



Achieving ABHE Standards 4-6

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Principles of Accreditation

- Biblical higher education mission
- Patterns of compliance
- Compliance for all educational sites, instructional modalities, languages of instruction, pedagogical models
- Supports with evidence

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Standard 4: Administration, Faculty, and Staff

The institution employs and supports competent personnel who effectively discharge their duties in support of mission achievement.

Key Terms (from the COA Standards and Policies Manual)

- **Employee Welfare** – Care that an institution demonstrates for its employees, particularly with regard to salaries, benefits, and professional development.
- **Faculty Status** – Institutional designation for individuals engaged in instruction, curriculum development, learning resource management and development, academic leadership, and other academic activities as designated by institutional policies.
- **Professional Development** – Organized institutional support for faculty and staff to advance in the knowledge, skills, competencies, and traits that contribute to effectiveness in their roles and achievement of institutional mission.

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Key Considerations

Mission-fit personnel

The assumption of the standard is that the institution hires personnel aligned with institutional mission.

Qualified personnel

Personnel have the competencies appropriate for their responsibilities, usually demonstrated through degrees and experience consistent with industry or market standards.

Policies and procedures

The assumption of the standard is that policies are written, published, current, and accessible to those governed by those policies.

Faculty qualifications

The assumption of the standard is that the institution maintains a faculty that meets the qualifications in EEs 11-13. Faculty qualifications based on factors other than degrees earned are justified with appropriate documentation.

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Standard 4: Administration, Faculty, and Staff

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. A sufficient number of qualified personnel to provide services to all stakeholders.
2. A chief executive officer who has the character, capacity, and professional qualifications to fulfill the institution-specific role, and who is sufficiently engaged with the institution to lead toward the accomplishment of its mission.
3. A chief executive officer appointed by, reporting to, and evaluated on a regular basis by the board.
4. Administrative leaders with education, experience, capacity, and competencies appropriate to their specific duties and to the level of education offered.
5. Published policies and procedures relating to the recruitment, appointment, role and responsibilities, professional development, evaluation, promotion, termination, and welfare of institutional employees.

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Standard 4: Administration, Faculty, and Staff

6. A clearly documented organizational structure appropriate to the size and scope of the institution that encompasses all units and roles and includes written job responsibilities.
7. Mission-driven values and practices that encourage job satisfaction and employee engagement.
8. Policies, procedures, and practices for the protection of personnel from threat of harm or loss, including security measures, crisis response measures, and protection of privacy.
9. Written policies and procedures to promote effective operations.
10. Complete, accurate, and securely maintained administrative records of institutional decision-making.

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Standard 4: Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Faculty

Specific to faculty, an accredited institution is characterized by...

11. Committed Christian faculty members who engage in the academic, spiritual, and vocational development of students.
12. Faculty members who possess earned and appropriately documented degrees from institutions accredited by agencies recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the U. S. Department of Education, or the appropriate provincial government.
13. Undergraduate faculty members who have earned a minimum of a master's degree and teach in an area of documented expertise. Graduate faculty members who have earned a terminal or doctoral degree and teach in an area of documented expertise. Faculty credentials based on factors other than degrees earned are justified by appropriate documentation.

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Standard 4: Administration, Faculty, and Staff

14. Published policies and procedures that delineate the authority and responsibility of the faculty for decision-making related to curriculum, program development, academic policies and procedures, graduation requirements, and other academic matters.
15. A faculty of sufficient size and expertise to support the institution's mission, ensure the quality of curriculum, and provide effective leadership of educational programs.
16. Systems for evaluating and improving instructional effectiveness to support student learning.
17. Published policies and procedures that address the intellectual property rights and academic freedom of faculty members.

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Applicable Policies

See the current COA Standards and Policies Manual

- **Policy on Ethical Practices**
- **Policy on Semi-Autonomous Institutions**
- **Policy on Closing an Institution**

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Standard 5: Financial and Physical Resources

The institution maintains and effectively manages the financial and physical resources necessary to achieve its mission.

Key Terms (from the COA Standards and Policies Manual)

- **Financial Audit** – Review of an institution's financial records by a certified firm that includes an opinion statement. Audits submitted to the COA must include the management letter, if provided by the auditor, and be conducted according to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) or Canadian generally accepted auditing standards as a full financial audit (not a review or compilation).
- **Internal Controls** – A comprehensive system of procedures to ensure sound fiscal management.
- **Risk Management** – The process of planning for and taking action to minimize potential adverse effects related to emergency management, insurance claims, cyber security, natural disasters, international travel, sexual assault responses, reputational issues, and other institutional challenges.

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Key Considerations

Financial stability

The assumption of the standard is that the institution has resources, policies, and practices that support ongoing financial stability.

Planning and budgeting

The assumption of the standard is that the institution's budgeting process is informed by planning (and by assessment results).

Effective resource management

Institutions have adequate personnel, policies, and procedures in place to effectively manage physical, financial, and technological resources.

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Standard 5: Financial and Physical Resources

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. An annual independent, opinioned audit, prepared by a licensed accounting professional, approved by the board, and made available to the public.
2. Financial stability, including adequate revenue streams to realize institutional mission and sufficient financial reserves to enable effective response to unforeseen financial circumstances and enrollment fluctuations.
3. A budgeting process, informed by institutional planning, that serves as an effective instrument of financial oversight.
4. Risk management policies and procedures and adequate internal controls sufficient to safeguard assets and protect personnel from accusations of wrongdoing.

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Standard 5: Financial and Physical Resources

5. Adequate institutional resources, including financial resources, facilities, equipment, supplies, and technology to support its mission, achieve educational goals, and ensure continuity of offerings.
6. Sufficient personnel to adequately manage and maintain institutional resources.
7. Facilities and services compliant with applicable health, safety, and disability access codes.
8. Policies, procedures, and practices for effective maintenance and protection of institutional resources and users from threat of harm or loss, including security and crisis response measures.
9. Reliable technology platforms, training and support, and related policies and procedures, that support institutional mission and ensure accurate and secure institutional data.

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Applicable Policies

See the current COA Standards and Policies Manual

- **Policy on Semi-Autonomous Institutions**
- **Policy on Monitoring Annual Report Data**

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Standard 6: Enrollment Management

The institution develops and implements an enrollment management plan that is consistent with its mission and addresses recruitment, admissions, and student financial services.

Key Terms (from the COA Standards and Policies Manual)

- **At-Risk Students** – Students pursuing higher education who have been under-served by educational or social systems.
- **Diversity** – The degree to which an institution, consistent with its theological commitments, reflects difference within its constituency in alignment with its admission, hiring, and nominating policies.
- **Financial Aid** – Grants, loans, assistantships, scholarships, fellowships, tuition waivers, tuition discounts, veteran's benefits, employer assistance and other monies provided to students to meet expenses.
- **Transfer Credit** – Academic credits completed at another institution and applied to an academic program in process according to the institution's policies.

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Key Considerations

Enrollment management plan

Institutions are expected to have an enrollment management plan that guides enrollment efforts.

Recruitment of mission-fit students

Recruitment strategies should be directed toward student populations that fit with institutional mission and program outcomes

Accurate and clear communication

The assumption of the standard is that institutions publish clear and current information regarding transfer policies, articulation agreements, credit for prior learning, financial aid opportunities, admission policies, etc.

Regulatory requirements

Institutions offering federal or state aid are expected to meet all related regulatory requirements.

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Standard 6: Enrollment Management

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

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

1. A written, mission-focused enrollment management plan that addresses recruitment, admissions, and student financial services, is appropriate to the level of education, and is consistently applied in the admissions process.
2. Admissions requirements and student financial services that are clearly communicated to prospective students.
3. The allocation of resources and authority to support effective recruitment, admissions, and student financial service efforts.
4. Student recruitment and admissions policies and practices that are directed toward students whose spiritual commitments, educational goals, and interests are consistent with the intended outcomes of the institution, and that promote diversity of ethnicity and sex appropriate to the institution's theological and cultural context.

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Standard 6: Enrollment Management

5. Evaluation procedures and/or programs that reasonably ensure admitted students have attained the requisite educational level, possess the ability to achieve their educational goals successfully, and are adequately prepared for their desired level of study and instructional modality.
6. Accurate and fair descriptions of the institution's admissions policies, transfer credit and prior learning policies and criteria, articulation agreements, and effectiveness claims in institutional publications (print and electronic), statements, and advertising.
7. Accurate financial aid information regarding scholarships, grants, loans, and refunds that is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.
8. Financial aid practices that meet applicable regulatory and reporting requirements.
9. Financial counseling services that help students make financial decisions regarding their education and inform students receiving financial assistance of related repayment obligations.

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Applicable Policies

See the current COA Standards and Policies Manual

- Policy on Transfer and the Award of Academic Credit
- Policy on Validating Credits Earned at Unaccredited Institutions
- Policy on Institutional, Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status

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