

Requirements of Affiliation

To be affiliated with the New England Commission of Higher Education as a candidate institution, an institution of higher education must meet the following requirements. Accredited institutions fulfill these requirements through meeting the *Standards for Accreditation*.

The institution:

1. has formally adopted a statement of mission, which demonstrates that the fundamental purposes of the institution are educational, and which is also appropriate to a degree-granting institution, and appropriate to those needs of society it seeks to serve;
2. offers one or more collegiate-level education programs, consistent with its mission, that leads to degrees in recognized fields of study and that require at least one year to complete;
3. awards the bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degree or, if it grants only the associate's degree, includes programs leading to degrees in liberal arts or general studies or another area of study widely available at the baccalaureate level of regionally accredited colleges and universities;
4. has, for each of its educational programs, clearly defined and published objectives appropriate to higher education in level, standards, and quality, as well as the means for achieving them, including a designated course of studies acceptable for meeting degree requirements, adequate guidance to degree candidates in the satisfaction of requirements, and adequate grading or evaluating procedures.
5. awards only degrees appropriate to each graduate's level of attainment;
6. in addition to study of the areas of specialization proper to its principal educational programs, requires a coherent and substantive program of liberal studies at the postsecondary level, as either a prerequisite to or a clearly defined element in those programs;
7. has adopted a statement specifying the potential students it wishes to serve, and admits qualified students to its programs under admission policies consistent with this statement and appropriate to those programs;
8. has students enrolled in and pursuing its principal educational programs at the time of the Commission's evaluation;
9. has available to students and the public a current and accurate website and catalog or comparable official publication setting forth purposes and objectives, entrance requirements and procedures, rules and regulations for student conduct, programs and courses, degree completion requirements, full-time and part-time faculty and degrees

- held, costs, refunds, and other items related to attending or withdrawing from the institution;
10. has a charter and/or other formal authority from the appropriate governmental agency authorizing it to grant all degrees it awards, has the necessary operating authority for each jurisdiction in which it conducts its activities, and is operating within its authority;
 11. has sufficient organizational and operational independence to be held accountable for meeting the Commission's standards;
 12. has a governing board that includes representation reflecting the public interest that oversees the institution; assures that two-thirds or more of the board members, including the chair, have no personal or immediate familial financial interest in the institution, including as employee, stockholder or shareholder, corporate director, or contractor;
 13. has a chief executive officer, appointed by and responsible to the governing board, whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution and who possesses the requisite authority;
 14. has faculty sufficient in number, qualifications, and experience to support the academic programs offered, including an adequate number of faculty whose time commitment to the institution is sufficient to assure the accomplishment of class and out-of-class responsibilities essential to the fulfillment of institutional mission and purposes;
 15. has sufficient staff, with appropriate preparation and experience, to provide the administrative services necessary to support its mission and purposes;
 16. devotes all, or substantially all, of its gross income to the support of its educational purposes and programs;
 17. documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to carry out its stated purposes;
 18. has financial records that relate clearly to the institution's educational activities and has these records audited annually by an external auditor in accord with the generally accepted auditing standards for colleges and universities as adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants;
 19. has graduated at least one class in its principal educational programs before the Commission's evaluation for accredited status;
 20. agrees to submit any dispute involving the final denial, withdrawal, or termination of candidacy or accreditation to initial arbitration prior to any other legal action.

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