with the employer AND the graduate.
The graduate’s name and contact information

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

An attestation that the graduate is earning training-related income

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

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

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

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

Written documentation (attestation) from the employer OR the graduate that the training supported the graduate’s ability to be eligible or qualified for advancement.
Third Party Verification Of Employment Records

SECTION VII STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
IS THIS VERIFICATION OF OUR VERIFICATION?

Yes.

Why?

Because...
The process provides an assessment of:

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

**The extent to which the institution’s records can be relied upon in making decisions about a school’s compliance with the Commission’s student achievement standards**
Three circumstances in which third party verification is required

ACCSC engages an independent third party to verify a random sample of employment data submitted with each year’s Annual Report.

Initial and renewal applicants engage an independent third party to verify the school’s most recently reported employment data that will be used for the on-site evaluation process.

The Commission may also direct a school to undergo a Third-Party Employment Verification at any time.
Step One – Choose a Vendor
What does INDEPENDENT mean?

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

Does not provide any other services to the school.

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

Understands and applied ACCSC’s defined classifications exactly as stated.
The same disclosures that apply to owners and managers of the school Apply to owners or managers or affiliated contractors of the third-party verifier
THIRD PARTY VERIFICATION
IF THE VENDOR ANSWERS “YES”

- The vendor must provide a narrative explanation for YES answers to the questions above.
- The school must provide an explanation as to why the school chose this vendor and how this vendor can serve as a reliable verifier.
The third party verifier will provide the following for the school to include in the SER:

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

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

- A description of the methodology that the verification agency used for the verification process.
Step Two – Records

Provide employment records for each graduate reported on Line 14 in every G&E Chart submitted with the Self-Evaluation Report.
The independent third-party must select minimally a 50% sample of employed graduates (classified as “Graduates - Employed in the Field”) on line 14 of each G&E Chart and report the results from that sample.

Once the 50% sample has been selected the independent third-party may not alter the sample in an effort to get better results.
The independent third-party must verify employment records with the employer or graduate or in writing.
The independent third-party must conduct the verifications without assistance from the school, with the exception of the school’s provision of records to be verified.

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

✓ The same employer as listed in the school’s record;

✓ The start date listed in the school’s record is within 45 days of the verified start date; and

✓ The verified job title is substantively the same as that listed in the school’s record, using the following illustrative guidelines
Examples from an Automotive Technology Program

- Exact Match - The school employment record matches exactly the verified job title e.g., “Mechanic”;

- Obvious Match - The school employment record states “Mechanic” and the verified job title of, “Auto Mechanic” is an obvious match; or

- Confirmed Match - The school employment record states “Mechanic” but the verified job title is “Technician II” and the employer or graduate confirm that the job responsibilities are substantively the same.
Unable to Verify

The third-party verifier is:

☑️ Unable to obtain verification of the school’s employment record from either the employer or the graduate.

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

- A start date that is more than 45 days different from the start date in the school’s employment record; or

- A substantively different job title from that in the school’s employment record (i.e., any job title that is verified to be different from the school’s employment record and is not an obvious match or confirmed match as described above)
Verified as Incorrect

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

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

The school must provide the full report from the independent third-party verification of employment data to the ACCSC on-site evaluation team, as directed by Appendix B of the SER.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Third-Party Initial Employment Verification Reported Institutional Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report Date on Graduation and Employment Chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Sampled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verified as Correct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned
Maximize your relationship with the third party

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

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

Help students to understand their role in the accountability framework

► Begin on the first day of Orientation and continue throughout the program

► Accreditation Resources: New Student Letter / Graduation Letter
SET EXPECTATIONS WITH STAFF

USE THE FORM

COMPLETE THE FORM
Employment Record

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

- Incomplete forms
- Poor description of job duties
- Insufficient information that demonstrates the connection between the educational objectives of the program and the vocational outcomes.
Example: Pharmacy Technician Program

Pharmacy Technician...!

Designated Hitter...?
INCLUDE EMPLOYERS

- Work proactively with employers
- Set expectations, get feedback
- Batching Verification
- Avoid the temptation to “scrub” data
- Accreditation
  Resources:
  Employer Letter – (English / Spanish)
The Guidelines for Independent Third Party Verification are available here:

The Independent Third-Party Employment Verification FAQ is available for download at www.accsc.org.
Crossing the Finish Line!
Process Overview – First Leg

- **August 2023**: Workshop
- **February 2023**: Application Part I
- **August 2024**: Application Acceptance Letter
- **February 2024**: Self-Evaluation Report + Application Part II
- **May 2025**: Orientation Evaluation
- **June 2025**: Orientation Report
Process Overview – Finish Strong

July 2025
Final Materials for the On-Site Evaluation (revised Application Part II and Self-Evaluation Report)

September 2025
On-Site Evaluation

November 2025
On-Site Evaluation Report

February 2026
Commission Review

March 2026
School Action Letter
ON-SITE EVALUATION
## Purpose of the On-Site Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verify</td>
<td>Verify data in the school’s reports, applications, responses, and any other information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Develop an understanding and perform an assessment of how well the school meets its objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine</td>
<td>Determine the extent to which the school complies with the Standards of Accreditation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The school is evaluated according to:

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

• A Commission representative will contact you to schedule the on-site evaluation

• Typically required for two days

• Regular “School Day”
  – Not exam week
  – Majority of students in class
  – Administrators and faculty present
Composition of the Team

- Team Leader/Management Specialist (administration / management)
- Education Specialist (education delivery / curriculum / faculty)
- ACCSC Staff Member (technical assistance / interpretation of Standards)
- Occupation Specialist (equipment / facilities)
- Distance Education Specialist (if required)
- State Observer (invited)
Evaluation team members do not recommend action to the Commission; this function is reserved to the Commission.

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

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

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

THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL ON-SITE EVALUATION
Prepare YOUR Team

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

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

Familiarize your team with the Application for Accreditation and Self-Evaluation Report that will be the foundation of the on-site evaluation team’s review.
Prepare a Workspace for the Team

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

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

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

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

Documentation of admissions requirements
Fully executed enrollment agreements
Satisfactory progress evaluations
Advising sessions
Transcripts for graduate files
Refund calculations
Evidence refunds were made
ACCSC’s Student Survey is a crucial part of gathering student input.

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

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

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

Please distribute this to your whole current student body.
And... action!
Day One - Arrival

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

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

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

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

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

The team will select files for review from the lists of students required by Appendix B of the SER.
Day One – The Work

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

Occupation Specialists depart after the completion of their reviews.

Throughout the day, team members communicate with school officials regarding the team’s progress and potential findings.

For evening programs, the team will stay to survey students and observe the operation of the school in the evening.

At the conclusion of Day One, the Team Leader will meet with school officials to provide a “debrief” of the day’s activities and to outline areas of focus for Day Two.
Day Two

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

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

Serves as the official written record of the on-site evaluation.
Commission Review

ACCREDITATION DECISIONS ARE BASED ON THE WRITTEN RECORD
The Written Record Consists of

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

It is NOT the number of findings in the OER

It IS whether the response demonstrates current compliance with standards
Narrative

Explain
- Explain circumstances that impacted the school’s ability to demonstrate compliance

Act
- Describe corrective action and provide documentation to show current compliance

Plan
- Describe the school’s plan to ensure compliance in the future
Documentation

• Shows consistent execution of policies

• Demonstrates systematic compliance over time
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.
Deferral

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

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

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

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

When the Commission determines from the record that the school does not meet the requirements specified in the Standards of Accreditation
Accredit - Maximum Grants

3 Years Initial

5 Years for Renewal

5 Years for Institutions Accredited by another Accrediting Agency

6 Years for Institutions Recognized as an ACCSC School of Excellence
Accredit

✓ The response demonstrates compliance with accrediting standards

✓ Applicants for initial accreditation will be granted accreditation for up to three years
Stipulations are generally those questions that can be answered with documentation within a relatively short period of time, such as:

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

All stipulations must be met before a Commission decision to grant renewal of accreditation becomes effective.
The Commission grants accreditation to a school but requires the submission of an Interim Report in order to demonstrate compliance with accrediting standards, such as:

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

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

- Obligations of an accredited member of ACCSC
- Maintain compliance
- Continuous operation
- Fulfill reporting requirements
- Maintain state authorization
- Pay all fees
Parting Thoughts
Getting Off to a Great Start
DO THIS!

✔ Contact ACCSC staff with any and all questions you may have
✔ Utilize ACCSC website resources
✔ Read and familiarize yourself with the Standards of Accreditation prior to preparing and submitting the application
✔ Have your independent CPA read ACCSC’s Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Financial Statements and Related Information prior to preparing your school's financial statements.
Don’t Do This!

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

Submit compiled or reviewed financial statements
Common Miscues on the Application for Initial Accreditation Part I

- Application fails to show graduates from longest programs
- Application fails to show at least one 300 clock hour program
- Application fails to show continuous enrollment/operation
- Financial statements not audited
- Financial statements not prepared in a comparative format
- Financial statements do not meet all three tests for eligibility
Most Common On-Site Evaluation Team Findings 2018

10 Initial schools
Average 9.2 findings per report

- Admissions (8)
- Program Advisory Committee (8)
- Enrollment Agreement (6)
- Faculty Qualifications (6)
- Recruitment (6)
Most Common On-Site Evaluation Team Findings 2019

8 Initial schools
Average 5.75 findings per report

- Faculty Qualifications (5)
- Student Progress (5)
- Institutional Assessment and Improvement (4)
- Management (4)
- Program Advisory Committee (4)
- Student Achievement Outcomes (4)
Tool Kit

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

- Student Success is at the Center
- Standards = Best Practices
- Ongoing Assessment
- Strong Infrastructure/Resources
- Continuous Improvement
Assessment – where are we now and where are we going?
How do we get there from here?
Do we have enough fuel and snacks (infrastructure, resources)?
Who is going to drive? Who is checking the map?
Parting Thoughts

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

Be prepared to constantly use the system you design
Don’t Guess!
Pick up the phone… or keyboard
Transformation

Understand that accreditation involves a transformation to the accredited school paradigm
GOING ON A ROAD TRIP

EXPECTATION vs REALITY

PACKING THE CAR
Focus on Excellence

Rather than just “jumping through hoops,” understand the spirit of the standard
More than a Survival Badge

LEARN AND GROW THROUGH THE PROCESS
SLOW DOWN!
Building the Airplane

In the Air