



COMMISSION ACTIONS ON ACCREDITATION

1.3. COMMISSION ACTIONS ON ACCREDITATION

1.3.1. Process Used for Determining Accreditation Action

The Commission on Secondary Schools is responsible for determining the accreditation status of a member institution and the Commission's actions shall be final. Accreditation determinations shall be based on relevant documentation provided to the Commission by evaluation teams, advisory committees, staff, the educational institution itself, and other viable sources of information. This information can include, but is not limited to:

- Nature and strength of deficiencies/excellent performance demonstrated in meeting the Standards for Accreditation
- Nature and strength of deficiencies/excellent performance in addressing expectations of the accreditation protocol used
- The degree to which the institution is accomplishing the purposes and functions outlined in its own statement of philosophy/mission/beliefs.
- Total number of Standards for Accreditation with which the institution does not comply/exceeds
- Performance reported by the evaluation team
- Performance reported by the mid-point reviewer and other onsite visitors
- Progress made in implementing action plans for improvement
- Growth shown on student performance assessments
- History of previous accreditation efforts

1.3.2. Accreditation Action Designations

1.3.2.1. Accreditation Actions for Secondary Schools Previously Accredited: The actions the Commission may take regarding accreditation are:

Accreditation

An "Accredited" institution is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol used. The institution agrees to adhere to the requirements for maintenance of accreditation, and there are no outstanding issues related to the Standards or requirements of the protocol that would require monitoring or on-site visits beyond the normal expected events required by the protocol utilized.

Accredited with Stipulations

An institution "Accredited with Stipulations" is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol used. However, the institution has been given significant stipulations in one or more areas that require follow-up and monitoring in order to ensure that the stipulations are met. In such cases, MSA will identify the stipulations and specify the nature, purpose, timelines, and scope of any corrective action required or additional information to be submitted to the Commission by the institution. Subsequent reports and/or on-site visits may be required to provide the Commission with assurance that appropriate corrective action has been taken. Corrective action must take

place within the specified time limit unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

Probationary Accreditation

An institution granted Probationary Accreditation is a previously MSA accredited educational organization that does not meet one or more of the MSA Standards for Accreditation, does not adhere to applicable MSA policies, and/or does not follow the requirements of the self-study protocol used. The institution is provided with specific corrective actions that must be followed in order for the institution to have its accreditation in good standing reinstated with MSA. Subsequent reporting and/or onsite visits confirming those corrective actions are required within defined time limits in order for the entity to remove probation and gain accreditation for the full term as specified by the protocol used. Probationary Accreditation is typically granted for a period of one year, but shall not exceed a maximum of three years.

Removal of Accreditation

The Commission may remove the accreditation of a previously accredited educational organization for one or more of the following reasons:

- Failure of the institution to correct the deficiencies that led to Accreditation with Stipulations, Limited Term Accreditation, or Probationary Accreditation
- Failure of the institution to continue to meet the MSA Standards for Accreditation
- Failure of the institution to adhere to timelines for self-study, accreditation maintenance, and planning expectations
- Failure of the institution to submit required MSA reports
- Failure of the institution to pay approved dues and fees
- Inability or unwillingness of the institution to adhere to Commission policies and/or procedures

When the Commission removes the accreditation of an institution, this action will be recorded in the Commission's permanent records for the institution.

1.3.2.2. Accreditation Actions for Candidate Secondary Schools: The actions the Commission may take regarding accreditation are:

Accreditation

An "Accredited" institution is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol used. The institution agrees to adhere to the requirements for maintenance of accreditation, and there are no outstanding issues related to the Standards or requirements of the protocol that would require monitoring or on-site visits beyond the normal expected events required by the protocol utilized.

Accreditation with Stipulations

An institution "Accredited with Stipulations" is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol used. However, the institution has been given significant stipulations in one or more areas that require follow-up and monitoring in order to ensure that the stipulations are met. In such cases, MSA will identify the stipulations and specify the nature, purpose, timelines, and scope of any corrective action

required or additional information to be submitted to the Commission by the institution. Subsequent reports and/or on-site visits may be required to provide the Commission with assurance that appropriate corrective action has been taken. Corrective action must take place within the specified time limit unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

Limited Term Accreditation

An institution with Limited Term Accreditation is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, but has conditions or issues to address and/or does not fulfill all expectations associated with the accreditation protocol used. In such cases, the Commission will specify the nature, purpose, and scope of any further information to be submitted by the institution. The corrective action required is of an immediate nature and must be addressed by a specific deadline in order for the institution's accreditation term to be extended to the full term of accreditation. Issues are such (in complexity and seriousness) that the Commission recommends a shortened accreditation term and additional monitoring activities are scheduled. A follow-up report and a special visit are required before the accreditation term can be extended. Should the accreditation of the institution be extended to the full term of accreditation, the period of time that the institution is accredited for the limited term shall be subtracted from the normal term of accreditation.

Accreditation Postponed

An institution with Accreditation Postponed is an educational organization, not currently accredited by MSA, for which an accreditation action is postponed because one or more of the Standards for Accreditation are not met, applicable MSA policies are not adhered to, and/or deficiencies in the self-study process were identified during the team visit. Specific corrective action will be required. An onsite visit may be required to verify that the specified corrective action has been taken. If evidence of progress in taking corrective action is not evident within one year, the institution will be presented to the Commission for a review of its continued Candidacy.

Accreditation Denied

An institution with Accreditation Denied is an educational organization, not currently accredited by MSA, for which accreditation is denied when there are significant violations of Standards for Accreditation, applicable MSA policies are not adhered to, and major shortcomings in the self-study process are identified during the team visit. Violations will be specifically identified by MSA. Membership will be terminated. The institution will be permitted to reapply for candidacy only when the deficiencies have been corrected and an onsite visit confirms that corrective action has been taken. The institution may not reapply for candidacy for at least one year and must initiate the candidacy process from the beginning.

1.3.2.3. Accreditation Actions for Postsecondary, Non-Degree Granting Career and Technology Schools: The actions the Commission may take regarding accreditation of postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology schools that have declared they intend to use their MSCSS accreditation to establish eligibility to participate in Title IV, HEA program are:

Accreditation

An "Accredited" postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology school meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol for establishing eligibility to participate in Title

IV, HEA programs. The institution agrees to adhere to the requirements for maintenance of accreditation, and there are no outstanding issues related to the Standards or requirements of the protocol.

Accredited with Stipulations

An institution “Accredited with Stipulations” is an educational organization that meets all MSA Standards for Accreditation, adheres to applicable MSA policies, and meets the requirements of the self-study protocol used. However, the institution has been given significant stipulations in one or more areas that require follow-up and monitoring in order to ensure that the stipulations are met. In such cases, MSA will identify the stipulations and specify the nature, purpose, timelines, and scope of any corrective action required or additional information to be submitted to the Commission by the institution. Subsequent reports and/or on-site visits may be required to provide the Commission with assurance that appropriate corrective action has been taken. Corrective action must take place within the specified time limit unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

The Commission may, at its discretion, require an institution to report on progress sooner than the maximum time allowed, and may, for good cause (e.g. demonstration of good faith efforts to remedy existing deficiencies and a reasonable expectation that deficiencies will be remedied within the period of extension), extend the time for demonstrating compliance.

However, if the institution is unable to provide a just cause as to why it cannot come into full compliance within the timelines listed in Policy 6.3.6., accreditation shall be removed.

Removal of Accreditation

The Commission may remove the accreditation of a previously accredited postsecondary, non-degree granting career and technology school for one or more of the following reasons:

- Failure of the institution to correct the deficiencies that led to Accreditation with Stipulations within the time period prescribed by the Commission
- Failure of the institution to continue to meet the MSA Standards for Accreditation
- Failure of the institution to adhere to timelines for self-study, accreditation maintenance, and planning expectations
- Failure of the institution to submit required MSA reports
- Failure of the institution to pay approved dues and fees
- Inability or unwillingness of the institution to adhere to Commission policies and/or procedures

When the Commission removes the accreditation of an institution, this action will be recorded in the Commission’s permanent records for the institution.

1.3.3. Procedural Actions

The procedural actions the Commission may take are:

Monitoring and Non-Compliance Actions

Monitoring actions require the institution to submit to closer scrutiny by the Commission including follow-up reports, special visits, shortened terms of accreditation, and probationary status. The four monitoring actions are as follows:

- Accreditation with Stipulations
- Limited Term Accreditation
- Probationary Accreditation
- Accreditation Postponed

Show Cause Actions

A show cause action requires an institution to show cause why its accreditation should not be removed. Show cause may or may not result in the adverse action or removal of accreditation. (See Policy 3.7.—Show Cause Action.)

Adverse Actions

An adverse action is an action by the Commission to deny accreditation or remove an institution from the list of accredited institutions.

- Accreditation Denied (for candidate institutions)
- Removal of Accreditation (for previously accredited institutions)

1.3.4. Terms of Accreditation

The Commission shall grant terms of accreditation based on the following criteria:

- The term prescribed by the protocol utilized for self-study and evaluation
- The recommendations of the evaluation team, the MSCSS staff, the appropriate advisory committee, and the Membership and Accreditation Committee

See 6.3.6.--Time Frames for Further Review and Action for Institutions Not in Compliance—for further details on Terms of Accreditation for postsecondary, non-degree granting, career and technology schools.

1.3.4.1. Duration of Terms: Terms of accreditation may be granted from one to ten years.

1.3.4.2. Effective Date of Accreditation: The institution's date of accreditation shall be effective on the first day of the month following the granting of accreditation by the Commission.

1.3.4.3. Duration of Probationary Terms of Accreditation: Because concerns are of an immediate nature, probationary accreditation will not exceed three years.

1.3.4.4. Duration of Limited Accreditation Terms (for candidate institutions): Because concerns are of an immediate nature, limited accreditation shall not exceed three years.

1.3.4.5. Time Limit Following a Show Cause Action: Institutions shall respond to show cause actions within no more than six months of receipt of the show cause action, and the Commission shall respond no more than six months from receipt of the institution's response to the show cause action.

1.3.5. Status of Institution during Reaccreditation Activities

The accreditation status of an institution seeking reaccreditation shall not change following the visit of an evaluation team until the Commission takes an accreditation action and establishes a new term of accreditation for the institution. This shall be true so long as the Commission has reasonable cause to believe that Standards for Accreditation and expectations for accredited institutions are met.

1.3.6. Status of Institution during Probationary Accreditation and Limited Term Accreditation:
Institutions with Probationary Accreditation shall remain accredited by the Commission on Secondary Schools until a further accreditation action is taken by the Commission.

1.3.7. Notification of Accreditation Decisions

The Commission on Secondary Schools makes every effort to notify institutions, in writing, of all accreditation actions as soon after Commission action as possible, but no later than 30 days after action is taken.

1.3.8. Actions of Other Agencies

While the Commission acts independently of other organizations in taking accreditation actions, it shall not knowingly grant candidacy or accreditation to any institution that is on probation or has had its accreditation removed by another recognized accrediting agency or state agency, until such time that the Commission is assured and satisfied that the reasons for suspension, revocation, or probation have been corrected.

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