Dear ACCET Members and Other Colleagues:

This letter provides information regarding actions taken by the ACCET Accrediting Commission at its August 2019 meeting. Specific reports relative to the April 2019 Commission meeting are 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 December 2019 and April 2020 meetings.

A summary of Commission actions taken at the August 2019 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


   Approved is the following additional sentence to the section on the appeals process: “The appeals hearing shall be held before the next Commission meeting following the notice of denial or withdrawal, unless the Chair of the Commission determines that special circumstances warrant a delay or time extension.”

2. ACCET Document 31ESOL – Cancellation and Refund Policy

   For purposes of clarity, approved is guidance relative to the offering of tuition discounts, as follows:
“An institution must treat students fairly and equitably relative to tuition, other charges, and refunds. Tuition discounts may be offered, on a limited basis, to students, provided that: (a) the terms and eligibility requirements for all discounts are published and clearly disclosed to prospective students; (b) all students meeting the eligibility criteria are given the tuition discount; and (c) there is a fair, equitable, and reasonable rationale for the tuition discount (e.g. discounts for multiple term/session enrollments, full tuition payment by or on behalf of the student for a period not to exceed 12 months, and/or a specific program offered at a specific time of year). Note that refunds made to or on behalf of students with tuition discounts must be based on the discounted tuition charged, except when students with multiple term/session discounts fail to attend multiple terms/sessions.”

3. **Documents 49 – Policy for Processing Complaints Against ACCET Accredited Institutions and Applicant Institutions**

Approved are the following changes: (a) align the closure process for dismissed complaints whether they are anonymous complaints or not; (b) align and extend to 14 business days the time frame for: (i) notice of complaints to institutions, (ii) institutional responses to complaints, and (iii) notification of closure of complaints; (c) clarify that when a follow-up visit is directed by the Commission to investigate a complaint, the institution may be required to provide its response to the complaint in conjunction with the institutional response to the team report.

4. **Document 50I – On-Site Compliance Checklist Relative to Enrolled Non-Immigrant Students**

Following the five-year review of this document, no substantive changes were made.

**CALL FOR COMMENT**


Proposed are changes to the Appeals Process to state that “One of the three panelists may be a former Commissioner who may be designated as the Chair of the Appeals Panel.” Currently, the language states that the Chair will be a former Commissioner. Additionally, proposed is to modify the language regarding the admissibility of evidence. Another proposed change is to alter the language regarding the submission of additional information and exhibits after the initial submission of the appeals brief. Also, proposed is to prohibit the recording of the appeals hearing other than by a court reporter present at the hearing.

2. **Document 26 – Policy on Additional Locations and Changes of Location**

Proposed is the following exception to the requirement for a preliminary visit to an auxiliary classroom: “The requirement of a preliminary visit may be waived for an auxiliary classroom that is located at a public facility such as a public golf course and/or a public firing range that is inspected and certified by public governmental agencies for health and safety purposes.”
3. ACCET Document 31ESOL – Cancellation and Refund Policy

For purposes of clarity, proposed is guidance relative to the offering of tuition discounts, as follows: “An institution may not offer targeted tuition discounts and financial incentives to induce students from competing institutions to transfer.”


Following the five-year review of this document, the following changes are proposed: (a) revisions to language in the introductory paragraphs, (b) clarification as to the information to be provided as part of the list of currently enrolled students, (c) documentation required to be submitted relative to the currently enrolled students, and (d) wordsmithing throughout the document.