

# Ofc. of Postsecondary Educ., Education § 602.17

1. The agency’s accreditation stand- ards effectively address the quality of the institution or program in the fol- lowing areas:
   1. Success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institu- tion’s mission, which may include dif- ferent standards for different institu- tions or programs, as established by the institution, including, as appro- priate, consideration of State licensing examinations, course completion, and job placement rates.
   2. Curricula.
   3. Faculty.
   4. Facilities, equipment, and sup- plies.
   5. Fiscal and administrative capac- ity as appropriate to the specified scale of operations.
   6. Student support services.
   7. Recruiting and admissions prac- tices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising.
   8. Measures of program length and the objectives of the degrees or creden- tials offered.
   9. Record of student complaints re- ceived by, or available to, the agency.
   10. Record of compliance with the in- stitution’s program responsibilities under Title IV of the Act, based on the most recent student loan default rate data provided by the Secretary, the re- sults of financial or compliance audits, program reviews, and any other infor- mation that the Secretary may provide to the agency; and
2. The agency’s preaccreditation standards, if offered, are appropriately related to the agency’s accreditation standards and do not permit the insti- tution or program to hold preaccreditation status for more than five years.
3. If the agency only accredits pro- grams and does not serve as an institu- tional accrediting agency for any of those programs, its accreditation standards must address the areas in paragraph (a)(1) of this section in terms of the type and level of the pro- gram rather than in terms of the insti- tution.
4. If the agency has or seeks to in- clude within its scope of recognition the evaluation of the quality of institu- tions or programs offering distance education or correspondence education,

the agency’s standards must effectively address the quality of an institution’s distance education or correspondence education in the areas identified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section. The agency is not required to have separate standards, procedures, or policies for the evaluation of distance education or correspondence education.

1. If none of the institutions an agency accredits participates in any Title IV, HEA program, or if the agen- cy only accredits programs within in- stitutions that are accredited by a na- tionally recognized institutional ac- crediting agency, the agency is not re- quired to have the accreditation stand- ards described in paragraphs (a)(1)(viii) and (a)(1)(x) of this section.
2. An agency that has established and applies the standards in paragraph
3. of this section may establish any additional accreditation standards it deems appropriate.
   1. Nothing in paragraph (a) of this section restricts—
      1. An accrediting agency from set- ting, with the involvement of its mem- bers, and applying accreditation stand- ards for or to institutions or programs that seek review by the agency; or
      2. An institution from developing and using institutional standards to show its success with respect to stu- dent achievement, which achievement may be considered as part of any ac- creditation review.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1845–0003)

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74

FR 55427, Oct. 27, 2009]

## § 602.17 Application of standards in reaching an accrediting decision.

The agency must have effective mechanisms for evaluating an institu- tion’s or program’s compliance with the agency’s standards before reaching a decision to accredit or preaccredit the institution or program. The agency meets this requirement if the agency demonstrates that it—

* + - 1. Evaluates whether an institution or program—
         1. Maintains clearly specified edu- cational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate in

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light of the degrees or certificates awarded;

* + - * 1. Is successful in achieving its stat- ed objectives; and
        2. Maintains degree and certificate requirements that at least conform to commonly accepted standards;
      1. Requires the institution or pro- gram to prepare, following guidance provided by the agency, an in-depth self-study that includes the assessment of educational quality and the institu- tion’s or program’s continuing efforts to improve educational quality;
      2. Conducts at least one on-site re- view of the institution or program dur- ing which it obtains sufficient informa- tion to determine if the institution or program complies with the agency’s standards;
      3. Allows the institution or program the opportunity to respond in writing to the report of the on-site review;
      4. Conducts its own analysis of the self-study and supporting documenta- tion furnished by the institution or program, the report of the on-site re- view, the institution’s or program’s re- sponse to the report, and any other ap- propriate information from other sources to determine whether the insti- tution or program complies with the agency’s standards;
      5. Provides the institution or pro- gram with a detailed written report that assesses—
         1. The institution’s or program’s compliance with the agency’s stand- ards, including areas needing improve- ment; and
         2. The institution’s or program’s performance with respect to student achievement; and
      6. Requires institutions that offer distance education or correspondence education to have processes in place through which the institution estab- lishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The agen- cy meets this requirement if it—

1. Requires institutions to verify the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as—

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1. A secure login and pass code;
2. Proctored examinations; and
3. New or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity; and
4. Makes clear in writing that insti- tutions must use processes that protect student privacy and notify students of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74

FR 55427, Oct. 27, 2009]

## § 602.18 Ensuring consistency in deci- sion-making.

The agency must consistently apply and enforce standards that respect the stated mission of the institution, in- cluding religious mission, and that en- sure that the education or training of- fered by an institution or program, in- cluding any offered through distance education or correspondence education, is of sufficient quality to achieve its stated objective for the duration of any accreditation or preaccreditation pe- riod granted by the agency. The agency meets this requirement if the agency—

* 1. Has written specification of the requirements for accreditation and preaccreditation that include clear standards for an institution or program to be accredited;
  2. Has effective controls against the inconsistent application of the agen- cy’s standards;
  3. Bases decisions regarding accredi- tation and preaccreditation on the agency’s published standards;
  4. Has a reasonable basis for deter- mining that the information the agen- cy relies on for making accrediting de- cisions is accurate; and
  5. Provides the institution or pro- gram with a detailed written report that clearly identifies any deficiencies in the institution’s or program’s com- pliance with the agency’s standards.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

[64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, as amended at 74

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