



CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

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1.1.1. Code Of Good Practice in Accreditation

In accordance with its code of good practice in accreditation, the Commission on Secondary Schools follows these general principles.

- a) CSS recognizes the right of an institution to be evaluated in light of its own stated purposes (mission, beliefs, philosophy and/or objectives) as long as those purposes adequately reflect the expectations for institutions as defined by the Standards for Accreditation.
- b) CSS conducts evaluations of a program or programs of study in relationship to the overall institutional mission, beliefs, philosophy and/or objectives.
- c) CSS establishes Standards for Accreditation that are directly relevant to the quality of an institution and its ability to provide appropriate and meaningful experiences for students.
- d) CSS uses only relevant qualitative and quantitative information in its decision-making processes.
- e) CSS fosters and ensures continuous improvement and, therefore, is prepared to provide services separate from the accreditation process.
- f) CSS encourages sound educational experimentation and innovation.
- g) CSS arranges evaluations or other visits in consultation with the leadership of the member organization.
- h) CSS designs evaluation processes to stimulate an institution to evaluate and improve itself.
- i) CSS conducts evaluation visits by utilizing experienced and qualified evaluators under conditions that ensure impartial and objective judgment, including representation from the staff of other institutions knowledgeable about the types of programs offered in the institution to be visited.

- j) CSS appoints evaluation teams and special visitors, and always endeavors to appoint visitors who are acceptable to the institution.
- k) CSS cooperates with other accreditation agencies so far as possible without compromising its own Standards for Accreditation.
- l) CSS provides the head of an institution being evaluated the opportunity to review a draft of written reports in order to correct for errors of fact.
- m) CSS regards the text of the evaluation as confidential between an institution and the Commission, except in the case of postsecondary institutions where information and documents about the institution's evaluation shall, in all cases, be shared with the United States Secretary of Education, state education departments, other licensing authorities, and other accrediting agencies, upon request.
- n) CSS permits an institution to publicly disseminate evaluation reports as it desires, provided they are not used to misrepresent the institution's status.
- o) CSS notifies an institution in writing within 30 days regarding any accreditation decision.
- p) CSS revokes accreditation only after advance notice has been given to an institution that such action is contemplated and the reasons for it, giving the institution sufficient time to pursue established procedures for appeal and review.
- q) CSS makes information available to the public regarding the Commission's policies and procedures including:
 - the type of accreditation and candidacy granted by the Commission
 - procedures for applying for accreditation and candidacy
 - the standards and procedures used for determining whether to grant, reaffirm, reinstate, deny, restrict, revoke or take any other action related to each type of accreditation and candidacy
 - the names, academic and professional qualifications, relevant employment, and organizational affiliations of the members of its policy and decision-making bodies as well as its principal administrative staff
 - the institutions currently accredited or in candidacy and the date when the Commission will review or reconsider the accreditation or candidacy of each institution.

1.1.2. Code of Good Practice in Regard to Decisions of States, Licensing Authorities, and Other Accrediting Organizations

In accordance with its code of good practice in regard to decisions of States, licensing authorities, and other accrediting organizations, the Commission on Secondary Schools follows these general principles.

- a.) CSS does not accredit or grant candidacy to institutions that lack legal authorization under applicable federal, state, or host nation laws to provide a program of education at the secondary and/or postsecondary, non-degree granting level.
- b.) CSS investigates and reviews all situations where an institution is the subject of a pending or final action brought by a State, licensing authority, or recognized accreditor to place on probation or suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation or candidacy. The purpose of the investigation is to determine if the Commission should also take adverse action, place the institution on probation, or ask the institution to show cause why adverse action should not be taken.
- c.) CSS does not accredit or grant candidacy to institutions that have filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.
- d.) CSS shares information with other appropriate recognized accrediting organizations and recognized state and federal approval agencies about the accreditation status of an institution and any adverse actions it has taken against an accredited or candidate institution.

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