

CAEP

I. Introduction to CAEP's Proposed Revisions to Accreditation and Policy and Procedures

This draft policy and procedures document reflects several broad changes being proposed for adoption:

- (1) It combines accreditation policies and procedures into a single document to make it easier for educator preparation providers (EPPs) to navigate CAEP's processes for initial accreditation and renewal of accreditation.
- (2) It addresses changes made in the requirements of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (to which CAEP must comply as a condition of continued recognition by CHEA) and puts CAEP closer to fully meeting requirements for recognition by the U.S. Secretary of Education.
- (3) It presents the policies and procedures related to each stage of EPP work – initial accreditation, renewal of accreditation, and continuing accreditation – as separate sections. Provisions regarding the selection, training, and conduct of volunteers, as well as Accreditation Council governance, are clustered together in subsequent sections.

Highlights of some specific amendments are provided below.

II. Invitation for Stakeholder and Public Comment

The Accreditation Council has approved the release of this draft and invites stakeholders and the public to submit comment by September 1, 2020. Following the public comment period, the Accreditation Council will consider all feedback received, make necessary revisions, and take action on adoption in October 2020.

III. Implementation

This draft is proposed for use by and with the following EPPs:

- (1) EPPs beginning the Initial Accreditation Process (submitting a Part I application) on or after January 1, 2021; and
- (2) EPPs scheduled to have a Reaccreditation site visit on or after January 1, 2022, including any EPP scheduled to have a site visit prior to January 1, 2022 and granted a Good Cause Extension or postponement which results in the site visit taking place after this date.

All other CAEP accreditation reviews (those for which EPPs have already begun Self Study Report development) are to be carried out in accordance with previous versions of Accreditation Policy.

IV. Highlights of Significant Changes

This draft incorporates several significant substantive changes – primarily in response to CHEA’s revised policies and federal regulations, as well as organizational changes. For example:

(1) Action Regarding Substantially Underperforming EPPs

CHEA’s 2019 Recognition Policy and Procedures (Paragraph 11(A)(3)) requires CAEP to provide evidence that accreditation standards, policies or procedures are used to take timely action to prevent substantially underperforming EPPs from achieving or maintaining accredited status. This requires that CAEP articulate how it defines “underperforming;” describe what it is looking for in order to make a determination that an EPP is underperforming; and explain the procedures for intervention and actions that may be taken “in order not to prolong or extend accredited status when an accredited institution or program fails to meet accreditation requirements on an ongoing basis.”

CAEP considers any EPP that fails to meet any one of the five CAEP Standards (at either level – initial or advanced) to be “substantially underperforming”. These EPPs are granted Probationary Accreditation and are required to submit a self-study report demonstrating remediation of the unmet standard for review during a targeted site visit within two years. Failure to correct the condition leading to the unmet standard results in revocation or denial. A decision of Accreditation with Stipulations does not indicate substantial underperformance because all CAEP Standards are met; however, the EPP is granted a 2-year term and must provide evidence of remediation during a virtual site visit. Probationary Accreditation and Accreditation with Stipulations are both described in Policy III.2.13 Accreditation Council Review, Decisions, and Term of Accreditation. The criteria CAEP uses for determining that an EPP is underperforming remain the same in this proposed policy as in current policy; however, the steps CAEP will take to prevent substantial underperformance and the actions that will be taken when there is evidence of substantial underperformance revealed through monitoring are described in greater detail in Part V. Continuing Accreditation.

(2) Monitoring and Reevaluation of Accredited EPPs

Section 602.19 of the federal regulations on recognition of an accrediting agency establishes requirements for the monitoring and reevaluation of accredited EPPs. To meet this requirement, CAEP must: (a) reevaluate, at regularly established intervals, the EPPs it has accredited; and (b) demonstrate it has, and effectively applies, a set of monitoring and evaluation approaches that enables the agency to identify problems with an EPP’s continued compliance with CAEP standards and that takes into account EPP strengths and stability. These approaches must include periodic reports, and collection and analysis of key data and indicators, identified by CAEP, including, but not limited to, fiscal information and measures of student achievement, consistent with the provisions of §602.16(f)...(c) CAEP must monitor overall growth of the EPPs it accredits and, at least annually, collect headcount enrollment data from those institutions or programs...

If CAEP's review of an EPP under any standard indicates that the EPP is not in compliance with that standard, CAEP must (in accordance with Section 602.20 of the federal regulations): (a) immediately initiate adverse action against the EPP; or (b) require the EPP to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with CAEP's standards. These requirements are included in Part V. Continuing Accreditation. In addition, Policy VII.6.03 Corrective Action creates two (2) new kinds of corrective action notices which may be issued to an EPP by the Accreditation Council as precursors to adverse action:

- **Warning Action.** The Council may issue a Warning to an EPP if there is evidence that an accredited EPP fails to: (a) Maintain adequate compliance with CAEP Standards; (b) Adhere to policies and procedures regarding the Continuing Accreditation obligations; or (c) Respond by stated deadlines to any requirement, conditions, or notices issued by the Council. Any failure to comply with the terms or conditions of a Warning Action will be grounds for Adverse Action.
- **Show Cause Action.** A Show Cause action provides an EPP in Probationary status with a final opportunity to take corrective action or be subject to Revocation of Accreditation.

(3) Verification of Students in Distance Learning

To comply with Section 602.17 of the federal regulations requires CAEP must, among other things, have processes in place through which an EPP establishes that a student who registers in any course offered via distance education or correspondence is the same student who academically engages in the course or program; and makes clear in writing that EPPs 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. These requirements are now addressed in expanded provisions regarding distance education. See Policy II.8.01 Distance Education.

(4) International Accreditation Activities

CHEA requires evidence of an accreditor's capacity and competence to engage in international accreditation activities. These requirements are addressed in Policy II.7.01 through 11.7.04 which specify that reviews of international EPPs will reflect good practice in the field of accreditation while still taking cultural and unique circumstances into account. These policies provide additional details on the standards that will be used during the review, the composition and training of review team members, and fees for international EPPs.

(5) Selection and Assignment of Review Team Members

To meet federal requirements regarding the selection and assignment of accreditation review team members, existing policies were expanded to include additional information on the qualifications and duties of review team members,

as well as procedures for their selection as reviewers and assignment to review teams. These policies and procedures are now included within Parts VI. CAEP Volunteers and Part VII. Accreditation Council Governance.