Letter of Intent to Apply for Accreditation

# **Before You Start**

Institutions applying for Initial Accreditation with the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) must submit a Letter of Intent using this form prior to their Seeking Accreditation, Visit 1.

**Note:** If you have not already done so, please submit the [**Application for Accreditation**](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/39qfzt74m0k3onxj5gdj) with the appropriate fee as listed on the WSCUC [**Dues and Fees Schedule**](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/n48zh3zy3bwpf59nvxauqzfuyxzycbfb) prior to submitting this form. The Letter of Intent will not be reviewed until the application and fee have been submitted.

**Read these instructions carefully before submitting your Letter of Intent.**

## **Creating and Naming Your Document**

* Please name the Letter of Intent in the following manner: **Institution Name\_Letter of Intent\_Year.**
* The Letter of Intent must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.
* As you move through the form adding information, please take care not to delete the original questions.

## **Attachments**

* Ensure that all attachments are named consistently and referenced with the same name in the appropriate place in the narrative. The name of the attachment should begin with the Section to which it is referring. For example, **Attachment 2-A: “Org Chart”** would be used for Section 2. Upload all attachments to the “Attachments” folder on Box.com.
* **Attachments are preferred as PDF.**

## **Length**

The Letter of Intent should be concise, between 2,500 and 5,000 words (5-10 pages), not including attachments.

## **Submitting the Letter of Intent**

* **See the READ ME FIRST instructions in your Letter of Intent folder in Box.com for uploading this form and related attachments.**
* **Notify Mia Lowe, the Accreditation Process Coordinator/Office Manager, at** **mlowe@wscuc.org** **when you have submitted the Letter of Intent.**

## Review Process

The Letter of Intent is reviewed by the assigned WSCUC staff liaison, who considers whether the letter provides all the required information and attachments, responds to concerns identified by the Eligibility Review Committee, identifies key areas on which the institution will work during the review process, and sets forth a realistic and appropriate plan and timeline for the review. The staff liaison ordinarily approves the Letter of Intent within a month after submission. Revisions to the Letter of Intent may be requested if the staff liaison finds the letter to be lacking any key elements or otherwise reveals a lack of readiness for the institution to pursue Initial Accreditation.

Upon approving the Letter of Intent, the staff liaison works with the institution to schedule the Seeking Accreditation, Visit 1 within approximately 12 to 18 months. If Initial Accreditation is not achieved after the first visit, Candidacy may be granted with the next visit usually scheduled in 18 months.

## **Additional Resources**

* Definitions, supporting documentation, and a detailed description of the entire Eligibility, Candidacy, and Initial Accreditation process may be found in the [**How to Become Accredited**](https://wascsenior.box.com/s/lmogpr9etew9brgwo92i) manual.
* Additional information and resources are available in the [**Resource Library**](https://www.wscuc.org/resources) at [**www.wscuc.org**](http://www.wscuc.org/).

# Section One: Addressing Previous Areas of Concern

## Addressing areas of concern or development from the Eligibility Review Committee action letter

Describe how the institution has addressed each area identified as requiring further development in the Eligibility Review Committee (ERC) action letter granting Eligibility. The document linked below, "Shifting the Focus", will assist institutions moving from Eligibility to Candidacy in framing the review around the Standards of Accreditation rather than the Eligibility Criteria.

Link: ‘Shifting the Focus’ <https://wascsenior.box.com/s/5cfxdgsqrvoh7eotns26>

# Section Two: Preparing for the Seeking Accreditation, Visit 1

## **Preparation for Self-Study Process**

**Provide a description of how the institution will prepare for the Seeking Accreditation, Visit 1. Please include organizational structures and timelines. The review must use a comprehensive approach that addresses each of the Standards of Accreditation and related Criteria for Review (CFRs).** **How will broad support for the review process be generated? How will key leaders and other stakeholders be involved in preparing for each review?**

# Section Three: Outcomes of the Review Process

## Outcomes of the review process

**Identify intended outcomes that the institution plans to achieve by means of the review process. Key institutional issues arising under the Standards, especially those related to student learning and organizational quality assurance, should be addressed.**

# Section Four: Changes in Leadership, Ownership or Governance

## Changes in leadership, ownership, or governance

**Please provide a description and explanation of any changes in the leadership, ownership, or governance structures of the institution that have transpired since the ERC review (if applicable).**

# Section Five: Attachments

## Financial documents

Provide the institution’s most recent audited financial statement, with detailed explanations for any negative financial levels or trends, and for any matters of concern identified by the auditors in the related management letter. If the auditor provided a management letter, please include it.

## Stipulation

Please provide a stipulation that the institution agrees to be reviewed only for the degree levels and programs in operation, or explicitly planned and fully documented in all relevant areas of the Eligibility application, at the time of the ERC review. Any new degree levels of programs, off-campus, or distance education programs considered for initiation between the designation of Eligibility and the Seeking Accreditation, Visit 1 may require prior approval by the Eligibility Review Committee. If the institution does not attain Initial Accreditation after the first visit but is granted Candidacy, such changes will require approval by the Substantive Change Committee.