

**NEW DIVISION
REPORT TEMPLATE**

# Instructions

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission requires that all institutions seeking to add a new division and related program(s) obtain prior approval from the Commission and undergo an on-site visit. Prior approval serves two main purposes: (1) It provides the institution an opportunity to critically reflect on its operations, processes, and procedures prior adding an administrative site and (2) it provides the on-site team with a comprehensive overview of the institution, its mission, and its processes that are integral to delivering quality distance education.

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission’s accreditation process is grounded on the fundamental principle of peer review that enables faculty and administrative staff from within higher education to make recommendations essential to ensuring the quality of learning and institutional operations for all students. The process is guided by transparent standards that are established collaboratively by professional peers and member institutions.

The on-site visit provides an opportunity for evaluators to meet with key staff members, faculty/instructors, principal managers, outside accountants, governing board members, and advisory council members. The evaluators verify that the institution is meeting its mission and can demonstrate successful student achievement.

This report informs the Commission whether the institution is meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting each of the DEAC accreditation standards and core components by adding a new administrative site. Approximately four to six weeks following the on-site visit, the report is provided to the institution for response. Both the report and the institution’s response are submitted to the Commission for review prior to final decision making.

# Instructions

It is the evaluator’s responsibility to review and assess the accuracy of the information presented in the application and during the on-site visit. By completing the following report template, the Chair of the evaluating team presents a single overall determination of whether the institution adequately demonstrates that it meets DEAC’s accreditation standards when adding an administrative site.

Findings guidelines:

* **Meets Standard:** The institution demonstrates compliance with the intent of the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Partially Meets Standard:** The institution was able to demonstrate compliance with some, but not all, of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Does Not Meet Standard:** The institution was unable to demonstrate compliance with a majority of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.

The Chair should provide clear and concise descriptions within the “Comments” section of the report to support each determination that a standard or core component is met, partially met, or not met. If an institution meets the accreditation standard, the Chair may want to consider highlighting within the Comments section the processes and procedures the institution followed that enabled it to demonstrate compliance. If an institution partially meets or does not meet a standard, the Chair needs to adequately describe why the evaluation team reached this decision and refer, as appropriate, to narrative sections and exhibits within the SER that support the determination.

The Chair must also indicate the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the partially met or unmet accreditation standard. Each required action must be tied back to an accreditation standard or core component.

For required actions, the Chair should begin each statement with, “[Insert Name of Institution] needs to [insert the action necessary by the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standard.]”

As part of the peer review process, it is important that institutions receive suggestions for improving their educational offerings and support services. The accreditation process allows the institution to benefit from an external review and perspective. The Chair is encouraged to provide suggestions within the report. Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

For suggestions, the Chair should begin each statement with, “[Insert Name of Institution] may want to consider [insert the recommendation for improvement.]”

It is the Chair’s responsibility to review the merits and evidence presented for each determination. The Chair has the discretion to choose a finding based on the institution’s response and evidence presented during the on-site visit.

**Report Submission:** The Chair emails the completed report to DEAC’s director of accreditation four weeks following the on-site visit. Once all information is received, DEAC notifies the Chair to appropriately dispose of all institutional materials.

Helpful Hints

* The report should be objectively written in third person, narrative format using declarative sentences and simple verbs. The report should avoid broad generalities and speculative views.
* The report represents an accurate, concise, factual, and thorough presentation of the findings during the on-site visit.
* When making a determination whether the institution meets, partially meets, or does not meet accreditation standards, the Chair should include evidence of documents reviewed on site or analyzed in the report that led to the finding. Include specific examples.
* The report documents attributes and deficiencies using language found in the accreditation standards and core components. All deficiencies must be documented.
* The report should not require an institution to implement a new program or procedure in order to demonstrate compliance with a partially met or unmet accreditation standard. The Chair’s report states the required action necessary to provide evidence or demonstrate compliance. The institution bears responsibility for demonstrating compliance with DEAC’s accreditation standards.
* The report accurately presents comments, required actions, and suggestions using direct quotations, references, and data.
* The report does not make recommendations to the Commission concerning the overall accreditation of the institution.

New Division Report (Confidential)

Name of Institution: Name of institution

Date of Visit: Date of on-site visit

Name of Evaluator: Evaluator name

Position on Team: Position on team

Onsite Team Chair: Name of on-site team chair

Date Report Due to Chair: Date report is due

# Accreditation Standards

## Standard I: Institutional Mission

1. **Description of the Mission:** The institution’s mission communicates its purpose and its commitment to providing quality distance educational offerings appropriate to the level of study offered. The mission establishes the institution’s identity within the educational community and guides the development of its educational offerings.

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| **Standard I.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Review and Publication of the Mission:** The institution’s leadership, faculty, staff, administrators, and other stakeholders regularly review the mission to assure continued institutional quality and viability. The published mission statement is readily accessible to students, faculty, staff, other stakeholders, and the public.

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| **Standard I.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Information on Achievement of the Mission:** The institution identifies key indicators it uses to demonstrate that it is effectively carrying out its mission. The institution documents the achievement of its mission and shares appropriate information on this achievement with relevant groups (e.g., Advisory Councils, faculty, staff, students, and the public).

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## Standard II: Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning

1. **Institutional Effectiveness Planning:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to its educational offerings and administrative operations through processes that monitor and improve institutional effectiveness. The institution engages in sound research practices; collects and analyzes evidence about its effectiveness; and develops action plans that are used to improve operations, educational offerings, and services.

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| **Standard II.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Strategic Planning:** The institution has a systematic process of planning for the achievement of goals that supports its mission. The institution’s planning process involves all areas of the institution’s operations (e.g., admissions, academics, technology, etc.) in identifying strategic initiatives and goals by evaluating external and internal trends as they affect the future. At a minimum, the strategic plan addresses finances, academics, technology, admissions, marketing, personnel, and institutional sustainability. The strategic plan is reviewed and updated annually using established metrics designed to measure achievement of strategic planning goals and objectives. The plan helps institutions set priorities, manage resources, and set goals for future performance.

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## Standard VI: Academic Leadership and Faculty Qualifications

1. **Academic Leadership:** The institution demonstrates appropriate academic leadership capacity and infrastructure to support the effective distance education delivery of educational offerings. Academic leaders possess the academic credentials, background, knowledge, ethics, and experience necessary to guide the instructional activities of the institution.

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Chief Academic Officer (CAO) or Educational Director:** The institution designates a chief academic officer, educational director, or other similar oversight position. This individual is responsible for overall administrative of the educational program(s); for the educational, editorial, and research activities within departmental subject fields; and for faculty/instructors. The individual also informs marketing decisions.

Within the context of the institution’s mission:

* 1. The CAO or education director has appropriate academic administrative experience and competence necessary to lead and manage educational offerings in a distance education environment.
	2. The CAO or education director possesses academic credentials that are appropriate for the leadership, supervision, and oversight of faculty, curriculum design, and student achievement expectations.
	3. Doctoral Degrees

The institution appoints a director for doctoral degree programs. The director possesses previous higher education administrative capacity and distance learning knowledge to lead doctoral programs. The director possesses the appropriate terminal degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution in a subject area relevant to the degree program being offered.

* 1. Dissertation Supervisory Committee

A doctoral committee of at least three faculty members is assigned for each student. Doctoral committee members possess appropriate credentials, scholarship, experience, and practice in the field of study. At least one member of the doctoral committee is a member of the awarding institution’s faculty. At least two members of the doctoral committee have earned doctoral degrees from appropriately accredited institutions other than from the awarding institution. All committee members are qualified in the subject area of the dissertation or research project topic. The institution has final approval for students who nominate faculty to the doctoral committee.

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| **Standard VI.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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1. **Instructors, Faculty, and Staff:** Faculty/instructors are qualified and appropriately credentialed to teach the subject at the assigned level. The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified faculty/instructors to provide individualized instructional service to each student. The institution maintains faculty/instructor résumés, official transcripts, and copies of applicable licenses or credentials on file. Faculty/instructors are carefully screened for appointment and are properly and continuously trained on institutional policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of instructional technology. The institution regularly evaluates faculty and administrator performance using clear, consistent procedures. The institution assures that faculty are appropriately involved and engaged in the curricular and instructional aspects of the educational offerings. Faculty are assigned responsibilities based on their degree qualifications and/or area(s) of expertise.
	1. High School

The institution provides evidence that all faculty/instructors are qualified and appropriately credentialed to teach the subject and level within the high school program offered.

* 1. Non-Degree

Instructors teaching technically- or practice-oriented courses have practical experience in the field and possess current licenses and/or certifications, as applicable.

* 1. Occupational/Technical Associate Degree

Faculty possess earned credentials awarded by appropriately accredited institutions and/or have practical experience in the field and possess current licenses and/or certifications if applicable. The institution must demonstrate the academic preparation and practical experience of each faculty member consistent with accepted postsecondary education practices.

* 1. Undergraduate Degrees

Faculty teaching undergraduate degree program courses possess, at a minimum, a degree at least one level above that of the program they are teaching and demonstrate expertise in the subject field of the discipline. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level, including occupational/technical associate degrees, must possess a master’s degree in the assigned general education subject field or have a master’s degree and 18 semester credit hours in the general education subject field.

* 1. Master’s Degrees

Faculty teaching graduate-level courses in a master’s degree program must possess, at a minimum, a doctoral/terminal degree earned at an appropriately accredited institution in the subject field of the discipline and demonstrate familiarity with practical applications of the field.

* 1. Faculty Qualification Equivalency

In limited and exceptional cases, institutions may demonstrate that faculty are qualified to teach at the undergraduate and master’s levels through faculty qualification equivalency. Such equivalency is demonstrated by evidence of substantial breadth and depth of experiences and knowledge that are relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member is teaching. An institution that intends to substitute faculty qualification equivalency for the degree qualifications set forth in Standards VI.C.4 and VI.C.5 must have:

* + 1. well-defined policies, procedures and documentation that demonstrate how experience and knowledge are sufficient to determine that the faculty member has the expertise necessary to teach students in that discipline; and
		2. procedures that ensure that adequate oversight of teaching and learning is provided by individuals who possess degree qualifications in accordance with Standards VI.C.4 and VI.C.5.
	1. First Professional Degrees

All teaching faculty and involved practitioners possess a first professional or higher degree earned at an appropriately accredited institution in a related subject field and possess specialized knowledge and skills in the subject area, consistent with educational practices of other similar programs.

* 1. Professional Doctoral Degrees

All teaching faculty possess terminal degrees (e.g., professional doctoral degree or Ph.D.) earned at an appropriately accredited institution in a related subject field. Prior to enrolling students, the institution has in place a dedicated dean, director, or other academic officer with credentials appropriate to the degree(s) being offered.

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**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Professional Growth:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to faculty and staff professional development. The institution encourages faculty and staff to become members of professional organizations, to review and apply relevant research, to pursue continuing education or training in their respective fields, and to enhance their skills in developing and using electronically delivered, online, or other forms of distance study. The institution provides faculty and administrators with access to a collection of professional educational materials to keep abreast of current trends, developments, techniques, research, and experimentation.

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| **Standard VI.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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## Standard VII: Advertising, Promotional Literature, and Recruitment Personnel

1. **Advertising and Promotion:** The institution conforms to ethical practices in all advertising and promotion to prospective students. All advertisements, website content, and promotional literature are truthful, accurate, clear, and readily accessible to the public; proactively states that programs are offered via distance education; and appropriately discloses occupational opportunities as applicable. Catalogs, enrollment agreements, manuals, and websites list the institution’s full name and physical address. At a minimum, all print advertisements and promotional literature include the institution’s city, state, and website home page URL where, in compliance with DEAC’s website disclosures checklist, the institution’s physical address is provided. All web-based advertisements provide a link to the institution’s website home page URL. All institutional social media account profiles provide a link to the institution’s website home page URL. The institution complies with the DEAC’s catalog disclosures checklist and DEAC’s website disclosures checklist.
	1. All advertisements and promotional materials accurately reflect the programs and services offered by the institution. The word “guarantee” is never used in advertisements. Under limited and exceptional circumstances, institutions may use the word “free” when it is appropriate to the mission and purpose of the institution.
	2. The institution’s website testimonials and endorsements are truthful and less than four years old. The institution maintains signed student consent forms for each published testimonial. The institution’s website discloses all program requirements, course descriptions, tuition and related costs, program schedules, method of delivery, and its catalog prior to the collection of any personal student contact information. The institution does not use other institutions as triggers for its own sponsored links on Internet search engines.
	3. The institution discloses in its catalog, website, and enrollment agreements that the acceptance of earned transfer credits is determined by the receiving institution.
	4. The institution adheres to applicable catalog, website, and enrollment agreement disclosures checklists, based on educational offerings. The institution publishes student consumer information as required by federal and state statute and regulations.
	5. Any incentives offered to prospective and current students to enroll must be limited in nature to institution-branded items and in no event may such items exceed an aggregate value of $100 annually with respect to any individual.
	6. The institution permanently archives its catalogs.

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| **Standard VII.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Institution and Course Accredited-Status Recognition:** The institution accurately reflects its accredited status and uses the official DEAC accreditation logo and/or statement of accreditation when publishing its accreditation status in advertisements and promotional materials on its website, and in social media. DEAC’s name, address, telephone number, and web address are published in the institution’s catalog.
	1. The institution publishes a statement of accreditation only as follows:
		* + Accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission
			+ DEAC Accredited
	2. The institution refers to DEAC’s recognition by the U.S. Department of Education only as follows: “The Distance Education Accrediting Commission is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a recognized accrediting agency.”
	3. The institution refers to DEAC’s recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) only as follows: “The Distance Education Accrediting Commission is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).”
	4. The accredited institution publicly corrects any misleading or inaccurate information it releases on its accreditation status, contents of its on-site team reports from accreditation-related visits, and/or actions taken by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission with respect to the institution.
	5. All courses and programs are approved by DEAC before the institution advertises or enrolls students in them. The institution uses the term “College” or “University” in its name only if it offers academic degree programs.

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| **Standard VII.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Student Recruitment:** The institution demonstrates ethical processes and procedures are followed throughout the recruitment of prospective students by any individual who is authorized by the institution to participate in the enrollment process with prospective students. Minimum ethical practices and procedures are identified below.
	1. The institution takes full responsibility for the actions, statements, and conduct of its authorized recruitment personnel. The institution maintains appropriate records, licensures, registrations, signed employment contract, and signed DEAC Code of Ethics, as applicable for all recruitment personnel. The institution demonstrates it adequately trains its recruitment personnel and provides them with accurate information concerning employment and remuneration. All authorized recruitment personnel are provided with appropriate materials covering applicable procedures, policies, and presentations. The institution demonstrates that it routinely monitors its recruitment personnel or independent organizations that provide prospective applicants names to assure they are in compliance with all state, federal, and DEAC recruitment practices.
	2. All personnel involved in student recruitment, including telemarketing staff, conform to applicable federal, state, and international laws. Personnel involved in student recruitment may not be given and may not use any title that indicates special qualifications for career guidance, advising, or registration, nor may they publish advertisements without written authorization from the institution.
	3. If an institution offers students nominal gifts for referring prospective students to the institution who ultimately enroll in the institution, such gifts must be limited in nature to institution-branded items and in no event may exceed an aggregate value of $100 annually with respect to any individual.

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| **Standard VII.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

## Standard VIII: Admission Practices and Enrollment Agreements

1. **Admissions Disclosures:** Admissions policies and procedures are designed to assure that the institution enrolls only those students who are reasonably capable of successfully completing and benefiting from the educational offerings.
	1. The institution informs each applicant, prior to admission, of the admissions criteria, the nature of the education provided, and the demands of the educational offerings. Prior to completing the enrollment process, the institution requires students to affirm access to the catalog and other institutional documents disclosing the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution.
	2. The institution admits students regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age. Institutions reasonably accommodate applicants and students with disabilities to the extent required by applicable laws.
	3. Official transcripts, if required for admission, are received within one enrollment period not to exceed 12 semester credit hours, or the student is withdrawn from the program.

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| **Standard VIII.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Student Identity Verification:** Student identity verification is initiated during the admissions process to verify that the admitted student who participates in and completes coursework and assessments is the same student who is awarded credit.

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| **Standard VIII.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Compulsory Age Students:** An institution enrolling students under the compulsory school age obtains permission from responsible parties to assure that the pursuit of the educational offerings is not detrimental to any compulsory schooling.

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Admissions Criteria:** The institution’s admissions criteria aligns with its mission and student population served. The institution establishes qualifications that an applicant possesses prior to enrollment in order to successfully complete the stated educational offerings. The institution consistently and fairly applies its admission requirements. If an institution enrolls a student who does not meet the admissions criteria, the institution documents the reason(s) for the exception to the admissions criteria.
	1. Transcripts not in English are evaluated by an appropriate third party and translated into English or evaluated by a trained transcript evaluator fluent in the language on the transcript. Evaluators possess expertise in the educational practices of the country of origin and include an English translation of the review.
	2. The institution’s admissions criteria disclose procedures for verifying appropriate language proficiencies. The institution verifies English language proficiency for applicants whose native language is not English and have not earned a degree from an appropriately accredited institution where English is the principal language of instruction. Verification procedures align with DEAC’s guidance on English Language Proficiency Assessment.
	3. Non-Degree Programs

As appropriate for the students served and educational programs offered, the institution obtains official documentation that applicants possess a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent at the time of admission (e.g., high school diploma, general educational development tests [GED], or self-certification statement).

Institutions that implement self-certification procedures must:

* + - * obtain a signed statement from the applicant attesting to a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
			* require applicants to provide the institution name, city, state, and year of graduation on the self-certification statement;
			* develop and follow procedures to evaluate the validity of high school completion, or its equivalent, if the institution has reason to believe that the documentation was not obtained from an entity that provides secondary school education (e.g., general educational development tests or GED); and
			* document that such practices are necessary to be consistent with the institution’s mission.
	1. Undergraduate Degrees

The institution obtains official documentation that applicants possess a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent at the time of admission (e.g., high school diploma or general educational development tests [GED]). Institutions may implement self-certification in accordance with VIII.D.3.

* 1. Master’s Degrees

At the time of admission, the institution obtains official documentation that applicants possess a bachelor’s degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution.

* 1. First Professional Degrees

At the time of admission, the institution obtains documentation that applicants possess a bachelor’s or master’s degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution.

* 1. Professional Doctoral Degrees

At the time of admission, the institution obtains documentation that applicants possess a bachelor’s or master’s degree earned from an appropriately accredited institution and relevant academic experience. At a minimum, the institution verifies that applicants have completed 30 graduate-level credit hours prior to admission.

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| **Standard VIII.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Admission Acceptance and Denial:** The institution informs applicants that they have been accepted for admission. The institution communicates with the applicant and documents the basis for any denial of admission.

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| **Standard VIII.E. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

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**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Transfer Credits:** The institution implements a fair and equitable transfer credit policy that is published in the catalog. The steps for requesting transfer credit are clear and disclose the documentation required for review. Students are able to appeal transfer credit decisions using published procedures. Transfer credit requests are not denied based solely on the source of accreditation of the credit-granting institution.

Credit awarded for experiential or equivalent learning, including challenge and test-out credits, cannot exceed 25 percent of the credits required for an undergraduate degree. Institutions maintain official documentation of the bases for decisions to award credit for experiential or equivalent learning.

An institution seeking to offer credit for prior learning assessment publishes evaluation standards consistent with CAEL’s Ten Standards for Assessing Learning. Prior learning assessment is performed by qualified individuals with experience in the evaluation of prior learning.

In instances where a student seeks to transfer more than the maximum allowable percentage of required credit hours specified in the relevant degree category listed in subsection F.2 through F.5 below, the institution must conduct a comprehensive assessment of the student’s credits earned and document how the credits align with its program outcomes. In such cases, transfer credit allowances may not exceed the lesser of any applicable state requirements or 90 percent of the credits required for undergraduate degrees, 75 percent of the credits required for master’s degrees or first professional degrees, or 40 percent of the credits required for professional doctoral degrees.

* 1. High School

The institution may award a maximum of 75 percent of the credits required for a high school program.

* 1. Undergraduate Degrees

The institution may award a maximum of 75 percent of the credits required for a degree program or a combination of transfer credit and experiential or equivalent credit (including challenge/test-out credits). Courses accepted for transfer credit are relevant to the program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level. Credit awarded for experiential or equivalent learning cannot exceed 25 percent of the credits required for a degree.

* 1. Master’s Degrees

The institution may award a maximum of 50 percent of the credits required for a master’s degree program through transfer credit. Courses accepted for transfer credit are relevant to the program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level. Credit awarded for experiential or equivalent learning cannot exceed 25 percent of the credits required for a master’s degree.

* 1. First Professional Degrees

The institution may award a maximum of 50 percent of the credits required for a first professional degree program through transfer credit. Courses accepted for transfer credit are relevant to the program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level.

* 1. Professional Doctoral Degrees

The institution may award a maximum of 15 percent of the credits required for a professional doctoral degree program (or nine semester credit hours for a 60 semester credit hour degree program) through transfer credit. Courses accepted for transfer credit are relevant to the program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level.

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| **Standard VIII.F. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Enrollment Agreements:** The institution’s enrollment agreements/documents clearly identify the educational offering and assure that each applicant is fully informed of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution prior to applicant signature. The institution complies with the DEAC Enrollment Agreements Disclosures Check List.
	1. The institution requires that, prior to accepting the enrollment agreement, students affirm and accept the tuition refund policy and the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution. The terms of the tuition refund policy are published in the institution’s enrollment agreement, catalog, and website.
	2. An enrollment agreement is not binding until it has been submitted by the student and accepted by the institution. A copy of the accepted enrollment agreement is made available to the student within 10 days of acceptance and maintained as a part of the student’s record.
	3. The institution complies with the applicable Truth in Lending Act (TILA) requirements, including those under Regulation Z, and state requirements for retail installment agreements.
	4. All required state and Truth in Lending Act disclosures are included on the enrollment agreement. Requirements for type size, notice to buyer and computations examples, as applicable, are observed.
	5. If there is a separate payment contract, the contract is incorporated in the enrollment agreement.

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| **Standard VIII.G. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

## Standard X: Institutional Governance

1. **Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, and Administrators:** The institution’s owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and ability to oversee institutional operations. The owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators are knowledgeable and experienced in one or more aspects of educational administration, finance, teaching/learning, and distance study. The institution’s policies clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators. Individuals in leadership and managerial positions are qualified by education and experience.

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| **Standard X.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Reputation of Institution, Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, and Administrators:** The institution and its owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators possess sound reputations, a record of integrity, and ethical conduct in their professional activities, business operations, and relations. The institution must promptly notify DEAC of any investigative, enforcement, legal or prosecutorial actions which may be initiated or which are current against the institution, its owners, governing board members, officials and administrators. Such notification shall include an explanation of the circumstances giving rise to such actions and the institution’s response to the same as well as its explanation of why such actions should not be deemed a concern with respect to the integrity of the named persons or institutions.

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| **Standard X.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Succession Plan:** The institution has written plans that describes the process that it follows in the event a leadership succession is necessary. The plan identifies specific people, committees, or boards responsible to carry on the operation of the institution during the transition period. The plan includes a business continuity structure that the institution can implement immediately. The institution reviews and revises the plan on an annual basis.

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| **Standard X.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

## Standard XI: Financial Responsibility

1. **Financial Practices:** The institution shows it is financially responsible by providing complete, comparative financial statements covering its two most recent fiscal years and by demonstrating that it has sufficient resources to meet its financial obligations to provide quality instruction and service to its students. Financial statements are audited or reviewed and prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America or International Financial Reporting Standards. The institution’s budgeting processes demonstrate that current and future budgeted operating results are sufficient to allow the institution to accomplish its mission and goals.

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| **Standard XI.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Financial Management:** Individuals overseeing the fiscal and budgeting processes are qualified by education and experience. The institution employs adequate administrative staff for effective operations, and at least one person is qualified and able to prepare accurate financial reports in a timely manner. Internal auditing trails and controls are in place to assure that finances are properly managed, monitored, and protected. Adequate safeguards prevent unauthorized access to online and onsite financial information.

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| **Standard XI.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Financial Stability and Sustainability:** The institution maintains adequate administrative staff and other resources to operate effectively as a going concern and is not exposed to undue or insurmountable risk. Any risk that exists is adequately monitored, manageable, and insured. In the event the financial operations of the institution are supported by a parent company or a third party, audited or reviewed financial statements are provided by the supporting entity to demonstrate that the supporting entity possesses sufficient financial resources to provide the institution continued financial sustainability, as well as the commitment to do so. If the institution’s financial performance is included within the parent corporation’s statements, a supplemental schedule for the individual institution is appended to the parent statement.

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| **Standard XI.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Financial Reporting:** Financial statements are prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America often referred to as “GAAP,” including the accrual method of accounting. An independent certified public accountants (CPA) audit or review report accompanies these statements.
	1. The institution’s financial statements reflect sufficient liquid assets to provide for a staff and faculty.
	2. Annually, the institution has the option of submitting one of these two types of financial statements, unless the Commission directs the institution to submit audited financial statements:
		* + Audited comparative financial statements containing an audit opinion by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with standards established by the American Institution of Certified Public Accountants, or
			+ Reviewed comparative financial statements containing a review report by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

When circumstances raise a concern as to the financial soundness and stability of an institution, the Commission may, in its discretion, require that the institution deliver within a specified period of time (as reasonably determined by the Commission taking into account, for example, the exigency of the concerns and the size of the institution), audited comparative financial statements or such other financial documentation as the Commission may determine will provide information as to the institution’s financial health and status.

* 1. Financial statements submitted must include the institution’s fiscal statement for either the most recent fiscal year end or the date specified by the Commission, the CPA’s opinion letter or review report, and a letter of financial statement validation.

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| **Standard XI.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Demonstrated Operations:** In all respects, the institution documents continuous sound and ethical operations, including the necessary resources to accommodate demand and assure all learners receive a quality educational experience. The institution’s name is free from any association with activity that could damage the reputation of the DEAC accrediting process, such as illegal actions, fraud, unethical conduct, or abuse of consumers.

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| **Standard XI.E. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

## Standard XII: Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, Record Protection and Retention

1. **Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies:** The institution maintains sufficient facilities, equipment, and supplies to achieve its mission and values and support its educational offerings and future operations. A written plan outlines the maintenance and upgrade of facilities, equipment, and supplies, and includes a disaster response and recovery plan. The plan states the resources that are budgeted to support its goals. Buildings, workspace, and equipment comply with local fire, building, health, and safety regulations and are appropriately equipped to handle the educational program(s) of the institution.

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| **Standard XII.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Record Protection:** The institution’s financial, administrative, and student educational records are maintained in a reasonably accessible place and are adequately protected in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
	1. If maintaining documents electronically, the institution provides audit records to verify that the images were properly created and validated.
	2. If an institution accepts digitally signed transcripts or electronically transferred verified data from an outside source, the institution documents the outside source using a system that provides registration and verification of participants, protocols for securely sending and receiving files, logging of file transmissions, and electronic notification. The outside source complies with all applicable laws and regulations governing the activities and services provided, including FERPA and other laws concerning the privacy and confidentiality of information and records.

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| **Standard XII.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

1. **Record Retention:** The institution’s financial, administrative, and student educational records are retained in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. The institution implements a comprehensive document retention policy.

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| **Standard XII.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **State Authorization:**
	1. The institution is properly licensed, authorized, exempted, or approved by all applicable state education institutional authorizations (or their equivalent for non-U.S. institutions).
	2. Exemptions from state law are supported by state-issued documentation or in statutory language for that state.

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| **Standard XII.E. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.