

**Report from the Distance Learning and Educational Innovation Subcommittee
on definitions related to accreditation in Sections 600.2 and 602.3**

- The Subcommittee forwards the following proposed “Preaccreditation” definition from Section 600.2 to the Accreditation and Innovation Committee with support and without comment:

Preaccreditation (sometimes referred to as candidacy) means the status of accreditation and public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an institution or program for a limited period of time that signifies the agency has determined that the institution or program is progressing towards a full term of accreditation and is likely to attain a full term of accreditation before the expiration of that limited period of time.

- The Subcommittee forwards the following proposed definitions from Section 602.3 to the Accreditation and Innovation Committee with support and without comment:

Compliance report means a written report that the Department requires an agency to file to when that agency is found to be out of compliance to demonstrate that the agency has corrected deficiencies specified in a decision letter from the senior Department official or the Secretary. Compliance reports must be reviewed by Department staff and the Advisory Committee and approved by the senior Department official (and, in the event of an appeal, by the Secretary).

Final accrediting action means a final determination by an accrediting agency regarding the accreditation or preaccreditation status of an institution or program. A final accrediting action is the decision made by the agency, at the conclusion of any appeals process available to the institution or program under the agency’s due process policies and procedures.

Programmatic accrediting agency means an agency that accredits specific educational programs, including those that prepare students in specific academic disciplines or for entry into a profession, occupation, or vocation.

Senior Department official means the official in the U.S. Department of Education designated by the Secretary who has appropriate seniority and relevant subject matter knowledge to make independent decisions on accrediting agency recognition.

- The Subcommittee forwards the following proposed definitions from Section 602.3 to the Accreditation and Innovation Committee, representing edits recommended by the full committee in February:

Monitoring report means a report that an agency is required to submit to Department staff when it is found to be substantially compliant. The report contains documentation to demonstrate that -

- (1) The agency is implementing its current or corrected policies; or
- (2) The agency, which is compliant in practice, has updated its policies to align with those compliant practices.

Substantial compliance means the agency demonstrated to the Department that it has the necessary policies, practices and standards in place and generally adheres with fidelity to those policies, practices and standards; or the agency has policies, practices, and standards in place that need minor modifications to reflect its generally compliant practice.

- The Subcommittee takes no position and defers the following proposed definition change definition from Section 602.3 to the Accreditation and Innovation Committee:

Scope of recognition or scope means the range of accrediting activities for which the Secretary recognizes an agency. The Secretary may place a limitation on the scope of an agency's recognition for Title IV, HEA purposes. The Secretary's designation of scope defines the recognition granted according to—

~~(1) Geographic area of accrediting activities; such that the inclusion of a particular geographic area (including but not limited to a State or tribal lands) in one accreditor agency's scope does not preclude the inclusion of that same or a similar geographic area in another accreditor agency's scope;-~~

- ~~(2) Types of degrees and certificates covered;~~
- ~~(3) Types of institutions and programs covered;~~
- ~~(4) Types of preaccreditation status covered, if any; and~~
- ~~(5) Coverage of accrediting activities related to distance education or correspondence education courses.~~