

Institutional Accreditation Standards

STANDARD 4 AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

The institution is legally constituted as a nonprofit organization or is a nonprofit subsidiary of a parent organization, authorized by its state or province to operate as an educational institution and grant all degrees and/or offer credentials. The institution has its own governing board with legal and fiduciary responsibility to exercise appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, resource development, and ongoing operations.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Relative to this standard, an accredited institution is characterized by . . .

1. Enabling documents that establish the institution as a legal entity in its state or province; protect its mission/purpose, tenets of faith, and control; and provide a basis for governance and administration. Where an institution is a subsidiary of a parent organization, it must have its own enabling documents.
2. Evidence that the institution is authorized to award the credentials that it offers in all of the jurisdictions in which it operates.
3. A governing board that has the necessary authority and exercises legal power for the operation of the institution. Where an institution is a subsidiary of a parent organization, the institution must have its own governing board, including representatives from a broader pool than the sponsoring organization alone, and autonomy over institutional decisions.
4. Board membership that excludes all employees except the chief executive officer.
5. A governing board with officers that do not include the chief executive officer.
6. A governing board that assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution.
7. A conflict of interest policy for board members that addresses issues such as financial interests, contracts, employment, family, or other personal interests in the institution.
8. A governing board appropriate in size to operate efficiently and sufficiently diverse in ethnicity, gender (where theologically appropriate), and professional competencies to serve the constituency effectively.
9. Evidence for the ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the board and its members.
10. A process for effective recruitment, orientation, and development of board members to ensure stability and new membership.
11. A process for providing updates for board members on issues relative to institutional mission, finances, and programs.
12. Board policies and practices that clearly distinguish board and staff roles and that define the authority of the board and its limitations.

[Applicable Policies: Policy on Governance, Policy on State/Government Authorization, Policy on Semi-Autonomous Institutions]