

NEW Policy on Correspondence Education

Proposed new policy separates policy language for correspondence education from the *Policy on Instructional Modalities* and further clarifies requirements for correspondence education.

Recognition and Authorization for Correspondence Education

Correspondence education is included in ABHE's scope of recognition with the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) but is not included in ABHE's scope of recognition with the U.S. Department of Education. Correspondence education is not distance education, and correspondence courses are not eligible for Title IV financial aid.

Institutions must ensure that they meet state and/or provincial authorization requirements for correspondence education in all jurisdictions in which they operate. The institution must be approved in its home state to grant all certificates, diplomas, and/or degrees offered as correspondence education programs. For more information, see the *Policy on State/Government Authorization*.

Ensuring Integrity in Correspondence Education

Institutions utilizing correspondence education are required to:

1. Ensure that admissions policies address required proficiencies to enroll in correspondence courses.
2. Provide students with written notification at the time of registration of any additional charges associated with verification of student identity. This notification should include a disclosure to students related to the technology(ies) that will be required by students prior to enrolling in the course (specific software, smart phone, version of an operating system or plug-ins, audio and/or video capabilities).
3. Take appropriate steps to ensure that the student who registers for a correspondence education course and/or program is the same student who participates in the course and/or program and receives the academic credit. Institutions must have written policies governing measures undertaken to verify the identity of a student who participates in class or course work offered via correspondence education. The following methods are possible measures that institutions may take (alone or in combination), at their discretion, to ensure the required level of integrity:
 - a. Authenticate student identity through a uniquely assigned and secure login and password.
 - b. Require major exams to be proctored by a responsible party who, as part of the proctoring process, verifies the identity of the student and certifies in writing that the examination was taken under the conditions required by the course.
 - c. Validate the student's identity via a government issued photo ID.
 - d. Conduct random interviews of a sampling of correspondence education students at some point during a course, asking focused questions about course content and student-generated products to verify the student's knowledge of course materials.

- e. Employ available software applications and services (e.g., turnitin.com) to verify that student-produced materials are not plagiarized
 - f. Require students to sign an “academic honesty” statement at the end of the course, asserting that the work done for the course has been their own. Students must be notified of this requirement at the outset of the course.
4. Develop and implement written procedures to protect the privacy of students enrolled in correspondence education courses and/or programs.

Applicable Standards: Standard 3, 7

Other Applicable Policies: *Policy on Substantive Change and Required Notifications*
Policy on Instructional Modalities

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