

ABHE Policy Updates

Michael D. Jackson

Associate Director, Commission on Accreditation

Important Resources to Track Changes

- <https://www.abhe.org/accreditation/accreditation-documents/>
- Click on COA Manual – CHANGES
- This document will include ALL CHANGES from the previous FEBRUARY up until the present time. (The current COA Manual – CHANGES document is for February 2023-last week)
- New changes that were initiated this week will be in the February 2024 edition which will be released as soon as it is feasible

Review of Changes to Accreditation Standards

FEBRUARY 2023-FEBRUARY 2024

Definition of Accreditation Standard

- A written statement of the criteria by which an institution can measure its educational effectiveness and the COA can determine an institution's accreditation status. (COA Manual, page 235)

Procedure for Standards Changes

- Recommendations for addition, deletion, or modification to the COA's accreditation policies, procedures, or Standards may originate from any source.
- Recommendations are then studied by the Committee on Criteria. If the committee agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will express the proposal in language that is consistent in style and format with existing accreditation policies, procedures, and Standards, and recommend it to the COA for approval.
- Recommendations from the Committee on Criteria are then considered by the COA. If the COA agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will recommend it to the ABHE membership.

Procedure for Standards Changes (cont'd)

- Recommendations released by the COA are then circulated by electronic means or mail to the Association's constituency. Recommendations related to Standards are also circulated to member institutions, states, provinces, other recognized accrediting bodies, and the public and published on the Association's website.
- Standards recommendations that have gained final approval from the COA are placed before the COA Delegate Assembly for a vote.
- Unless otherwise specified by the COA, institutions or programs have **two years to comply** with newly adopted Standards.



VOTED ON YESTERDAY

ALL OF THEM! WE HAVE NEW STANDARDS! THERE ARE OTHER
CONFERENCE SESSIONS ABOUT THOSE.

Explanation of New or Revised Accreditation Policies

FEBRUARY 2023-FEBRUARY 2024

Definition of a Policy

- Commission on Accreditation policies provide supplemental guidance regarding implementation of the Standards for Accreditation. Institutions are expected to use the policies to understand how the Commission on Accreditation interprets various aspects of the Standards. Evaluators may use the policies as a basis for “Suggestions” to institutions, but “Recommendations” by evaluators may only be attached to Standards. (COA Manual, p 43)
- The Policies are organized into three sections:
 - 1) Policies Relating to Commission on Accreditation Standards (Institutional & Programmatic)
 - 2) Policies Relating to Commission on Accreditation Procedures
 - 3) Policies Providing General Institutional Guidance

Procedure for Policy Changes

- Recommendations for addition, deletion, or modification to the COA's accreditation policies, procedures, or Standards may originate from any source.
- Recommendations are then studied by the Committee on Criteria. If the committee agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will express the proposal in language that is consistent in style and format with existing accreditation policies, procedures, and Standards, and recommend it to the COA for approval.
- Recommendations from the Committee on Criteria are then considered by the COA. If the COA agrees with the worthiness of a recommendation, it will recommend it to the ABHE membership.

Procedure for Policy Changes (cont'd)

- Recommendations released by the COA are then circulated by electronic means or mail to the Association's constituency.
- Policy and procedural recommendations adopted by the COA do not require further approval by the COA Delegate Assembly.
- Institutions or programs have one year to comply with newly adopted policies.

Recent Policy Change List (February 2023)

- Policy on Substantive Change
- Policy and Procedures for Reviews and Appeals
- Other: Glossary Definitions
- Policy and Procedures for Branch Campuses and Additional Locations
- Policy and Procedures for Institutional Accreditation
- Policy on Assignment of Primary and Secondary Readers
- Policy on Communication of Accreditation Decisions
- Policy on Confidentiality
- Policy on Independent Accreditation Status
- Policy on Public Representatives
- Policy on Use of Accreditation Consultants



Recent Policy Change List (June 2023)

- Policy on Student Success and Institutional Culture
- Policy and Procedures for Institutional Accreditation (A&I)

Recent Policy Change List (August 2023)

- Policy on Substantive Change (A&I)
- ~~Policy and Procedures for Branch Campuses and Additional Locations~~ (A&I) NOW Policy and Procedures for Educational Sites Geographically Separate from the Main Campus
- Policy on Prison Education Programs (PEPs) (A&I)

Recent Policy Change List (November 2023)

- Policy on Public Representatives
- Policy on Composition of Evaluation Teams
- Policy on Canadian Institution Degree Programs

A Look Ahead

Examining the Climate and Currents in the World of Accreditation

Q&A