

Policy on Noncompliance with Commission Standards, Policies, and Procedures

The Commission expects that institutions will remain in compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation* and its policies and procedures. However, it appreciates that occasionally there are circumstances beyond the institution's control where, for a period of time, the institution may be out of compliance with one or more standards, policies, and procedures. Examples of such circumstances include:

- 1) a natural disaster or other catastrophic event significantly impacting an institution's or program's operations;
- 2) accepting students from another institution that is implementing a teach-out or closing;
- 3) significant and documented local or national economic changes, such as an economic recession or closure of a large local employer;
- 4) changes relating to State licensure requirements; or
- 5) the normal application of the agency's standards creates an undue hardship on students.

An institution that finds itself in one of these circumstances may make a written request to the Commission for approval for a period of noncompliance. Institutions considering a request for approval of a period of noncompliance are encouraged to discuss the matter with Commission staff.

The report prepared by an institution requesting approval for a period of non-compliance should include the following:

- 1) a description of the circumstances that led to the noncompliance;
- 2) an indication of the standards, policies, and/or procedures with which the institution is noncompliant;
- 3) evidence that the institution has the resources necessary to achieve compliance with the standards, policies, and/or procedures within the time allotted; and
- 4) evidence that the period of noncompliance will not
 - a) Contribute to the cost of the program to the student without the student's consent;
 - b) Create any undue hardship on, or harm to, students; or
 - c) Compromise the quality of the institution's academic programs.

In approving an institution's request, the Commission will specify a time period for non-compliance not to exceed three years and will specify ongoing monitoring during the period of non-compliance, to include at least a report, annually, of the institution's progress in bringing itself back into compliance. The Commission may, for good cause, extend the period of non-compliance beyond three years.

Approval of a period of noncompliance with Commission standards, policies, or procedures does not affect the subsequent schedule of Commission reviews for the institution.

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