



***Re: Accrediting Commission Report
April 2018 Meeting
(via email distribution)***

Dear ACCET Members and Other Colleagues:

This letter provides information regarding actions undertaken by the ACCET Accrediting Commission at its April 2018 meeting. Specific reports relative to the April 2018 Commission meeting will be available on the ACCET website under the “Commission” tab, including: (1) Final Actions Taken by the Commission (referenced by institution), (2) Summary Statistics of Actions Taken by the Commission, and (3) a copy of this Accrediting Commission Report, which describes new and/or revised ACCET policy documents considered by the Commission for final approval or call for comment. Also available on the website is a request for written comments relative to institutions scheduled for consideration of accreditation at the Commission’s August and December 2018 meetings.

A summary of Commission actions taken at the April 2018 meeting regarding ACCET policies is provided below, including: (1) final documents approved by the Commission (available on the ACCET website under “Documents and Forms”) and (2) call for comment on proposed revisions to policy documents.

As a reminder, the Commission’s Standards and Policy Review Committee (SPRC) conducts an ongoing review of each ACCET policy document at least every five years. Additionally, SPRC considers specific policy documents for review and revision to address governmental regulatory requirements, arising issues of concern, and/or the need for additional policy guidance. Member institutions and other interested parties are invited and encouraged to submit their written comments to proposed changes to ACCET policies and standards (available on the ACCET website under “News”).

FINAL APPROVAL

1. Document 3.ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages Template

Approved are changes to the specific field criteria under Standard II-A – Governance to add the following requirement: *“The institution enrolls students under the appropriate visa status, which is: (a) a F visa for academic and language (avocational) programs, (b) a J visa for visitor exchange programs, and (c) a M visa for vocational and/or technical programs, consistent with federal requirements. An institution may enroll students in other visa categories in accordance with the requirements of the specific visa, such as B visa holders in programs that are avocational or recreational in nature.”*

2. Document 11 – Policies and Practices of the Accrediting Commission

Approved is a change to make explicit the time limit for programmatic probation that mirrors the limit for show cause directives, as follows: *“The duration of the programmatic probation may not exceed 12 months, unless the Commission extends the time frame for good cause, defined as significant improvement by the institution in the deficient area(s) and/or the need for sufficient time to demonstrate full compliance (e.g. measurable improvement in program completion and/or placement rates). Beyond the initial 12-month period, an extension for good cause may be incrementally determined to be sound by the Commission at each successive Commission meeting, for a maximum period of 12 months.”*

Additionally, approved are revisions to be consistent with federal requirements and to codify ACCET’s current practice. Approved is a change to clarify that the length of a grant of reaccreditation will be reduced by the period of deferral, if applicable.

3. Document 16 – Transfer of Credit Policy

For purposes of clarity, approved is a change to specify that tuition and fees are to be adjusted *“to ensure a pro-rated tuition reduction for transfer credit awarded.”*

4. Document 23 – Admissions Requirements and Ability to Benefit

Approved is the following change relative to proof of high school graduation or its equivalent: *“Documented proof of high school graduation or its equivalent must include a copy of a high school diploma or a GED, a high school transcript, and/or written certification by a cognizant authority for home-schooled students. A student attestation of high school graduation, which identifies the name of the secondary school, location, and date of graduation, may be provided as proof of high school graduation only on a limited, exceptional basis such as when the student’s high school closed or a foreign high school transcript is unavailable from a foreign country at war, in a declared state of emergency, or other extreme circumstances that prevent access to transcripts. In such an event, the student’s file must include: (1) documented evidence that the institution made all reasonable efforts to obtain documented proof of high school graduation and (2) written documentation to substantiate the extraordinary circumstances that warranted the use of a student attestation of high school graduation.”*

5. Document 25 – Policy for New, Revised, and Existing Programs

For purposes of clarity, approved are changes to make clear that ACCET’s requirements are the same for an externship, internship, and practicum. Additional approved changes are for purposes of clarity such as stating that any required program template must be submitted with an application for an out-of-scope program and the subsequent program report. Also approved is to delete reference to the bachelor’s degree pilot, as the pilot is postponed indefinitely.

6. Document 25.10a – Guidance for On-Site Credit Review

Approved are the following changes regarding the assignment of credit based on work outside of class (homework) for financial aid purposes:

- *Homework assignments are separate and distinct from the work assigned during the scheduled hours of the course/program, particularly for training delivered through interactive distance learning. Hours spent completing homework must be in addition to the regularly scheduled instructional hours of the course/program and not count as scheduled instructional hours.*
- *Homework is typically weighted between 10%-15% of the final course grade and is not to exceed 20% of the final course grade.*
- *Although homework may be assigned and required for successful completion of an externship/internship course/module (e.g. the submission of a journal), homework hours are not approved by ACCET for financial aid purposes.*

7. Document 29 – Catalog Guidelines and Checklist

Approved is to require a catalog to include the following additional items:

- a. Identification (by program) of any additional requirements such as immunizations, medical physical exams, background checks, and/or drug tests, etc.*
- b. Summary (by program) of any conditions and relevant state requirements that may adversely impact the students' ability to benefit from training, sit for certification/licensure examinations, if applicable, and/or work in the field (e.g. felony conviction), in accordance with ACCET Document 30 – Policy on Recruiting, Advertising, and Promotional Practices."*
- c. If applicable, require a statement affirming that non-immigrant foreign students will be enrolled under the appropriate visa status, which is a M visa for all vocational programs and a F visa for avocational ESOL programs, consistent with federal requirements. Note: An institution may enroll students in other visa categories in accordance with the requirements of the specific visa, such as B visa holders in programs that are avocational or recreational in nature.*
- d. For each avocational and vocational program, require a full and accurate description of the following: (Refer to ACCET Document 38 – Certification and Licensing Policy).*
 - 1. Identification of any certification, licensing, registration, or examination requirements that are mandatory and/or optional for program graduates.*
 - 2. Any measures taken by the institution to prepare graduates to obtain mandatory and/or optional certification, licensing, registration, or examination, including: (i) any related coursework; (ii) test prep, test review, and/or test materials for certification/licensing; (iii) test vouchers; (iv) on-site testing for certification/licensing exams; and/or (v) payment or reimbursement of any certification/ licensure/registration fees.*

8. Document 38 - Certification and Licensing Policy

Approved is a new policy to clarify when Standard IX-C Certification and Licensing is applicable and what the expectations are for recording and tracking the success of program graduates in obtaining certification and licensing, along with the pass rates of graduates on any examinations required for certification and licensing.

9. Document 49.1 – Notice to Students: ACCET Complaint Procedure for ACCET-Accredited Institutions

Approved are minor changes as a result of the five-year review of this document.

10. Document 49.2 – Notice to Students: ACCET Complaint Procedure for Institutions Applying for ACCET Accreditation

Approved is a new document to advise students how to file a complaint if they are enrolled at an institution seeking initial ACCET accreditation.

CALL FOR COMMENT

1. Document 49 – Policy and Procedure for Processing Complaints Initiated Against ACCET Institutions

Proposed is a change to address institutions that have multiple complaints closed with merit as follows: *“When an institution has three or more complaints closed with merit (full or partial) within a five-year period, subsequent complaints filed against the institution will be referred to the Commission for review and action following a review by the Complaint Review Committee and a recommendation to close the complaint with merit.”*