

Procedures for Interim Reports

Between comprehensive evaluations, the Commission requires, per its Policy on the Periodic Review of Accredited Institutions, that member institutions complete an interim report, typically at the fifth year of a ten-year review cycle. Interim reports require institutions to: review how they continue to meet the Commission's Standards for Accreditation; analyze, appraise, and reflect upon progress made since the last comprehensive review; and project areas of focus for the next five years leading up to the next comprehensive review. The interim report process serves as a vehicle for stimulating improvements within the institution, for strengthening the institution's ongoing system of self-evaluation, and for supporting the Commission in its role of assuring the public of the quality of the institution and higher education as an enterprise.

The following procedures provide assistance to institutions with the process and format of completing interim reports. Procedures, policies and supporting documents related to the interim report may be found on the Commission website.

Notification to the Institution

Approximately eighteen months in advance of the Commission's consideration of the interim report, the institution is reminded of the requirement via a letter to the president with a copy to the Accreditation Liaison Officer.

Orientation

Approximately fifteen months before the interim report is due, Commission staff will offer an orientation workshop for institutions completing a report.

Staff Visit

At the institution's request, a member of the Commission staff will visit the institution for a meeting with those responsible for the preparation of the interim report to discuss Commission expectations and to answer questions.

Review of Programs offered at Off-Campus Locations

In conformity with federal regulations, institutions with general approval for off-campus programming that have added instructional locations since the last comprehensive review will undergo a visit to a sample of the new locations to validate the institution's continued capacity to administer its off-campus instructional sites. The Procedures for the Review of Off-Campus Sites At the Time of the Interim Report For Institutions with General Approval, available on the Commission's website, provides further guidance. The visit typically takes place the semester before the interim report is due.

Submission of the Report

The institution is asked to submit an electronic (single, searchable pdf file) copy of the entire report to the Commission through the NECHE Institution Portal by the required date. After reviewing the report, the Commission will notify the institution of its action.

FORMAT FOR THE INTERIM REPORT

1. Cover Page (1 page)
Include the name, location of the institution, the date of the report's submission, and a notation that this is an interim report.
2. Introduction (1 page)
Describe briefly the process by which the report was prepared and indicate the names of those involved in its preparation.
3. Institutional Overview (1 page)
Provide an overview of the institution, including its purpose, setting, and any special circumstances that would help the reader understand its nature and scope.
4. Response to Areas Identified for Special Emphasis (~ 2 pages per area of emphasis)
In its notification letters to the institution, the Commission frequently identifies areas that should be given particular emphasis in the interim report, referencing numbered paragraphs from the *Standards for Accreditation*. In this section of the report, discuss, analyze, and appraise actions taken regarding the areas of emphasis, and, as appropriate, include a projection of what needs continued attention, so that the Commission will be adequately apprised of the current state of development in these areas. As appropriate, refer to the Interim Report Forms and the Making Assessment More Explicit (E series) Forms.
5. Standards Narrative (~15 pages)
Respond briefly to Standards 1-7 and 9:
 - a. address any significant changes since the comprehensive evaluation;
 - b. discuss how the institution continues to meet each Standard;
 - c. support the narrative with evidence, contextualized analysis and appraisal, commenting on noteworthy trends observed in the Interim Report Forms and the Making Assessment More Explicit (E Series) Forms.

Include in this section a discussion of the institution's off-campus locations, distance education programming, and dual enrollment programs, if relevant. The Policy on the Review of Off-campus Programming, Policy on the Review of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs, and Policy on Dual Enrollment Programs provide further guidance.
6. Reflective Essay on Educational Effectiveness (~ 15-20 pages)
This section of the report is a reflective essay about Standard 8: *Educational Effectiveness*:

The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by ensuring satisfactory levels of student achievement on mission-appropriate student outcomes. Based on verifiable information, the institution understands what its students have gained as a result of their education and has useful evidence about the success of its recent graduates. This information is used for planning and improvement, resource allocation, and to inform the public about the institution. Student achievement is at a level appropriate for the degree awarded.

The essay should address four related but distinct areas having to do with student achievement and success articulated in Standard 8:

 - a. What students gain as a result of their education
 - b. Assessment of student learning; "what and how students are learning"
 - c. Measures of student success, including retention and graduation
 - d. Satisfactory levels of student achievement on mission-appropriate student outcomes

Suggested format for each of the areas:

- Description: Briefly describe how the institution measures its effectiveness
- Findings and Analysis: Include supporting data and summaries of data analyses conducted by the institution. As appropriate, refer to the Making Assessment More Explicit (E series) Forms and the Interim Report Forms for Standard 8. Discuss what the institution has learned and how it has used or will use the results for the improvement of the academic program and services for students and in internal and external communications.
- Appraisal and Projection: Include the institution's own evaluation of its success as well as the institution's plans to make further progress in the achievement of educational effectiveness.

As noted in paragraph 8.1 of the Standard, some institutions have multiple student bodies (e.g., by degree level, location, modality or other variables). If so, the essay should reflect each student body.

7. Institutional Plans (~ 3 pages)

Conclude the interim report with a summary of what the institution anticipates as its most significant issues and initiatives for the next five years, including those that may represent a substantive change as indicated in the Policy on Substantive Change.

8. Appendix

- a. Affirmation of Compliance with Federal Regulations Relating to Title IV.
A completed copy of this form, signed by the institution's chief executive officer, affirms the institution's compliance with key provisions of federal regulations.
- b. Most recent audited financial statement.
- c. The auditor's management letter: The management letter is any communication containing the auditor's specific recommendations to the institution on its financial controls and practices. Please indicate if no management letter was provided.
- d. Interim Report Forms: A modified set of the Data First forms.
- e. Making Assessment More Explicit (The E Series) forms.

Generally, interim reports are 50 pages long, exclusive of the Appendix. Institutions that have been asked to address more than three or four areas of emphasis (Section 4) may find they need to exceed the usual 50-page limit for their report.

August 1997, October 2003, February 2004, January 2005, August 2007, February 2009, June 2009, October 2010, July 2011, September 2012, April 2014, April, 2015, June 2015, February 2016, August 2016, August 2021