

Review of Commission Standards Policy

The Standards of Accreditation establish criteria for institutional quality and provide a foundation for institutional reviews and actions. The Standards also provide the basis for institutions to improve their quality and increase their effectiveness.

Focus of The Standards

The Commission maintains a comprehensive, systematic, and inclusive program of review of the Standards, ensuring that they are appropriate to evaluate the quality of the education provided by the institutions it accredits and that they are relevant to the needs of students. The Commission works to assure that the Standards, which must satisfy federal criteria, reflect proven practices in higher education, are outcomes oriented and broadly applicable, recognize the autonomy of institutions, promote program quality and stability, and accommodate flexibility and innovation.

Review Process

The Commission reviews each of the Standards individually and the Standards as a whole at regular intervals, soliciting suggestions from internal constituencies (such as Commissioners and WSCUC staff, member institutions and governing boards, faculty, staff, students, and those who have served as peer reviewers) and from external constituencies (such as communities of interest, those with special expertise, and members of the public served by member institutions). As part of the process of developing the Standards, the Commission provides opportunities to its member institutions, the public, and others who wish to comment on proposed changes. They are invited to send written comments to the Commission and/or share feedback at forums and meetings scheduled by the Commission. The comments gathered are taken into account as the Commission finalizes any revisions to the Standards. As provided in federal regulation, if the Commission determines that it needs to make changes to its Standards, the Commission will initiate action within 12 months to make the changes and will complete that action within a reasonable period of time. Such revisions to the Standards will be undertaken with appropriate notice to member institutions and the public, providing an opportunity for feedback on the proposed changes, and will take into account timely and relevant comments before formal action.

Revised by the Commission, November 2013

Revised, November 2022