Policies and Procedures

August 2025

Commission on English Language Program Accreditation
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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

The Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) is a specialized accrediting agency that focuses on postsecondary English language programs and institutions. CEA's purpose is to provide a systematic approach by which programs and institutions can demonstrate their compliance with accepted standards, pursue continuous improvement, and be recognized for doing so. CEA conducts accreditation activities in the U.S. and in international locations.

CEA was founded in 1999 by English language teaching and administration professionals, following a recommendation by a TESOL task force comprised of appointees from TESOL, NAFSA, UCIEP, and AAIEP (now EnglishUSA). TESOL provided early operational and financial support for CEA, after which CEA was incorporated as a separate and independent nonprofit accreditation agency. The history of CEA's development is available on the CEA website.

In 2003, CEA was recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education as a national accrediting agency for English language programs and institutions. This recognition gave CEA the distinction of being the only specialized accrediting agency for English language programs and institutions in the U.S. In 2005, the Commission expanded its mission to include the accreditation of English language programs and schools outside the U.S. CEA experienced steady growth in the number of accredited programs and institutions thereafter, and in 2013, when federal legislation (P.L. 111-306, also known as the "Accreditation Act") took effect, requiring that all English language programs seeking to admit non-immigrant international students be accredited by a USDE-recognized accreditor, CEA grew rapidly. CEA now accredits over 330 programs and institutions, each listed in the CEA Directory of Accredited Sites available on the CEA website.

1.2. Mission and principles

CEA's mission establishes its purposes. The Commission regularly reviews the mission; it was last revised as part of CEA's Strategic Planning process in 2021.

CEA's Mission

> The mission of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation is to protect the interests of students and promote excellence in the field of English language teaching and administration, through accreditation of English language programs and institutions worldwide. CEA achieves its mission by advancing widely held standards to foster student success and continuous program development through a rigorous process of regular self-assessment and peer evaluation.

CEA's accreditation process comprises an eligibility application, workshop, self-study report, site visit, and accreditation decision. Site visits are conducted by qualified professionals from the field who are trained as peer reviewers. In addition to accreditation process activities, the Commission oversees continued compliance with standards and CEA requirements, as well as conducts regular systematic review and revision of its standards.

In doing so, CEA is committed to practices and values that exemplify model accrediting agencies and high-functioning nonprofit agencies. The Commission actively seeks ways to enhance the accreditation process, further develop the agency's ability to meet the needs of its constituencies, and ensure that site reviewers and commissioners have the knowledge and training to consistently apply the standards and follow CEA procedures.

1.3. The philosophy of CEA accreditation

The focus of CEA accreditation is students. Throughout the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*, reference is made to how the program or institution meets its mission and provides quality language education for the students it serves. The CEA philosophy is that an English language program or institution worthy of accreditation demonstrates that it provides the student services and programs described in its materials; is student-centered; provides a program that supports its mission; and has the resources, fiscal and human, to assure that students are well served. This philosophy prevails throughout the review process.

CEA accreditation is not intended to impose a rigid uniformity of educational objectives, operations, or theoretical content upon a program. Since programs and language institutions in the field may have different objectives, each is judged in light of its own mission in accordance with the *CEA Standards.*

Thus, in keeping with its mission, values, and philosophy, the *CEA Standards* and these *CEA Policies and Procedures* seek to

1. advance standards and promote excellence in English language instruction and administration
2. protect the interests of students within accredited programs and institutions and assure the quality of programs and institutions for students and the public
3. provide an objective means to review the quality of programs and institutions, using accepted standards of the profession through voluntary peer review
4. provide trained and experienced professionals to take part in identifying the strengths and areas for improvement of programs and institutions seeking accreditation
5. publicly recognize programs and institutions that meet standards
6. provide a structured and unbiased process to guide programs and institutions through the accreditation process, ensuring their quality and commitment to continuous improvement.

1.4. CEA values

CEA's approach to accreditation is grounded in sound and established principles of professional leadership, inclusion, and operational integrity, as expressed in the CEA values.

Leading through Advancing Standards

We lead by setting widely accepted standards in English language instruction and administration and by ensuring that the standards reflect current best practice in language teaching, learning, and administration.

Advocating for Students

We recognize the students' need for appropriate, effective, language-learning opportunities. We believe that students have a right to the instruction and services promised by the program or institution.

Respecting Different Educational Approaches

We believe excellence takes many forms. We respect the variety of missions, goals, and models of English language programs and institutions. We recognize the rights and responsibilities of each program and institution to identify and implement its educational philosophy, methods, and approaches in its cultural and economic environment while meeting the standards.

Supporting Success

We believe in the potential of each program or institution to achieve accredited status, and we support programs and institutions in their efforts to meet the standards.

Promoting Continuous Improvement, Development, and Learning

We believe that the standards and the accreditation process provide the basis for program self-evaluation, improvement, and, ultimately, development of quality programs for students. We encourage administrators, faculty, and staff in English language programs to become involved in a process that offers an opportunity for individual learning and growth. We also encourage continuous learning and growth for CEA volunteers and staff.

Acting with Integrity and Care

We are committed to serving our community with professional integrity. We strive to maintain open communication, transparency, accountability, confidentiality, respect, consistency, and fairness throughout the accreditation process. An ethic of care pervades the work of reviewers, commissioners, and staff.

Embracing Collaborative Judgment

We acknowledge the power of collaboration in both the program review and the decision-making process. We value the expertise of members of the profession, the wider professional community, and the accreditation professionals who participate in the process of self-study and review.

Valuing Diversity

We strive to respect and embrace diversity amongst all stakeholders and believe that acting at all times with a spirit of inclusiveness and equity plays an important role in achieving our mission of protecting the interests of students and promoting excellence in the field.

1.5. Recognition by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education

Following rigorous review by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), CEA was granted recognition by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education in 2003 and has maintained recognition through regular renewal reviews. This recognition verifies that CEA is a reliable authority as to the quality of education in the field and that it complies with the Department's criteria for recognition, which are the requirements stated in federal regulations CFR 34 Part 602. CEA is recognized by the Secretary of Education to accredit both programs and language institutions. A description of the recognition process and a list of recognized accreditation agencies is available on the U.S. Department of Education website.

1.6. The Department of Homeland Security, the Student and Exchange Visitor Program, and the Accreditation Act

The vast majority of intensive English language programs and institutions within the United States serve international students who are admitted to the U.S. as non-immigrants and require visas to enter the U.S. The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) division that oversees certification of schools to admit international students is the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP). An intensive English language program or institution must be certified by SEVP to issue the document (Form I-20) to prospective students which allows them to apply for student visas to enter the U.S.

In 2010, P.L. 111-306 was enacted; this legislation, also known as the Accreditation Act, requires that English language schools that seek SEVP certification to issue Forms I-20 be accredited by an accreditor recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). Thus, important purposes of CEA accreditation are to provide programs and institutions a means to show that they meet the requirements of the Accreditation Act and provide SEVP with a means of identifying schools that comply with the Act.

1.7. The structure of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation

The governing body of CEA, the Commission, has 13 members, 11 of whom are elected. The Constituent Council, formed of representatives of accredited programs and institutions, is the body responsible for electing commissioners to serve on the Commission. Two public members, who are not elected by the Constituent Council, are appointed by the Commission to serve on the Commission. The Commission elects the chair.

CEA is a nonprofit corporation, and the Commission has the fiduciary responsibilities of a board of directors. The Commission is responsible for setting CEA policy and making accreditation decisions. In addition, commissioners are appointed to standing committees that conduct the business of the Commission.

1.7.1. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) comprises the chair, the chair-elect, the treasurer, and the secretary (the executive director, ex officio, without vote). Except for accreditation decisions, the Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the Commission on all issues, as necessary, between regular Commission meetings. The Executive Committee also sets the agenda for Commission meetings.

1.7.2. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee develops and monitors fiscal policies, and reviews the annual budget prepared by the executive director and presents it to the Commission.

1.7.3. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee identifies candidates for election to the Commission and prepares the annual ballot.

1.7.4. Standards Compliance Committee

The Standards Compliance Committee monitors reporting and compliance with the *CEA Standards* following accreditation and hears and acts upon complaints about accredited programs and institutions.

1.7.5. Standards Review Committee

The Standards Review Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending revisions to the *CEA Standards*.

1.7.6. Policies and Procedures Committee

The Policies and Procedures Committee reviews proposed amendments to the *CEA Policies and Procedures,* prepares recommendations, and drafts amended language for Executive Committee and Commission review and adoption.

1.7.7. Appeals Board

Appeals Boards are assembled as needed to hear appeals of accreditation decisions.

1.7.8. Constituent Council

The Constituent Council, comprising the primary contacts of accredited programs and institutions, may nominate, and votes to elect candidates to serve on the Commission. The Constituent Council may also make recommendations for revision of the *CEA Standards* and the *CEA Policies and Procedures*.

1.7.9. CEA Staff

The Commission employs a professional staff headed by an executive director to support the Commission's work, serve constituents and the public, and conduct CEA operations. The CEA office performs all administrative functions.

Complete information about the Commission is included in Section 3: Commission Governance, Administration, and Evaluation and in Section 18: Committees of the Commission.

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2. CEA Standards

All Commission decisions concerning accreditation are based on the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions* (*CEA Standards*) in place at the time a representative from an eligible program or institution attends an accreditation workshop. The *CEA Standards* provide evaluative criteria to assess a program or institution. The program or institution must demonstrate how it is accomplishing its educational objectives while adhering to the *CEA Standards*.

The *CEA Standards* were developed, adopted, and promulgated in accordance with U.S. Department of Education (USDE) requirements for recognized national accrediting agencies and reflect the professional judgment of a wide cross-section of the field of instruction of English to speakers of other languages.

2.1. *The CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*

The *CEA Standards* focus on the overall quality of an English language program or institution. A program or institution seeking accreditation must respond to each standard and document its compliance with the standard. During the review process, CEA reviewers make a judgment as to whether the program or institution appears to meet each standard. In making the accreditation decision, the Commission applies the standards as it reviews the self-study, the review team report, and the response from the program or institution.

The *CEA Standards*, divided into 11 standard areas, are below. A longer document, *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions,* includes a context for each standard area and intent, discussion, and requirements sections for each standard. CEA provides further instruction to applicants through self-study workshops and collateral materials.

The *CEA Standards* are available to the public on the CEA website. Earlier versions of the standards are available upon request from the CEA office.

CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions
(March 2022)

Mission

Mission Standard 1: The program or language institution has a written statement of its mission and goals, which guides activities, policies, and allocation of resources. This statement is communicated to faculty, students, and staff, as well as to prospective students, student sponsors, and the public, and is evaluated periodically.

Program Development, Planning, and Review

Program Development, Planning, and Review Standard 1: The program or language institution has a plan, in writing, for development of the program or language institution as a whole, including planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Program Development, Planning, and Review Standard 2: The program or language institution regularly reviews and revises its program components and has plans, in writing, to guide the review of curricular elements, student assessment practices, and student services policies and activities. The plans are systematically implemented.

Curriculum

Curriculum Standard 1: The curriculum is consistent with the mission of the program or language institution, appropriate to achieve the organization's goals and meet assessed student needs, and available in writing.

Curriculum Standard 2: Course goals, course objectives, and student learning outcomes are written, appropriate for the curriculum, and aligned with each other. The student learning outcomes within the curriculum represent significant progress or accomplishment.

Curriculum Standard 3: The instructional materials and methodologies are appropriate and supportive of course objectives.

Faculty

Faculty Standard 1: Faculty members have education and training commensurate with their teaching assignments.

Faculty Standard 2: Faculty have experience relevant to teaching students at the postsecondary level in their areas of assignment and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to professional development.

Faculty Standard 3: Faculty who teach English demonstrate excellent proficiency in English. In language institutions where languages other than English are taught, faculty demonstrate excellent proficiency in the languages they teach.

Faculty Standard 4: Teachers in training are appropriately selected, trained, and supervised for the instructional situations in which they are placed.

Faculty Standard 5: Faculty members each receive a job description and all the terms and conditions of employment in writing at the time they are hired and any time their duties or employment conditions change.

Faculty Standard 6: The program or language institution has an adequate number of faculty, whose duties are structured to permit timely and effective completion.

Faculty Standard 7: The program or language institution describes to faculty clearly and in writing the performance criteria and procedures for evaluation at the onset of the evaluation period; conducts faculty performance evaluations that are systematic, regular, fair, objective, and relevant to achieving program or institutional goals; and conveys evaluation results to faculty in writing in a timely manner.

Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies

Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies Standard 1: The program or language institution has facilities, equipment, and supplies that support the achievement of its educational and service goals; are adequate in number, condition, and availability; and are accessible to students, faculty, and administrators.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 1: The program or language institution clearly defines and provides a rationale for formal linkages with other entities.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 2: The program or language institution has an administrative structure and a system of governance that are effective in helping it achieve its mission and the mission of the host institution, if applicable. Administrator and staff positions within that structure are adequate in number and staffed with individuals who have appropriate education, training, and experience.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 3: Administrators and staff members each receive a job description in writing at the time they are hired and at any time their duties or employment conditions change.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 4: The program or language institution defines, encourages, and supports appropriate professional development activities for faculty, administrators, and staff.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 5: The program or language institution describes to administrators and staff clearly and in writing the performance criteria and procedures for evaluation at the onset of the evaluation period; conducts administrator and staff performance evaluations that are systematic, regular, fair, objective, and relevant to achieving program goals; and conveys evaluation results to administrators and staff in writing in a timely manner.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 6: Administrators ensure that policies and procedures relating to program or language institution operations are in place, accessible to all who are affected by them, reviewed regularly, and implemented in a timely, fair, systematic, and ethical manner.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 7: Administrators ensure that there are means for the exchange of information among those who need it.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 8: The program or language institution documents that it is in compliance with all local, state, and national laws, as well as with any applicable institutional regulations.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 9: Financial, student, personnel, program, governmental, and contractual records are maintained and kept current, accessible, complete, accurate, and, when appropriate, secure. Reporting is done ethically and in compliance with the law.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 10: Contracts are in compliance with the law and in keeping with policies of the larger institution, where applicable. Contracts are drafted with appropriate guidance, undergo appropriate review, and are authorized by the appropriate individual(s).

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 11: Financial supervision is conducted by qualified individuals, who implement appropriate policies and procedures and follow accepted accounting practices to ensure the integrity of program or institutional finances.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 12: Financial reserves are adequate and available to meet obligations to students, staff, and any contractual parties.

Student Services

Student Services Standard 1: Admissions policies are consistent with program objectives and with the mission of the program or language institution (and with the host institution if applicable), and are implemented by properly trained and authorized individuals. The admissions process ensures that the student is qualified to enroll in and benefit from the instructional program. Both the policies and the personnel who implement them adhere to ethical practices.

Student Services Standard 2: The program or language institution provides academic and personal advising and counseling, as well as assistance in understanding immigration regulations. Such advice and assistance are provided in a timely and accurate manner by qualified individuals.

Student Services Standard 3: The program or language institution provides pre-arrival and ongoing orientation (1) to support students in their adjustment to the program or institution (and to the host institution if applicable) and to the surrounding culture and community and (2) to help them understand immigration regulations and procedures, as well as health and safety issues.

Student Services Standard 4: The program or language institution seeks to ensure that students understand policies regarding enrollment, registration, attendance, repeating levels or courses, and progression through the program of study.

Student Services Standard 5: Students have access to health insurance if required and, in all cases, students are informed about the need for adequate health insurance coverage.

Student Services Standard 6: Students have access to social and recreational activities that provide a cultural context for their language acquisition and other studies, as appropriate.

Student Services Standard 7: The program or language institution clearly states and fulfills its responsibilities regarding student housing.

Student Services Standard 8: The program or language institution clearly states and consistently provides the extent of student services described in any written, electronic, or oral promotional information or in agreements.

Recruiting

Recruiting Standard 1: All program or language institution personnel follow ethical practices for recruiting students and promoting programs, and they ensure that the program or language institution's policies and procedures are made clear to prospective students and/or student sponsors. In any recruitment transaction, the students' interests and well-being are paramount.

Recruiting Standard 2: All written, electronic, and oral information used to describe or promote the program or language institution to students and other relevant parties is accurate and complete.

Recruiting Standard 3: If a program or language institution has recruiting agreements or contracts with a third party, the program or institution ensures that it has complete information about the third party, assumes responsibility for monitoring the third party, and terminates the agreement if necessary.

Length and Structure of Program of Study

Length and Structure of Program of Study Standard 1: The calendar states the number of terms per year, the number of weeks per term and the number of hours of instruction per week. The calendar is consistent with and supportive of the program or language institution's stated mission and goals.

Length and Structure of Program of Study Standard 2: Instructional time is structured to allow students to progress through individual courses and the full program of study as anticipated by the design of the curriculum. Student pass/fail and progression rates are documented and analyzed on a regular basis.

Student Achievement

Student Achievement Standard 1: The program or language institution has a placement system that is consistent with its admission requirements and allows valid and reliable placement of students into levels.

Student Achievement Standard 2: The program or language institution documents in writing whether students are ready to progress to the next level or to exit the program of study, using instruments or procedures that appropriately assess the achievement of student learning outcomes for courses taken within the curriculum.

Student Achievement Standard 3: The program or language institution maintains and provides students with written reports that clearly indicate the level and language outcomes attained as a result of instruction.

Student Achievement Standard 4: The program or language institution informs students of the assessment procedures used to determine placement, progression from level to level, and completion of the program, as well as their individual results.

Student Complaints

Student Complaints Standard 1: The program or language institution makes available to students, in writing, procedures by which they may lodge formal complaints. The program or language institution documents and maintains records of formal student complaints, as well as the resolution of any such complaints.

2.2. Review and revision of *CEA Standards*

2.2.1. Standards Review Committee (SRC)

The Standards Review Committee (SRC) of the Commission has responsibility for determining the validity, clarity, and reliable application of the *CEA Standards*. The SRC reviews the *CEA Standards* on an ongoing basis in accordance with regulations of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), other applicable laws, and sound accreditation practice.

a. CEA systematically reviews the standards document over a three-year cycle to ensure that each standard area is thoroughly addressed.

b. CEA undertakes a comprehensive review of the complete standards document, including context, intent, discussion, and requirements, at least once every 10 years.

c. CEA conducts a number of activities to ensure the validity of the *CEA Standards*.

d. In addition to the regular review cycle, periodically CEA will select certain standard areas or the standards as a whole for the purpose of review and revision. The selection will depend on information gathered from site reviews, including frequently unmet standards, surveys of sites and reviewers regarding the standards, clarity and reliability surveys, or other data sets deemed to be necessary.

e. CEA will carry out additional procedures to assure the reliable application of the standards, including measures to determine site reviewer reliability in applying the standards through content delivered in reviewer training sessions and regular evaluation of reviewer training sessions.

2.2.2. Constituent Council role

Programs or institutions of the Constituent Council in good standing may recommend revisions for the Standards Review Committee (SRC) to consider. A simple majority of all accredited programs and institutions in good standing at the time of the vote is required to forward to the Standards Review Committee any proposed amendment to the standards. Complete information about the Constituent Council is in Section 19: Constituent Council Governing Rules.

a. The Constituent Council is responsible for referring its proposed amendments to the SRC at least 90 days before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

b. The SRC will report the findings of any standards review undertaken in response to a Constituent Council request to the full Commission for discussion at a regularly scheduled meeting.

c. Recommended changes that result from Constituent Council requests will be subject to the regular standards revision process.

2.2.3. Standards revision process

a. CEA will provide advance public notice of proposed changes and allow sufficient time for public comment by interested parties.

b. CEA will seek input from as wide a spectrum of the profession as possible, including accredited members in good standing of the Constituent Council and representatives from other interested English language programs and institutions.

c. The Commission will review all forms of input and then vote to adopt revisions. The Commission's action will be reported to the Constituent Council and the public, along with the effective date of the revisions. CEA will publish substantive revisions within 90 days of adoption by the Commission.

d. Sites are subject to the *CEA Standards* in place at the time they attend a mandatory accreditation workshop or submit an interim report.

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3. Commission Governance, Administration, and Evaluation

3.1. CEA governance

CEA is governed by a body of elected and appointed members called the Commission. The Commission is responsible for setting CEA policy and for making accreditation decisions. Specific responsibilities of members of the Board of Commissioners are included in the *CEA Policies and Procedures* below and in the "Letter of Understanding and Agreement to Serve" located in the *Commission Procedural Manual* and available upon request from the executive director.

CEA and its governing Commission are separate and independent from professional associations in the field. The Commission serves CEA's mission and goals as a recognized and specialized accreditation agency.

CEA is a registered nonprofit corporation and the Commission is a standards-setting and accreditation body. As such, the Commission and each commissioner hold fiduciary responsibilities for CEA's governance and accreditation decision-making processes.

3.1.1. Representation and composition of the Commission

The Commission comprises 13 members, called commissioners, of which 11 are elected. Candidates are nominated by members of the Constituent Council; by individuals in the field following solicitation of nominations through TESOL, NAFSA, EnglishUSA, and UCIEP and other organizations that have direct interest in CEA's work; and through self-nomination. Two of the 13 commissioners are public members, who are appointed by the Commission. The commissioner elected by the Commission to serve as chair holds one seat.

The Commission is maintained in such a way to ensure

a. a range of program and institutional perspectives
b. a range of domains of expertise, as determined by the Commission from year to year
c. representation from both CEA-accredited and non-CEA-accredited programs and institutions
d. representation from administrative, academic, postsecondary education, and practicing professionals:

i. An administrator is defined as a person employed by an English language program or institution and who, at the time of nomination, holds an administrative position (e.g., director, assistant director) for at least 50% of their workload.

ii. An academic is defined as a person who holds academic qualifications related to curriculum and instruction and, at the time of nomination, is involved in English language program teaching related activities (e.g., classroom instruction, teacher-training, curriculum and materials design, and/or curriculum oversight) for at least 50% of their workload.

iii. An educator is defined as a person who, at the time of nomination, is engaged in a significant manner in postsecondary education in an academic capacity (e.g. professor, instructor, academic dean) for at least 50% of their workload.

iv. A practitioner is defined as a person who, at the time of nomination, is engaged in a significant manner in the practice of the ESL profession (e.g. classroom instruction, curriculum and materials design, assessment design or implementation) for at least 50% of their workload.

3.1.2. Term of service

Commissioners serve three-year terms. Terms are staggered to ensure continuity. A commissioner may serve a second term by going through the regular procedures of nomination. A commissioner may serve no more than two terms, which may be consecutive. The chair-elect is a sitting commissioner elected by the Commission in their second year of service with at least one year remaining in their term. The chair-elect serves for one year, and as chair the following year, which may result in a fourth year of service.

3.1.3. Commissioner qualifications

Elected CEA commissioners are identified on the basis of their professional experience and integrity. They have experience, training, and interest in English language programs and institutions, as well as in program evaluation. They have strong leadership ability, a commitment to quality English language education for international students, and an understanding that their role is to ensure CEA's standing as a respected, impartial, specialized accreditor and well-governed nonprofit organization.

Commissioners understand the function of English language programs and institutions within the broader context of postsecondary education and international education. Commissioners are:

a. academically qualified, having earned graduate degrees in disciplines related to language instruction and educational administration;

b. knowledgeable professionals who have gained the respect of their peers through their involvement in professional activities;

c. experts who have one or more domains of expertise related to program or institution operations;

d. experienced evaluators who have conducted self-studies, reviewed educational programs, or served with other accreditation programs;

e. effective communicators who possess demonstrated skills in team building and written and oral communication; and

f. respectful professionals who demonstrate a capacity to act without bias, maintain confidentiality, and exercise balanced judgment.

3.1.4. Nominating procedures for elected commissioners

The Nominating Committee (NC) solicits nominations and ensures that, through the selection process, the Commission continues to include commissioners with the knowledge sets, experiences, and perspectives required to maintain the necessary balance to effectively meet CEA's mission and purposes. Each year, the executive director consults with the Commission to determine the knowledge sets, experiences, and perspectives needed to maintain the Commission's balance and provides this guidance to the Nominating Committee chair.

The call for nominations and related procedures and deadlines are issued annually in March through publications and announcements by CEA, requests to associations with a direct interest in CEA's work (including TESOL, EnglishUSA, UCIEP, and NAFSA), and requests for nominations from the Constituent Council. A candidate may be self-nominated, nominated by a fellow professional, solicited by the Nominating Committee, or nominated by representatives of the Constituent Council. Procedures for nominations by the Constituent Council are stated in the Constituent Council governing rules.

Nominees submit an application package as outlined in the published call for nominations. The Nominating Committee reviews applications, conducts interviews and reference checks, and determines the slate of candidates for election.

The Nominating Committee provides an uncontested slate to the executive director, who prepares and distributes the ballot to the Constituent Council in September. The Constituent Council votes on the slate and elects commissioners.

The Nominating Committee's charge is located in Section 18: Committees of the Commission and the committee's operating procedures are outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

3.1.5. Public participation

Public members serve on CEA decision-making bodies, including two seats on the Commission and one seat on appeals boards. Public members cannot be affiliated with any aspect of teaching English as a second language**.** Specifically, a public member cannot be

a. an employee of or consultant to an English language program or institution

b. a member of the governing board, a shareholder, or an owner of an English language institution

c. a member of TESOL

d. affiliated with any program or language institution that is a member of EnglishUSA or UCIEP

e. a spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in (a) through (d) of this paragraph

CEA seeks public members who have experience in the fields of postsecondary education and/or accreditation, have an interest in the welfare of international students, and who have expertise deemed useful to CEA as determined by the Commission. A public member may not serve as chair of the Commission. Procedures for identifying and approving public members are maintained in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

3.1.6. Orientation and training

a. New commissioners

Newly-elected commissioners, including new public members, must attend a CEA accreditation workshop or a reviewer workshop at the earliest possible date after election to the Commission but no later than the end of the first year of service if they have not already participated as a self-study coordinator or reviewer. New commissioners are required to participate in orientation sessions prior to their first full meeting of the Commission. To prepare for these sessions, new members are required to read and be familiar with the *CEA Policies and Procedures,* the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions,* and other CEA materials as assigned by the chair. The new commissioner orientation focuses on defining and explaining the role and responsibilities of commissioners regarding governance and accreditation decision-making. Orientation to governance includes study of the Commission's policies and procedures, operating values, and functions as a nonprofit board as well as commissioners' fiduciary duties. Orientation to accreditation decision-making includes study of *CEA Standards*, decision processes, and past decisions to ensure reliable accreditation decisions and to ensure that commissioners become fully functioning members of CEA as a decision-making body from the outset.

b. All commissioners

All commissioners must participate in an annual orientation held before the first Commission meeting each year. This orientation focuses on commissioners' ongoing roles and responsibilities, as well as any new developments or changes in policies and procedures. In addition, all commissioners participate in continuing professional development sessions held at each Commission meeting.

3.1.7. Officers and the Executive Committee

Four officers comprise the Executive Committee of CEA. Elected officers of the Commission are the chair, the chair-elect, and the treasurer. The executive director serves ex officio without vote as the secretary.

a. Between regular meetings of the Commission, the Executive Committee is authorized to act as necessary on behalf of the Commission on all issues other than making accreditation decisions. The Executive Committee also sets the agenda for Commission meetings. The secretary (executive director) is responsible for keeping a written record of Executive Committee meetings and will report to the full Commission as appropriate.

b. Sitting commissioners elect a chair-elect and a treasurer at the fall meeting each year for service beginning in the next calendar year in January. The chair-elect must have served as a commissioner for two years before serving as chair-elect and may become chair during a fourth year of service. The treasurer must have served as a commissioner at least one year and must have at least one year remaining as a commissioner. Procedures for election of the chair-elect and the treasurer are found in the *Commission Procedural Manual.*

c. The chair of the Commission presides at meetings of the Commission and over the Executive Committee. With the executive director, the chair acts as public spokesperson for CEA and represents CEA at official functions, as necessary. In consultation with the executive director, the chair also appoints standing committee chairs and members, and appoints ad hoc committees and task forces as necessary. The chair presides over the Constituent Council and is an ex-officio member of all standing committees. These duties may be assigned to the chair-elect at the will of the chair.

d. The chair-elect presides at Executive Committee, Commission, and other meetings in the absence of the chair. The chair-elect also acts on behalf of CEA at official functions at the request of the chair. The chair-elect may serve as liaison to the Constituent Council and performs other duties as requested by the chair, including serving ex officio on any Commission standing committee.

e. The treasurer serves as chair of the Finance Committee.

3.1.8. Vacancies

Vacant seats on the Commission are filled depending on the position that is vacated and the time left for the position in relation to the term of service. Procedures are outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

a. Should the chair's position become vacant, the chair-elect will become chair, and the Commission will elect a new chair-elect.

b. Vacancies in the position of public member will be filled by Commission appointment.

c. If more than one year remains in the term of service of a commissioner, the vacancy will be filled by recommendation of the Nominating Committee, followed by approval by the Commission and appointment by the chair until the time of the next

election for the vacated position. When possible, the person recommended by the Nominating Committee will be selected from the most recent list of nominees for commissioners or from a list of former commissioners. If one year or less remains in the term of service of a commissioner, the vacancy may be left unfilled or may be filled by an appointee identified by the Executive Committee.

3.1.9. Removal of commissioners

A commissioner may be removed for cause or for nonperformance by a two-thirds vote of the Commission or by two-thirds vote of the Constituent Council, in accordance with the CEA Bylaws. Procedures for removal of a commissioner are found in the *Commission Procedural Manual*. Vacant positions are filled by the Commission according to guidelines in Section 3.1.8. Vacancies.

3.1.10. Committees of the Commission

a. Standing committees

Standing committees conduct the business of the Commission. The standing committees and their primary charges are:

1. The Executive Committee is authorized to act as necessary on behalf of the Commission between its regular meetings on all issues other than accreditation decisions. The Executive Committee also sets the agenda for Commission meetings.
2. The Finance Committee is responsible for annual review of the budget with the executive director and for making recommendations to the Commission concerning finances.
3. The Nominating Committee prepares the annual ballot.
4. The Standards Compliance Committee monitors compliance reporting and reviews complaints by or against accredited programs and institutions.
5. The Standards Review Committee is responsible for review and revision of the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*.
6. The Policies and Procedures Committee reviews and recommends amendments to the *CEA Policies and Procedures* for Commission consideration.

A minimum of two members constitutes a quorum for all standing committees. Responsibilities of standing committees are referenced throughout the *CEA Policies and Procedures*. Committee charges, membership configuration, and operating procedures are outlined in Section 18: Committees of the Commission.

The chair-elect of the Commission, as incoming chair, makes committee appointments for the coming year, in consultation with the executive director, based on the expressed interest of sitting commissioners and/or the current needs of the committees.

Appointments to committees become effective in January of each year. Committee assignments are for one year and are determined annually.

b. Other committees and groups

1. Subcommittees and ad hoc committees of the Commission may be formed as needed to carry out specific aspects of Commission work. The Executive Committee is responsible for writing the charge, specifying membership, monitoring the work, and determining when the work of a subcommittee or ad hoc committee is complete. Effective the date of these *CEA Policies and Procedures*, these committees are the Reviewer Selection Subcommittee, the Additional Branch Subcommittee, and the Research and Expansion Committee.
2. The Commission chair may also make shorter term assignments of commissioners to serve on other bodies, including task forces or other working groups, as the business of the Commission requires. Such bodies must include a current commissioner or CEA staff member, and may include individuals who are not current commissioners. The chair, in consultation with the executive director, is responsible for writing the charge, specifying membership, monitoring the work, and determining when the work of a task force or working group is complete.
3. Ad hoc advisory committees may be assembled to provide expertise or guidance to the Commission on selected topics. The Commission chair, executive director, and advisory committee chair, who must be a commissioner, will consult regarding who will be invited to serve. Individuals who are not current commissioners may be asked to serve. The Executive Committee is responsible for writing the charge, specifying membership, monitoring the advisory committee's input, and determining when the charge of an ad hoc advisory committee is complete.

3.1.11. Commission meetings

The Commission meets triennially in the spring, summer, and fall of each year. Dates for meetings are set at least one year in advance. The chair may call special meetings, which may be virtual meetings, with notice of such meetings provided to commissioners at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. Accreditation decisions may be made at any meeting; fiscal and policy reviews are a focus of the fall meeting. The presence of a majority of commissioners constitutes a quorum.

In all meetings, proceedings, hearings, and other official activities of the Commission, *Robert's Rules of Order*, newly revised, will provide a basis for conducting business.

3.2. The Constituent Council

The Constituent Council comprises representatives of accredited programs and institutions. The director of the accredited program or institution serves as the primary contact to the Constituent Council. The director may designate another primary contact to represent the program or institution; the designee must be employed by the accredited program or institution or be within the ownership structure of the institution. The primary contact serves at the will of the program or institution. All accredited programs and institutions are considered constituents of the Commission and in order to maintain good standing, are expected to adhere to the policies of CEA, submit required reports, and remit required fees, as outlined in Section 8: Maintaining Accredited Status.

Primary contacts of accredited sites in good standing are eligible to vote in the election of commissioners and may also make recommendations to the Commission for changes in the *CEA Standards* and the *CEA Policies and Procedures*.

Rules for the governance of the Constituent Council are stated in Section 19: Constituent Council Governing Rules.

3.3. CEA administration

The executive director is the chief executive officer of CEA. The person appointed to this position is hired and terminated by the Executive Committee in conjunction with the Commission and is fully empowered to act, upon their general direction, on behalf of the Commission. The executive director is responsible for the overall management of CEA's operations as well as the stewardship of its mission and purpose. In concert with the Commission, the executive director is responsible for implementing CEA's policies, programs, services, and decisions. The executive director may hire, supervise, and terminate a range of staff specialists and other outside experts to fulfill this charge. CEA staff members report directly to the executive director, who is accountable to the Commission.

In addition to administration of the central office and staff, the executive director is responsible for implementing functional responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, finance, constituent communication, marketing and promotion, programs and services, record-keeping, meeting management, development, public and government relations, and human resource development for staff.

The power and authority of the executive director to make fiscal commitments, pay bills, and engage in legally binding contracts on behalf of the Commission in order to implement the directions of the Commission is limited by the specific authorizations of the Commission. The direction and intent of the Commission is officially identified in the strategic plan, minutes of Commission meetings, and the annual budget approved by the Commission. Any item in an approved budget constitutes authorization for the executive director to make financial commitments. This authorization includes a line item for staff salaries and benefits and removes the Commission from individual decisions regarding staffing. The executive director acts on fiscal matters as an agent of the Commission and is insured for this purpose through the general liability policies that cover all aspects of the Commission's operations and finance.

The chair of the Commission, following collaboration with the Executive Committee and Commission, evaluates the executive director. The evaluation is based on the executive director’s responsibilities, as stated in the current job description, and on priorities set and provided to the executive director by the then sitting Commission.

3.4. CEA evaluation

3.4.1. Review by U.S. Department of Education

CEA is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). In order to renew and maintain recognition, CEA is required to evaluate its accreditation procedures at times, following Department guidelines. During the renewal of recognition process, USDE personnel accompany CEA reviewers on team visits, observe Commission meetings, and conduct other activities to verify compliance with USDE criteria and federal regulations. Outside of the renewal process, CEA must report to USDE any changes in policy or practices related to the Department's criteria for recognition or federal regulations. The Department's feedback from these review processes helps CEA to improve its accreditation procedures.

3.4.2. CEA self-evaluation

CEA is committed to ongoing self-evaluation. Information is collected at all stages of the standards-setting and accreditation process and used to inform changes and improvements.

a. Sites participating in the accreditation process complete evaluations of any training workshops they attend and of the materials provided to support their understanding of CEA's processes.

b. Each program or institution that undergoes an accreditation visit completes an evaluation of CEA's procedures, including the conduct and professionalism of the review team and CEA staff involved in arranging a site visit. Members of the site review teams evaluate the procedures and materials that guide the review process, other team members, and the team leader.

c. Reviewers complete evaluations of the various training workshops they attend. CEA uses evaluations of the team members to monitor the performance of individual reviewers and identify individuals who have the potential to be team leaders as well as those who are not performing adequately.

d. Standards are evaluated through a review and revision process conducted following protocols that require review of data submitted by sites, relevant task forces, public comments, and other sources of evaluation and input.

e. The Commission evaluates governance practices and accreditation decision-making processes at each Commission meeting and conducts an annual self-evaluation.

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4. Scope of Accreditation

CEA accredits both programs and institutions and is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) to do so. CEA does not accredit degree programs. At the time of application and the eligibility determination, CEA establishes the scope of review for the applicant site, documents what will be included in the accreditation action, and what the name of the accredited entity will be. In international settings, CEA defines the scope of review in collaboration with the applicant site.

4.1. Types of accreditation

CEA offers three types of accreditation: programmatic, institutional, and general accreditation.

4.1.1. Programmatic accreditation

Within the United States, CEA offers *programmatic* accreditation for English language programs (ELPs) and units with a direct reporting line within the administration of universities and colleges which are accredited by a regional or national institutional accrediting body. Such programs and units may be part of academic departments (such as ESL, English, linguistics, education), non-instructional units (such as student affairs or international student affairs departments), continuing education units, or other units. Sites seeking programmatic accreditation may apply to add accreditation of other regularly offered non-degree English or language teaching and learning programs within the unit that offers the ELP (such as TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate, foreign language, youth, or other courses or programs in addition to an ELP); additional accreditation of such programs is contingent upon the accreditation of the ELP or the English language unit. Additionally, CEA offers *programmatic* accreditation to ELPs within government agencies.

4.1.2. Institutional accreditation

Within the United States, CEA offers *institutional* accreditation for independent English language schools/institutions that offer an eligible English language program (ELP). Such institutions may offer TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate, foreign language, youth, or other courses or programs in addition to an ELP. However, all the educational programs offered must be within CEA's scope of English or language teaching and learning, and all programs offered must be included in the accreditation review. The forms of ownership and governance of such institutions and the organizational structures in which they exist can vary greatly. Such institutions may be governed by individual proprietors, governing boards, or corporate managers and may exist as stand-alone single-owner schools, not-for-profit organizations governed by boards, or units that are part of larger, multisite systems. Such institutions may also conduct classes on a university or college campus by contractual agreements.

4.1.3. General accreditation

Outside the United States, CEA offers *general* accreditation for English language programs in a variety of settings, including programs within academic departments at colleges or universities, foundation or preparatory year programs within or affiliated with colleges or universities, independent private language schools, or binational centers. Such programs may be governed by academic institutions, individual proprietors, governing boards, or other corporate organizational structures.

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5. Accreditation Process

Accreditation by CEA provides a structure through which programs and institutions can take steps to improve and evaluate their programs and institutions. CEA accreditation consists of several phases. First, programs or institutions must submit an eligibility application form. If they are deemed eligible to seek accreditation, they must send a representative to an accreditation workshop, develop a plan for the self-study process, conduct a self-study, and undergo a site visit by trained peer reviewers. The last step in the process is the Commission's review and accreditation decision. These phases are described below.

5.1. Eligibility

CEA will accept applications only from programs and institutions that fall within the Commission's scope of accreditation. In the United States, this includes English language programs in institutions accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education, English programs within an agency of the U.S. government, and independent English language institutions with an English language program. CEA also accredits English language programs offered outside the United States.

5.1.1. General eligibility requirements

a. All applicants, both within and outside of the United States, must document that

i. the program or language institution offers an educational program for at least three months of the year and the educational program is regularly offered;

ii. the educational program has a curriculum designed to serve the needs of postsecondary students who are nonnative speakers of English;

iii. the curriculum allows for the differentiation of participants by level of English language proficiency;

iv. instruction has been offered for at least one year.

b. If the English language program is configured as an intensive English program (IEP) within an accredited university or college within the United States, it must offer

i. at least 18 hours of language instruction per week to meet the needs of F-1 visa holders, or

ii. at least 12 credit hours of language instruction per term to meet the needs of F-1 visa holders.

c. If the English language program is configured as an intensive English program (IEP) provided by an independent language school within the United States, it must offer at least 18 hours a week of language instruction per week to meet the needs of F-1 visa holders.

d. Independent language institutions within the United States must document that all educational programs offered by the institution as legally constituted are within CEA's scope of English and foreign language teaching and learning related programs.

e. A program or institution within the United States that offers a non-intensive English language program of fewer than 18 hours a week may be deemed eligible provided

   i. it meets other eligibility requirements, and

   ii. the authorizing administrator acknowledges that CEA accreditation of the non-intensive program does not meet the requirements of the Accreditation of English Language Training Programs Act ("the Accreditation Act") and does not meet certification requirements for the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) petition to enroll non-immigrant students.

To show that it meets CEA's eligibility requirements, a program or institution submits an application for eligibility and an application fee. The application for eligibility, along with verifying documents submitted by the program's or language institution's chief operating officer or authorized individual, provides evidence that the applicant meets the general eligibility requirements and is within the scope of CEA accreditation. In addition, applicants must submit sufficient information about the program or language institution's curriculum, faculty, facilities, administration, and student services in order to show that it can be reviewed on the basis of the *CEA Standards.*

5.1.2. Additional eligibility application requirements

Additional specific eligibility application requirements apply in certain situations. In some cases, the eligibility application form will specify required submission of additional materials.

a. A program in a university or college that applies for *programmatic* accreditation must submit a copy of the host institution's letter of accreditation from a recognized regional or national accrediting agency.

b. A program in a university or college that offers an eligible English language program has the option to include in its application other regularly offered non-degree English language teaching and learning programs or courses within the unit that delivers the eligible English language program.

c. An independent language institution must submit a copy of its authority to offer postsecondary education in the state, if required.

d. If a language institution offers TESL/TEFL teacher training courses or programs, foreign language courses or programs, or other educational programs that will be included in the accreditation review, it must submit additional materials as required on the eligibility application form.

e. An English language program that exists as part of an agency of the U.S. government must include an explanation of the program's relationship to that agency.

Upon review of required documentation submitted with the eligibility application, CEA may request additional information before determining that an applicant is eligible to begin the accreditation process. CEA may also inform the eligible site of specific standard areas where it may have difficulty coming into compliance with the *CEA Standards.* In such cases, CEA will require a formal written confirmation from the authorized administrator stating that the program or institution intends to go forward with the accreditation process despite the concerns expressed by CEA.

5.1.3. Eligibility requirements for applicants following adverse actions by other agencies

If any of the following actions have been taken against either the institution in which a program resides or an independent institution seeking accreditation, the applicant must provide additional documentation along with its eligibility application. Failure to report such actions may result in denial of eligibility:

a. a pending or final action brought by a state or federal agency for non-compliance with the law
b. a pending or final action brought by a state agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the state
c. a pending or final decision by a recognized agency to deny accreditation or reaccreditation; suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution’s accreditation or reaccreditation; or to impose probation or an equivalent status.

In each case, the applicant must provide CEA with the appropriate explanatory information and documentation, including but not limited to the following:

a. the name of the federal or state agency, the accrediting body, or licensing authority
b. the type of action, the date of the action, and its underlying reasons, including copies of any official documents related to any such actions;
c. the anticipated or actual date of any final decisions related to the adverse action.

If the application is submitted less than one year after such action, CEA will investigate the conditions, including contacting the federal, state, or accrediting agency for further information. All information will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, which may take one of two actions:

1. Conclude, following review of the documentation, that the adverse action in question does not affect the eligibility of the applicant, in which case the investigation is complete.
2. Ask for additional information to be received within 15 working days.

Based on its investigation, CEA may approve or deny eligibility. If approved, CEA will provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, within 30 days of the approval, a thorough and reasonable explanation of why the action of the other accrediting agency or state or federal agency does not preclude the program or institution from being deemed eligible to begin the CEA accreditation process. If denied CEA eligibility, the program or institution may not again apply for eligibility for CEA accreditation for a period of one year following the final adverse action by the other agency.

5.1.4. Approval of eligibility

a. A program or institution that meets all eligibility requirements will receive a determination of eligibility letter. The letter states that the program or institution has been deemed eligible to seek accreditation, and states that it has one year to attend an accreditation workshop and start the accreditation process.

b. Approval of eligibility is not a preaccreditation status. A program or institution that has been deemed eligible is not permitted to publicly announce or promote its applicant status. Announcement of accreditation and use of the CEA logo is reserved for exclusive use of accredited programs and institutions.

c. A program or institution that does not meet the eligibility criteria will receive written notice. Except in cases involving adverse action by another agency, a program or institution that is initially denied eligibility to proceed may reapply if changes are made so that the site subsequently meets the requirements. In such a case, the program or institution must submit a new application for eligibility, as well as required documents and fees.

5.2. Accreditation workshop

Once eligibility has been approved, CEA requires programs and institutions to send at least one representative to an accreditation workshop. Sending a representative to the workshop implies that the program or institution is ready to begin the process of self-study.

CEA regularly offers accreditation workshops throughout the year, and for an additional fee, offers customized accreditation workshops upon request.

Workshops include general information about CEA policies and procedures, a review of the standards, requirements for writing the plan for the self-study, instructions for the self-study process, and requirements for submitting the self-study report. It is expected that the person chosen to be the self-study coordinator will attend the workshop. The representative(s) must register and pay the required workshop fee.

5.3. Plan for the self-study

Following the workshop, the site undergoing initial accreditation must submit a plan for the self-study, which is a document that guides the self-study process and confirms that the site intends to proceed with the self-study process.

A template for the plan for the self-study is distributed at the workshop. A fee is due at the time the plan is submitted. The fee covers staff review of the plan, staff guidance throughout the period of the self-study, and review of the self-study report when it is submitted. The plan template requires

a. a brief statement about the program or institution, its mission, and organization

b. the name of the person who will serve as the self-study coordinator and who will perform the following functions: act as contact person for CEA, coordinate activities of the various

committees, assist in the preparations for the site visit, and coordinate the writing of the final self-study report

c. a chronology of activities for undertaking the self-study
d. a list of roles and members of self-study committee(s)
e. a timeline for carrying out the self-study and a proposed target date for the site visit
f. affirmation that adequate resources are available to carry out the self-study

CEA staff reviews the plan to determine whether it meets the requirements listed above. The plan is due within two months following the accreditation workshop. After CEA receives, reviews, and approves the plan for the self-study, the electronic template(s) for the self-study will be sent to the self-study coordinator.

An extension for submission of the plan may be granted upon consultation with CEA staff. However, if the plan is not received within six months of attendance at the workshop, the program or institution will be removed from active status, and may be required to reapply for eligibility and register and pay for an additional workshop.

5.4. Reporting by in-process sites

Programs and institutions that have been deemed eligible are considered to be in process. An in-process site must promptly report the following events to CEA:

a. change of primary contact
b. change of program or institution name
c. change of location
d. change of control, if a program, or change of ownership, if an institution
e. closure of the site
f. addition or closure of an auxiliary location
g. elimination of an educational offering cited in the eligibility determination
h. any pending or final adverse action against the site by other accrediting agencies, or federal or state agencies. An in-process program must notify CEA of any such pending or final actions against the institution in which it resides.
i. any change that may affect the site's compliance with CEA's eligibility requirements

CEA will review the eligibility determination in light of the reported changes and inform the site of necessary actions to maintain eligibility, if any. CEA may withdraw the eligibility of a site or take other action based on the required reporting if compliance with CEA's policies, including eligibility requirements, is affected by the notification. Reports of adverse actions will be investigated following the process described in Section 5.1.3. Eligibility requirements for applicants following adverse actions by other agencies.

5.5. Self-study report

The *CEA Accreditation Handbook* outlines the procedures and format for submitting the self-study report.

The self-study report must be completed during the 12 -16 month period following the accreditation workshop to which the site initially sent a representative and submitted in accordance with CEA's Timeline for Scheduling Site Visits and Reviews.

A program or institution undergoing initial accreditation that cannot complete the self-study within 16 months of attending a workshop may request an extension of up to eight months. CEA has the right to grant or deny the request, based on communications with the self-study coordinator and the rationale for requesting an extension. Programs and institutions that are denied an extension or that fail to meet the extended submission date are removed from the CEA accreditation process and must begin the process anew.

Upon receipt of the self-study report, CEA staff reviews the report for completeness and correct formatting. If the self-study is incomplete, incorrectly formatted, or information in the report is considered to be insufficient for scheduling a site visit, the site will be required to make necessary revisions. The site may be moved to the next review cycle and a new submission date for the self-study will be established. In cases where the self- study report is complete and correctly formatted and the staff has determined that the report contains sufficient information to carry out a site visit, staff will begin the process of scheduling a visit.

5.6. Site review process

5.6.1. Site reviewers

The role of site reviewers is to verify information in the self-study report and evaluate whether the program or institution appears to meet the *CEA Standards*. The Commission uses the review team's report in making the accreditation decision. Reviewers are selected and trained based on the policies and procedures outlined in Section 17: Site Reviewers.

Evaluation is a sensitive task, requiring impartial review of a program or institution. At the time of their initial selection, all site reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement. They must bring to the attention of CEA any factor that might suggest any conflict of interest with regard to their evaluation of a particular program or institution.

To this end, CEA makes a good-faith effort to select potential reviewers from the pool in a manner such that no potential member

a. is a graduate of the program, its host institution, or the independent English language institution,
b. is or has been an employee or has close relatives in the same system,
c. has a close personal or professional relationship with site personnel, or
d. currently resides in the same immediate geographic area of the site under review.

CEA will not assign any reviewer who has expressed public opinions about the site's quality, integrity, or suitability to be accredited nor any reviewer who has or had a financial interest in or been a consultant to the program or the institution.

CEA will assign review team members to ensure that teams for programmatic reviews include educators and practitioners and that teams for institutional reviews include academics and administrators, as required by USDE regulations.

5.6.2. Site visit

CEA schedules site visits according to an established accreditation review cycle. The site visit must occur at a time when classes are in session, faculty are teaching, administrators and staff are available, and operations are functioning normally. CEA will make every effort to meet a site's request for a visit within the requested timeline but reserves the right to move the site to another review cycle based on availability of reviewers and CEA site visit representatives. CEA will assign a team leader and at least one additional reviewer for each site visit. The site may challenge the appointment of team members one time if there are perceived conflicts of interest or other substantive concerns. To challenge the appointments, the site must provide evidence of the conflict or concerns. A CEA staff representative accompanies the team on visits to ensure consistency of procedures and reliable application of standards. The CEA site visit representative is available to the Commission when it deliberates on accreditation decisions in order to answer specific questions that might arise.

The review team and the site follow detailed procedures as provided in workshop manuals and stated in visit preparation materials. On site, members of the team review any materials additional to the submitted self-study report and meet with the chief operating officer(s), administrators, staff, faculty, and students to evaluate the effectiveness of the program or institution. The reviewers develop an understanding of the extent to which the site meets its stated objectives and whether it appears to meet the *CEA Standards*.

Throughout the visit, reviewers discuss whether the site appears to meet each individual standard. Before the exit meeting, during which they meet with the chief operating officer(s) or administrators and the self-study team, reviewers establish their final findings on each standard. At the exit meeting, the review team leader indicates the strengths of the program or institution and mentions any general areas of weakness that will be cited in the team's report.

5.6.3. Review evaluation

The self-study and site visit processes are evaluated by each site. The self-study coordinator is asked to evaluate CEA's procedures related to the self-study, the *CEA Standards*, the review process, and the work of the reviewers and CEA site visit representative. Any complaints about policies and/or procedures related to the review will be referred to the Commission for discussion.

Similarly, the team leader evaluates the reviewer(s) and the review process, and the reviewers evaluate the team leader and the review process. Evaluation by the site and review teams is

critical to ensure the quality and reliability of the review process and determine the effectiveness of members of the reviewer pool.

5.6.4. Review team report

The review team conveys its findings to the site and the Commission in a review team report. The report represents the team's best professional judgment as to whether the site appears to meet the *CEA Standards*. The report includes a team summary which provides a broad look at the results, summarizing strengths and weaknesses; a list of activities conducted on site, including interviews, observations and other verification activities; and team findings for each standard. The reviewers' findings for each standard include the reviewers' rationale for the final finding that each standard appears to be met, appears to be partially met, or does not appear to be met. The CEA site visit representative supports the team in completing its report. Both reviewers are responsible for ensuring the review team report accurately reflects their findings.

5.6.5. Financial review report

Site reviewers do not view or verify a site's financial reporting. CEA staff conduct review of the site's responses to the financial standards and related financial reports. CEA's financial manager conducts verifications of financial matters and prepares a report reflecting findings.

5.6.6. Site response to the review team report

The review team report and the financial review report are sent to the site no later than 30 working days after the visit. Upon receiving the review team report and the post-visit financial review documents, the program or institution must respond to the reports in writing no later than 30 working days after receiving them. The response must have three sections:

a. a short response to the report as a whole
b. correction of factual errors, if any, and
c. a response to any standard marked as "appears to partially meet" or "appears not to meet."

A site may correct errors or provide additional documentation not accessed by the review team during the site visit or provide information about its plans (with documentation) to bring its policies, practices, and procedures into compliance with the *CEA Standards*.

5.7. The accreditation decision

The process concludes with a Commission review and decision at the Commission meeting designated in the site's plan. In making an accreditation decision, the Commission will review the site's self-study report and the review team report, and will take into consideration the site's response to the review team report. Accreditation decisions are outlined in Section 7: The Accreditation Decision.

5.8. Reaccreditation

At least two years before the end of the site's accreditation period, CEA will notify an accredited site that it must begin the reaccreditation process.

5.8.1. Steps in the reaccreditation process

The reaccreditation process requires the accredited site to complete the following steps:

1. Submit a reaccreditation application at least one year prior to expiration of the current grant of accreditation. At this time, eligibility will be reaffirmed.
2. Send a representative to an accreditation workshop.
3. Following the workshop, submit a timeline for completing the self-study report, undergoing the reaccreditation visit, and coming before the Commission for a reaccreditation decision no later than the end of the grant of accreditation.

   A fee is due which covers staff review of the timeline, staff guidance throughout the period of the self-study, and review of the self-study report when it is submitted.
4. Submit a self-study report responding to *CEA Standards* in place at the time the site attends the accreditation workshop.
5. Undergo a site visit.
6. Respond to the site visit report by the stated deadline.

5.8.2. Expiration of the period of accreditation

If an accredited program or institution does not apply for reaccreditation, accredited status expires at the time the current grant of accreditation expires, provided all fees are paid and the site is in good standing.

5.8.3. Extension of status by one cycle

In cases where the reaccreditation timeline cannot be met due to CEA's scheduling constraints or unexpected circumstances at the site, the CEA executive director may approve the extension of the site's accredited status for one cycle, that is, until the next Commission meeting at which the site can be reviewed. If the site subsequently withdraws from accreditation, the extension will be nullified and the expiration of the site's accreditation will revert to the original date.

5.8.4. Early Commission decision

In cases where the site comes before the Commission for a reaccreditation decision one cycle or more before the end of the previous grant of accreditation, the end date of the previous grant of accreditation is rescinded and replaced with the date the Commission makes the reaccreditation decision.

a. If reaccreditation is granted, the period of reaccreditation commences on the date the Commission makes the reaccreditation decision.

b. If reaccreditation is denied, the denial decision is effective on the date the Commission makes the decision; appeal and other processes available to the site following a denial conform to CEA's denial policies.

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6. Multiple-site Programs and Institutions, Additional Programs, and International Sites

Any site which has special characteristics will be required to meet with CEA staff after attending the accreditation workshop. These special characteristics are usually identified during the eligibility process or through questions from the site about how to manage certain aspects of the accreditation process. Common topics for post-workshop clarifications include management of multisite reviews and international reviews, and specific programming or administrative design questions, including how to account for one-on-one tutorial programs within the self-study, how to include additional programs along with the main English program in a university-based program review, and how to report partnership programs in the self-study.

6.1. Multiple-site programs and institutions

CEA accredits individual programs or language institutions rather than accrediting whole organizations. CEA does not require a campus or organization with multiple branches to submit all branches to CEA for accreditation. Each instructional branch within the organization pursuing accreditation must complete each step in the accreditation process. However, where there is significant overlap between branches in the content required by CEA, CEA's procedures provide for efficiencies as stated further below.

CEA makes distinctions between locations based on the instructional and/or administrative functions provided at the location. A location may be a main branch, administrative headquarters, branch, or auxiliary. Only a main branch or a branch may undergo accreditation. Although their standards-related practices will be included in the site review, administrative headquarters and auxiliary locations are not separately accredited.

During the initial eligibility application process, CEA staff will consult with the applicant to determine whether a particular location should be considered a main branch, administrative headquarters, branch, or auxiliary. Where there is evidence that the proposed instructional location does not meet the below location type descriptors, CEA staff will consult with the applicant to determine status and eligibility.

6.1.1. Location types

a. Main branch

A main branch is a location that delivers an eligible ELP and also provides centralized administrative, executive, or management oversight for certain functions of the multisite organization. In cases where such administrative functions are distributed to more than one branch of the multisite organization and the organization does not specify a main branch, CEA will designate one branch of a multisite as the main branch.

b. Administrative headquarters

In cases where principal administrative, executive, and management oversight responsibilities of the multisite organization are conducted at a location that does not deliver an eligible ELP, that location is designated an administrative headquarters.

c. Instructional locations

An instructional location within a multisite may be either a branch or an auxiliary. Upon review of submitted materials, CEA will determine whether the additional location is a branch or an auxiliary.

d. Branch locations

A branch is a full-service instructional site that

i. is under the same supervision (in the case of a university or college program) or ownership (in the case of an administrative headquarters or the main branch of a language institution) as the administrative headquarters or main branch

ii. is geographically separate from the administrative headquarters or main branch

iii. offers a full instructional program

iv. has its own faculty

v. offers an array of student services, including but not limited to orientation, advising, and student activities

e. Auxiliary locations

An auxiliary location is a classroom-only site in sufficiently close proximity to an administrative headquarters, main campus, or branch that students can receive student services, and faculty or staff have access to administrative functions provided by the main site.

An auxiliary

i. operates under the same authority and administrative control of an administrative headquarters, main campus, or branch

ii. may be permanent or temporary

iii. may offer a full or partial instructional program

iv. demonstrates its reliance on the administrative headquarters or main branch by

1. having faculty that teach at other locations of the organization,
2. providing no or limited student services, or
3. having no or limited administrative staff

An auxiliary location undergoes review as part of the main branch or branch with which it is associated. The auxiliary is included within the grant of accreditation of the main branch or branch. An auxiliary site's student enrollment is included in calculation of sustaining fees. An administrative headquarters cannot have auxiliary locations.

Auxiliary locations added after accreditation must be reported to CEA following the policy on reporting substantive change. The site's status as an auxiliary will be re-evaluated as needed and will be re-evaluated at the time of application for reaccreditation. If it is determined that an auxiliary location functions as a branch, the site will be required to undergo the process of becoming accredited as a branch location.

CEA reserves the right to determine other instructional locations as eligible, pending staff review of submitted materials.

6.1.2. Multisite accreditation process

The following procedures apply to multisite programs and institutions:

a. An application for eligibility must be submitted for a main branch and each additional branch location applying to become accredited. The application must identify the applicant site's administrative headquarters and auxiliary locations, if any, but the administrative headquarters and auxiliary locations do not submit separate applications.

b. A representative from each site seeking accreditation must attend an accreditation workshop.

c. If more than one site in the multisite organization is undergoing accreditation, each site may submit a separate plan for the self-study or the sites may submit one plan for the self-study. The plan(s) must demonstrate that the administrative headquarters or main branch and each branch location will be included in the self-study process.

d. Each branch must submit a complete self-study report. Where applicable, each report should incorporate information about any standards-related activities conducted by an administrative headquarters.

e. To provide consistency, CEA will make every effort to identify reviewers who are able to visit more than one site in the system, including the administrative headquarters or main campus, as applicable.

f. Fees must be paid for applications, the plan for the self-study, site visits, and sustaining fees according to the CEA Fee Schedule, available on the CEA website.

The Commission will consider each branch of a multisite program or institution separately in making accreditation decisions. Once accredited, each branch must follow the requirements for maintaining accredited status, including submitting an annual report and annual sustaining fees, responding to accreditation reporting requirements, and applying for reaccreditation.

6.2. Additional programs

To be eligible for CEA accreditation, a language institution must deliver an English language program; the institution may also offer other educational programs. In such cases, the other educational programs must be within CEA's scope, and all educational programs offered by the institution must be included in the CEA review.

To be eligible for CEA accreditation, a program must deliver an English language program. Additional educational programs administered by the program or by the unit that administers the program may optionally be included in the CEA review provided they are within CEA's scope.

The scope of review for the program or language institution is established at the time of the eligibility determination. Complete information about eligibility requirements is provided in Section 5: Accreditation Process.

Within either programmatic or institutional settings, typical additional programs include TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate courses or programs, foreign language courses or programs, and youth programs, or other educational offerings. Special eligibility, self-study, and site visit requirements pertain to these additional programs.

6.2.1. Eligibility review

A program or language institution that offers TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate, foreign language, youth courses or programs, or other educational offerings must submit additional materials that describe these courses when applying for eligibility. Depending on the submission, CEA may ask for additional information in order to confirm eligibility.

6.2.2. Self-study for programs and language institutions that offer additional programs

Once eligibility has been approved, the program or language institution may proceed with the next steps, which include sending a representative to a workshop and starting the self-study process. In addition to carrying out the self-study of the institution as a whole, the institution must respond to certain standards specifically in terms of TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate, foreign language, youth courses or programs, or other educational offerings included in the eligibility determination. The accreditation workshop will outline the supplemental report process and CEA's *Accreditation Handbook* contains guidelines that focus on the additional materials that must be submitted.

6.2.3. Verification activities during the site visit

Verification activities will take place at the time of the institution's regular site visit. CEA will make an effort to assign a member of the review team who is familiar with TESL/TEFL teacher training certificate, foreign language, and/or youth courses or programs, as applicable. If it is deemed that an additional reviewer needs to accompany the team on the visit, the program or institution will pay any direct costs related to the appointment of each additional reviewer. Information about review of additional programs will be included in the review team's report.

6.2.4. Accreditation decision

For independent language institutions, all of the institution's educational offerings will be considered in the accreditation decision; however, the English language program forms the basis of the institution's eligibility and must achieve accreditation in order for accreditation to be granted to the institution. For programs, the English language program must be granted accreditation in order for any additional programs to be accredited; additional programs themselves may or may not be accredited. See Section 7: The Accreditation Decision, for more information.

6.3. International sites

CEA reviews performed outside the United States mirror the process in the United States. International sites wishing to pursue accreditation with CEA are subject to the same *CEA Standards* as programs and language institutions within the United States.

CEA will ensure that international reviews reflect good practice in the field of accreditation in keeping with the *CEA Standards*, while taking any cultural and unique circumstances into account. The Commission has established that as a matter of policy, all costs pertaining to accreditation activities outside the U.S. be met or exceeded by pertinent fees.

6.3.1. Eligibility review

International sites that are approved as eligible will go through the accreditation process in the same way as U.S. domestic sites. However, an additional review of the site's circumstances will be undertaken by staff at the time of the workshop, to clarify and document any special issues related to the self-study and site visit.

6.3.2. Standards

CEA does not have separate "international standards" and all sites must respond to the published *CEA Standards*. However, occasionally a standard may not apply in the international setting. For example, in a country with universal government-provided health care, the student services standard requiring discussion of the risks of going without health insurance may not apply. In discussion with the site, CEA staff will establish and document which standards, if any, the site may not have to respond to in the self-study report.

6.3.3. Site visit

The site visit is the same length for international sites as for U.S. visits; however, the review team is provided with a rest day after travel before the visit begins.

6.3.4. Fees

Per CEA's published fee structure, international sites pay a base rate plus direct expenses for the site visit. CEA staff will review the expected costs with the international site.

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7. The Accreditation Decision

The Commission makes accreditation decisions. Commissioners consider all materials pertinent to the review, including the review team report following the site visit, the financial report, and the site's response to the review team report. The Commission will also consider adverse actions, if any, by any other agency as well as any public comments received about the site. Accreditation decisions are made based on a site's compliance with the *CEA Standards*. Through structured review, commissioners seek to determine that the mission and educational objectives are being communicated and met, that the program or institution is organized so that its mission and educational objectives are supported by adequate human and fiscal resources, and that there is evidence of sufficient financial stability for the site to carry out its educational objectives and meet financial obligations.

7.1. Types of accreditation decisions

The Commission may make a decision to accredit or to not accredit. Possible accreditation actions are listed below.

a. Grant five-year initial accreditation to a program or institution that is in compliance with the *CEA Standards*.

b. Grant 10-year reaccreditation to a program or institution that is in compliance with the *CEA Standards*.

c. Grant one-year initial accreditation to a program or institution that substantially meets the *CEA Standards* but needs to address minor standards-related deficiencies. The program or institution agrees to a proviso that it must comply with the requirements of the Commission by the end of the grant of one-year initial accreditation. A Commission decision to accredit for a one-year rather than a five-year period may not be appealed.

d. Grant four-year continued initial accreditation to a program or institution that has received one-year initial accreditation and has complied with the requirements issued by the Commission.

e. Grant one-year reaccreditation to a program or institution that has applied for reaccreditation and substantially meets the *CEA Standards* but needs to address minor standards-related deficiencies. The program or institution agrees to a proviso that it must comply with the requirements of the Commission by the end of the grant of one-year reaccreditation. A Commission decision to reaccredit for a one-year rather than a 10-year period may not be appealed.

f. Grant nine-year continued reaccreditation to a program or institution that has received one-year reaccreditation and has complied with the requirements issued by the Commission.

g. Grant initial accreditation of up to 20 months to an additional branch that has met CEA's requirements. The exact period of initial accreditation will be specified in the Commission's letter to the branch.

h. Grant continued initial accreditation to an additional branch location for a term to total five years from the date of the grant of the initial accreditation. The exact period of continued initial accreditation will be specified in the Commission's letter to the branch.

i. Defer a decision pending receipt of additional information required by the Commission in order to make a fully-informed decision. A deferral may be granted only until the next meeting of the Commission and may include a requirement for a special site visit. Deferral may not be used to give a program or institution an opportunity to come into compliance with specific standards. For sites pursuing initial accreditation, the unaccredited status remains until the Commission decision. For sites undergoing reaccreditation or continued initial accreditation, the site's accredited status remains in place during the period of deferral. The period for a grant of accreditation following a deferral begins from the time the Commission makes the new accreditation decision.

j. Deny initial accreditation or reaccreditation to a program or institution that has not substantially met the standards. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation may appeal the decision or reapply for accreditation. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation cannot again be considered by the Commission for an accreditation decision for at least one year after denial.

k. Deny four-year continued initial or nine-year continued reaccreditation to a program or institution that has not met the requirements of one-year accreditation. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation may appeal the decision or reapply for accreditation. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation cannot again be considered by the Commission for an accreditation decision for at least one year after denial.

l. Deny continued accreditation to an additional branch which had been granted up to 20-month initial accreditation. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation may appeal the decision or reapply for accreditation. A program or institution that has been denied accreditation cannot again be considered by the Commission for an accreditation decision for at least one year after denial.

m. Withdraw accreditation from a program or institution that

    i. no longer meets eligibility requirements due to pending action by a state agency to withdraw or terminate an institution's legal authority to operate

    ii. no longer meets eligibility requirements due to changes in the program or institution structure, ownership, institutional accreditation as applicable, or other condition

    iii. fails to meet the conditions of advisory actions including but not limited to advisory actions resulting from:

1. failure to be in compliance with the *CEA Standards* through failure to report a substantive change,
2. failure to be in compliance with the *CEA Standards* following an investigation of a complaint,
3. failure to be in compliance with the *CEA Standards* through failure to respond adequately to accreditation reporting requirements,
4. failure to demonstrate continued compliance with the *CEA Standards* following submission of the interim report.

Advisory actions leading to withdrawal are discussed in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

7.2. Policies specific to programmatic accreditation

For any grant of programmatic accreditation for which a site has sought accreditation of programs in addition to the ELP or accreditation of the unit within which the ELP resides, the following policies apply:

a. For an English language unit to be accredited, the English language program and each regularly offered program within the unit must undergo review.

b. For additional regularly offered, non-credit programs to be accredited, the English language program must receive accreditation.

c. The English language program may be granted accreditation and one (or more) of the individual programs may be denied accreditation.

7.3. Procedures for decisions to grant accreditation

a. The program or institution will receive a written explanation of the Commission's accreditation decision within 30 days. A discussion of any condition(s) related to standards will accompany the report.

b. For sites granted one-year initial accreditation or one-year reaccreditation, the Commission's letter will include reporting requirements that must be met within one year of the accreditation decision. The site's one-year report responding to the Commission's letter, which will include a response to reporting requirements and any supporting documentation, is due two months prior to the one-year anniversary of accreditation. The Commission will review the report and make a decision to grant continued accreditation, defer a decision, or deny continued accreditation. If the site fails to provide a required one-year report by the deadline, accreditation will expire at the end of the one-year grant of accreditation.

c. For sites granted five-year accreditation, continued initial accreditation of an additional branch, or 10-year reaccreditation, the letter may or may not include reporting requirements. The site's report, which will include a response to reporting requirements and any supporting documentation, is typically due two months prior to the one-year anniversary of accreditation. If reporting requirements are issued, the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) is charged with the review of such reports.

d. For sites granted continued accreditation beyond one year, the Commission may require continued follow-up reporting. Such reports will have specified due dates not to exceed 12 months. The Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) is charged with the review of such reports.

7.4. Procedures for decisions to deny or withdraw accreditation

a. The program or institution will receive a written explanation of the Commission's accreditation decision within 30 days.

b. In the event of denial of accreditation or withdrawal of accreditation by CEA, the letter will state the reasons for the denial or withdrawal and the fact that the site may appeal the decision, and will state procedures by which the site may make a responsive comment. A program or institution may appeal an adverse determination consistent with CEA appeals procedures set forth in Section 13: Appeals.

    i. A decision to withdraw accreditation is the culmination of a process of warning, probation, and show cause actions. See Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions for details.

    ii. If a Commission decision to deny or withdraw accreditation is based solely on failure to meet financial standards, the program or institution has a one-time only opportunity to submit significant financial information that was not available for review at the time of the decision and that may materially affect the decision. Any determination by CEA upon review of the new financial information is not separately appealable by the program or institution.

7.5. Early reaccreditation decisions

In cases where the site comes before the Commission for a reaccreditation decision before the end of the previous grant of accreditation, the end date of the previous grant of accreditation is rescinded and replaced with the date the Commission makes the reaccreditation decision.

a. If reaccreditation is granted, the period of reaccreditation commences on the date the Commission makes the reaccreditation decision.

b. If reaccreditation is denied, the denial decision is effective on the date the Commission makes the decision; appeal and other processes available to the site following a denial conform to CEA's policies.

7.6. Expiration of a grant of accreditation, voluntary withdrawal from accredited status, or closure

a. An accredited program or institution may choose to let its accredited status expire at the end of the term of accreditation. The site must inform CEA in writing of the decision to let accreditation expire. The program or institution is responsible for any fees due through the end of the term of accreditation. Regardless of whether or not CEA is formally notified, accreditation will automatically expire at the end of the current grant period if a site

   i. fails to provide a required one-year report by the established deadline.

   ii. fails to complete the reaccreditation process, including filing a reaccreditation application and attending an accreditation workshop by the established deadline.

   iii. if an additional branch, fails to complete the process for continued initial accreditation.

b. An accredited program or institution may choose to voluntarily withdraw from accredited status. The site must inform CEA in writing, state the reason for withdrawal, and state the date of withdrawal. The program or institution is responsible for any fees due through the specified date.

c. An accredited program or institution which closes or changes so as to no longer be eligible must inform CEA in writing of the last date of operation. The program or institution is responsible for any fees due through the specified date.

d. If an accredited program or institution ceases operations without notice to CEA, upon learning of the closure the Executive Committee will promptly investigate to determine the facts and conditions. Following investigation, the Executive Committee will authorize immediate withdrawal of accreditation and may take other actions related to CEA's policies and interests. CEA will promptly notify the public and appropriate agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security if applicable, of the withdrawal of CEA accreditation and the reasons for doing so. The Commission will vote to acknowledge the withdrawal of accreditation at the next available Commission meeting.

e. With any of the actions above, if students are affected by the action, the site must provide evidence of a teach-out or transfer plan for current students, a refund policy, or other means of meeting the site's obligations to affected students.

f. Upon expiration of the term of accreditation or the site's notification to CEA of its voluntary withdrawal or closure, the Commission, or the Executive Committee if a Commission meeting is not imminent, will vote to acknowledge the expiration or accept the voluntary withdrawal or closure.

g. For both programs and institutions, CEA will notify the public and appropriate agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, of expiration, voluntary withdrawal action, or closure within 10 working days. CEA will amend public references to CEA accreditation of the site and will require the site to remove references to CEA accreditation in its public information within 10 working days.

7.7. Announcement of accreditation decisions

CEA provides specific language to announce and publish the grant of accreditation (see Section 19: Constituent Council Governing Rules).

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8. Maintaining Accredited Status

8.1. Constituent Council responsibilities

All accredited programs and institutions are considered constituents of CEA and together comprise the Constituent Council. General information about the Constituent Council's role in governance is described in Section 3: Commission Governance, Administration, and Evaluation.

Each accredited site is represented within the Constituent Council by a primary contact. Complete information about the Constituent Council, including information about designation of the primary contact, is described in Section 19: Constituent Council Governing Rules.

For the site to maintain accredited status, the primary contact is responsible for fulfilling a number of obligations to CEA. Failure to meet these obligations during the period of accreditation may result in an accredited site being placed on warning, probation, or show cause, or having accreditation withdrawn following the due process described in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

8.2. Notifications to CEA

An accredited site must promptly notify CEA of the following events:

a. Change of primary contact

b. Change of program or institution name

   A change to the program or institution's name will be amended on the CEA Directory of Accredited Sites on the CEA website, with the name under which the site was originally accredited included in the listing for six months.

c. Closure of an accredited site

   Closure of an accredited program or institution will be accepted by the Commission and public and agency notifications will be made. The closure will be included in notifications of Commission decisions within 10 days following the closure effective date.

d. Closure of an auxiliary location

e. Intent to let the current term of accreditation expire at least one year prior to the end date of the site's current term of accreditation

f. Any substantive change as described in Section 9: Substantive Change

g. Any change in state licensure or exemption status

h. Any adverse action against the site by other accrediting agencies, or federal or state agencies. An accredited program must notify CEA of any such pending or final actions against the institution in which it resides.

i. Any change that may affect the site's compliance with CEA's eligibility requirements, including extended operational hiatus.

CEA may withdraw the eligibility of a site, withdraw accreditation of a site, or take other action based on such notification if compliance with CEA's policies is affected by the notification, and if necessary, after implementing the due process procedures described in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

8.3. Extended hiatus

An accredited site may maintain eligible status during periods of extended operational hiatus. In cases when an educational program is not on offer based on the published instructional calendar, approval of extended operational hiatus is required from CEA's executive director.

8.4. Adverse action notification

8.4.1. Requirements

Accredited institutions must promptly notify CEA of the following events. An accredited program must notify CEA of any pending or final actions listed against the institution in which it resides.

a. a pending or final action brought by a federal agency for non-compliance with the law.

b. a pending or final action brought by a state agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the state.

c. a pending or final decision by a recognized agency to deny accreditation or reaccreditation; suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation or reaccreditation; or to impose probation or an equivalent status.

8.4.2. Content

The site must provide CEA with the appropriate explanatory information and documentation, including but not limited to the following:

a. the name of the federal or state agency, the accrediting body, or licensing authority.

b. the type of action, the date of the action, and its underlying reasons, including copies of any official documents related to any such actions.

c. the anticipated or actual date of any final decisions related to the adverse action.

8.4.3. Process

All information will be reviewed by the Executive Committee, which may take one of several actions:

a. conclude, following review of the documentation, that the adverse action in question does not affect the accreditation of the site.

b. ask for additional information to be received within 15 working days.

c. require a site visit by staff or a review team within 30 working days.

Following receipt of additional information or completion of the site visit, the Executive Committee will review the status of the program or institution to determine if CEA should also take adverse action. If the Executive Committee concludes that CEA should also take adverse action, the matter will follow the procedures outlined in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

8.4.4. Reporting

Should the Executive Committee find that the adverse action does not affect the program or institution's ability to continue to meet the *CEA Standards*, CEA will notify the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education within 30 days of the CEA action and will provide a thorough and reasonable explanation, consistent with the *CEA Standards*, why the action of the other body does not preclude continued accreditation by CEA.

8.5. Reporting requirements

The Commission may issue reporting requirements as part of an accreditation decision, site visit, or as follow-up to substantive change, the annual report, the interim report, or special investigation. Reporting requirements specify a standards-related deficiency and a due date for reporting compliance. Accredited sites must respond to each reporting requirement by the due date in order to maintain accredited status. Failure to respond by the stated deadlines may result in advisory or adverse action, as described in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

8.6. Annual reporting

8.6.1. Annual report package

a. All accredited programs and institutions must submit annual reports and sustaining fees throughout the periods of both initial accreditation and reaccreditation. The annual report package comprises three components:

1. The annual review form, including confirmation of continued eligibility for CEA accreditation, data on enrollment and faculty, confirmation of regulatory compliance, and data on student achievement
2. Annual financial reports, including a Summary Report, a Balance Sheet, and a Revenues and Expenditures Statement
3. Sustaining fee payment forms and fees

b. The substantive change policy is distributed with the annual report package each year.

c. Annual reports are due in February of each year of accredited status, regardless of other dates which may be in place for reporting requirements:

    1. All sites are required to file sustaining fee payment forms and pay annual sustaining fees each year.

    2. Sites submitting an interim report the year of the annual report are not required to submit the annual review form.

    3. Certain sites are not required to submit the annual review form or the financial report form, including those that

        i. received an initial accreditation decision at the Fall Commission meeting

        ii. have site visits scheduled in the Fall cycle of the year preceding the year of the annual report or in the first two cycles of the year of the annual report deadline.

8.6.2. Staff review of annual report content

Annual report content is reviewed by CEA staff. The review establishes continued eligibility and regulatory compliance. Significant changes in student enrollment and numbers of faculty may prompt further investigation into faculty workload and the ability of the site to carry out its operations. A review of pass/fail rates may prompt further investigation into aspects of curriculum and assessment practices. Based on the findings, staff may accept an annual report as complete or recommend further consideration by the Standards Compliance Committee of the Commission.

Annual financial reports are reviewed by CEA's financial manager who may accept the report as complete or request further information. Any concerns that arise as a result of the financial review will be forwarded to the Standards Compliance Committee for additional review.

8.6.3. Standards Compliance Committee action on the annual report

If it appears that a program or institution may no longer meet eligibility requirements or any specific standards, the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) will determine follow-up actions. Eligibility matters will be referred to staff for review of compliance with CEA's eligibility requirements. Regarding standards matters, depending on the evidence and on which standards may be affected, the SCC may require a follow-up report or a special site visit. In cases where a substantive change has occurred but has not been reported, the site will be required to submit a substantive change report. The results of any further review will be reported to the Commission, which will determine what action to take, including whether an advisory action should be initiated.

8.6.4. CEA staff action on the annual report

CEA staff may place a program or institution on administrative warning for failure to submit a complete annual report package and pay sustaining fees by the deadline. As specified in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions, following a warning action and after consideration of the accredited site's response, the Commission will determine whether the issue for which the warning action was taken is resolved, or the issue is unresolved and the next step in the advisory action hierarchy will be taken. Advisory actions, which include warning, probation, and show cause actions, culminate in the adverse action of withdrawal of accreditation.

8.7. Interim reports for reaccredited sites

In the fifth year of the 10-year accreditation period or in the fourth year of nine-year accreditation, an interim report is due. Through the interim report, accredited sites verify that the program or institution continues to be eligible and continues to meet the *CEA Standards*. The interim report requires responses to each of the *CEA Standards* and is equivalent to a self-study. Detailed instructions for completing the interim report are sent to sites one year before the submission deadline. A fee is due for the interim report, payable prior to submission of the report upon invoicing by CEA. Failure to file an interim report or apply for an extension prior to the due date may result in an advisory action (see Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions). Extensions may be granted by CEA's executive director in cases where there are extenuating circumstances.

Interim reports are reviewed by the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC). The committee will make recommendations to the Commission, which may accept the report as complete, require additional reporting from the site, and/or require a special site visit within 90 days, at the expense of the site.

a. If either additional information from the site or a special site visit is required, the Commission will review the information at its next scheduled meeting following receipt of the additional information or submission of the site visit report.

b. The Commission may

    i. accept the interim report and grant a continuance of accreditation for the site's remaining term, with or without reporting requirements. If reporting requirements are issued, the site must come into compliance within one year.

    ii. initiate advisory action against the site for failure to comply with the standards. Advisory actions, which include warning, probation, and show cause actions, culminate in the adverse action of withdrawal of accreditation.

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9. Substantive Change

9.1. Substantive change

All accredited programs and institutions must promptly notify CEA in writing of any proposed substantive change in the program or institution since the most recent CEA accreditation review. This advance notice must be made prior to the change being implemented and must be reported following the Reporting Substantive Change document that each site receives with its letter of accreditation and with the annual report package. The report must include a thorough explanation of any proposed change and a list of affected standards with an explanation of how they will continue to be met following the change. The proposed change must be approved by the Commission prior to the change being included in the grant of accreditation. The types of substantive changes that must be reported prior to the change taking place include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. any change in ownership, legal status, or form of control, including a change in the relationship with departments within a host institution. (Request and submit the appropriate document, either “Application for continuance of accreditation following a change of control” for programs or “Application for continuance of accreditation following a change of ownership” for institutions)
b. the acquisition of any other institution, or program or location of another institution
c. the addition of a permanent location at a site at which an accredited institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before students have completed their program of study
d. any change in mission
e. any change in location or the addition of an auxiliary location
f. any change in the type of students served (academic to nonacademic, for example)
g. any change in Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) certification
h. the addition of courses that represent a significant departure, in terms of either content or method of delivery, from those offered during the most recent accreditation evaluation, including distance education
i. the addition of courses or programs at a level below or a level above those included in the program or institution’s current accreditation
j. a change in the means for determining student hours and/or a substantial increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours awarded for the successful completion of any program of study
k. a substantial increase or decrease in the length of the program
l. an increase or decrease of more than 50% in distance education enrollment or educational offerings
m. change in resources that would affect the program or institution’s ability to provide its services

Staff will conduct an initial review of substantive change reports and will prepare a written report and recommendation for consideration by the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC). The SCC reviews all staff reports and recommendations, including primary materials, when necessary, and reports compliance issues to the full Commission with a recommendation for follow-up action, if any.

The Commission's letter of approval of any substantive change will specify the date upon which a substantive change is included in the grant of accreditation. This date is the date the Commission completed review of the substantive change and voted to accept the changes; the effective date is not retroactive. In the case of a change in ownership, the effective date will be the date upon which the ownership changed if the decision to include the change in the grant of accreditation is made within 30 days of the change.

The Commission may take action to withdraw accreditation if any substantive change materially alters the program or institution so that it no longer falls within the scope of CEA accreditation or fails to comply with the *CEA Standards* following procedures specified in Section 12: Advisory and Adverse Actions.

9.2. Deep substantive change

If the substantive change is of such an extent that multiple standards will be affected, the staff report to the SCC may recommend further investigation. Such deep substantive change is characterized by a fully altered educational program as reflected in changes to Curriculum, Length and Structure of the Program of Study, and Student Achievement standards, and/or a fully altered administrative structure as reflected in changes to Administrative and Fiscal Capacity standards.

a. Additional investigation will include additional reports and documentation to establish the depth of change to the program or institution relative to when it was last accredited. The additional investigation may result in additional reporting requirements and/or a special site visit.

b. CEA staff is responsible for monitoring a site and presenting progress reports to the Standards Compliance Committee through the period of investigation. Should a site visit be required, the site must pay the fee for a special site visit and all direct expenses.

c. When the additional investigation reveals that the program or institution is substantially the same as when the accreditation decision was made but changes require further reporting, substantive change reporting requirements may be issued. Such substantive change reporting is subject to regular Standards Compliance Committee review.

d. When the additional investigation reveals that the program or institution is no longer substantially the same as it was when the accreditation decision was made, a new comprehensive evaluation will be required. A new comprehensive evaluation includes a regular self-study, full site visit, and new accreditation decision. Regular policies, procedures, and fees apply to these steps in the accreditation process.

9.3. Additional branch locations

9.3.1. Accreditation of additional branch locations

CEA-accredited programs and institutions (including multiple-site organizations) may apply to add additional locations. Such additional locations may be new locations, existing locations owned by the applicant site but which are not CEA-accredited, or acquired existing locations. The additional location may not claim accreditation until it has been independently accredited by CEA. To achieve accreditation, the additional location may apply to begin the accreditation process using one of two options:

a. An additional location that has been in operation for at least one year may apply for initial accreditation independently by submitting the initial eligibility application form and following the steps toward achieving accreditation as any site pursuing initial accreditation would, or

b. An accredited program or institution, or the administrative headquarters (if any) of a multisite organization with an accredited site may apply for accreditation of the additional branch by following the policy and procedures for application for an additional location outlined in this section.

Accredited programs and institutions may exercise only option “a” above if any of the following circumstances applies. The proposed additional branch

1. is outside the country in which the accredited program or institution is located
2. has been subject to an adverse action by another agency within one year of application
3. has been previously denied by CEA
4. has withdrawn from accreditation or allowed accreditation to expire within one year

9.3.2. Requirements for additional branch location applications

a. Programs or institutions must have at least a grant of four-year continued initial accreditation. Programs or institutions holding one-year initial accreditation are not eligible to apply to accredit an additional location until their status changes.

b. Programs or institutions holding one-year reaccreditation and with limited reporting requirements are eligible to apply for an additional location.

c. Programs or institutions that are on warning, probation, or show cause are not eligible to apply for an additional location.

d. If an independent language school, the site must provide evidence that the owning entity of the currently accredited school has at least 51% ownership of the new location.

e. An accredited program or institution may apply to add two additional locations within a year, following the same procedures. The application for additional locations beyond two within a year includes the additional requirements and review below and includes an additional fee.

i. The applicant program or institution must provide a business plan outlining how the planned growth of the organization will be carried out and financial statements documenting the organization's capacity to carry out the business plan.

ii. The business plan will be reviewed by CEA staff, and the financial statements will be reviewed by CEA's financial manager and, if necessary, an outside accounting firm. The applicant program or institution must pay the special review fee for additional locations.

iii. The executive director will review the findings and issue a determination to approve or reject the application for the addition of more than two locations within a year.

iv. Business plans and financial statements submitted as part of this special review are held confidential in CEA files. Only CEA staff and the outside accounting firm, if necessary, will have access to these documents.

CEA reserves the right to request additional information and to conduct a secondary review in cases where there is not clear evidence of compliance with standards, including those related to financial capacity and stability.

9.3.3. Process for additional branch location accreditation

a. Application

An accredited program or institution that seeks to apply for accreditation for an additional location must contact CEA staff to request the application for accreditation of an additional location. CEA communicates only with the accredited site and does not engage directly with third parties beyond providing information about the process that is available to the public. The application process includes a review of application materials by staff and a subcommittee of the Commission, a special site visit, a visit report, and an accreditation decision by the Commission. Through the application process, the applying site must demonstrate that it provides strong and effective administrative controls over the new site, that the educational program delivered or to be delivered is soundly designed, and that services to support students, including appropriate immigration counseling if applicable, are in place.

For a newly opened location, the site must provide evidence that the new location is fully prepared to begin operating as a branch and to provide instruction. If the new location is an already operating location or an acquisition, there must be evidence that the additional location is prepared to operate according to the *CEA Standards.*

To this end, the application must include the following materials:

1. evidence of eligibility to seek CEA accreditation
2. copies of any required legal documents (lease, mortgage, proof of ownership, articles of incorporation, state license if required, etc.)
3. the floor plan of the new facility and a materials/textbook list
4. an organizational chart for the new location, showing the chain of authority and the relationship to the already accredited program or institution
5. a description of the expected working relationship between the accredited site and the additional location and the lines of communication to be established
6. a list of existing faculty and staff, or staff expected to be hired, with job titles, required qualifications, and job descriptions
7. for an already existing location or an acquired location, the name of the primary designated school official (PDSO or DSO) and evidence that they meet SEVP requirements, if applicable. For a new location, the name of the designated person who will fill the position of PDSO or DSO, should accreditation and SEVP certification be granted
8. documentary evidence of administrative policies and procedures to be or being implemented
9. faculty and student handbooks specific to the new location
10. a current or proposed brochure, website, or other information to be provided to the public
11. a description of curricular programs, including a curriculum document for the English language program including course goals, course objectives, and student learning outcomes level by level
12. proposed or existing course schedule
13. a description of current or proposed student services
14. a statement of plans for development of the new location
15. financial statements that show adequate and available financial reserves to operate the additional location
16. fee for an application to seek accreditation of an additional location
17. signed and notarized statement (text provided by CEA) certifying that the new site is prepared to meet the *CEA Standards* and operate in accordance with CEA policies

b. Review

CEA staff process the application and may issue a recommendation for scheduling a special site visit, with any specific visit requirements, to a subcommittee of the Commission for consideration. If the application is not complete or there is not sufficient evidence that the program or institution is ready to operate as a branch,

the staff recommendation to the subcommittee of the Commission will indicate that the site visit should not be scheduled, and the site will be informed of any deficiencies.

c. Special site visit

Upon approval by the subcommittee, the special site visit will be scheduled, and may be conducted virtually. The special site visit is typically conducted within three months of approval by the subcommittee. The purpose of this special site visit is to verify that the instructional program and administrative policies and procedures, as evidenced in the application, are in place for the program or institution to begin operation as a branch and that there is evidence that the site is ready to meet the *CEA Standards*. The site must pay a special site visit fee.

d. Special site visit report and site response

Following the visit, the applicant will receive a copy of the special site visit report and has 10 working days to respond to the findings in the report.

e. Accreditation decision

The materials in the application, the visit report, and the site's response are reviewed by a subcommittee of the Commission, which makes a recommendation for accreditation to the Commission at its next scheduled meeting. The Commission may grant up to 20-months' accreditation, depending on the type of additional location (new, already existing, or acquired) and the timing of the decision; defer a decision; or deny accreditation to the additional location.

f. Maintaining accredited status

When accreditation is granted, the additional location will pay a sustaining fee as an additional branch of the already accredited site. Once accreditation is granted and the fee is paid, the branch may advertise its accreditation.

g. Continued initial accreditation of the additional branch location

Upon being granted initial accreditation of an additional branch location, the site must send a representative to the next scheduled accreditation workshop and propose a timeline for submitting the self-study report. The site must undergo a site visit at its physical location and be reviewed by the Commission for a continued accreditation decision prior to the end of the initial grant of accreditation.

h. Accreditation decision for continued initial accreditation of the additional branch location

Following the timeline in place, the site will be considered for continued accreditation to total five years from the time of the grant of initial accreditation. In cases where this timeline cannot be met, and with the approval of the CEA executive director, the accredited status in place at the time of the accreditation decision will continue until the next Commission meeting at which the site can be reviewed.

9.4. Change of control or ownership

Any change in the form of control of an accredited program or change of ownership of an accredited institution constitutes a substantive change. Such changes must be reported to CEA 30 days prior to the change taking place in order for the accreditation of the program or institution to continue under the new control or ownership. The reporting process is designed to ensure that throughout and following the change in control or ownership, the program or institution remains in compliance with the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions* in all standards areas.

For programs with a direct reporting line within the administration of a university or college, a change in control includes but is not limited to a change in

a. the organizational location of the accredited program
b. the reporting line between the accredited program and the university or college, including changes resulting from university or college partnership agreements.

For language institutions, a change in ownership includes but is not limited to a

a. change in controlling interest of the institution or of the organization than owns the institution
b. sale or acquisition of the institution
c. merger with another organization or institution
d. division of a school or a school's assets
e. change in legal status of the owning entity

Regardless of the particular organizational design, in all cases, the program or institution must describe its relationship to any entity that has authority over it and to which it reports, or with which it shares authority over any aspects of its instructional program, administration, or services.

9.4.1. Requirements for application for change of control or ownership

a. The program or institution must contact CEA staff to request the application for continuance of accreditation following a change of control (for programs) or change of ownership (for institutions).
b. The completed application must be submitted 30 days prior to the change of control or ownership taking place.
c. The application requires submission of the following items:
    1. documents showing names of individuals or legal entities that will own, have authority over, or exercise control of any aspects of the instructional program, administration, or services
    2. for institutions or for programs in universities or colleges that are affected by agreements with a third-party: contracts, agreements, or other legal documents, and state authorization documents, if any

3. for institutions: documents indicating approval by the state licensing agency, if any, or exemption letters
4. for programs in universities and colleges: documents indicating any changes in the reporting lines within the university or college
5. documents indicating any change in the name of the program or institution
6. organizational chart(s) showing the new governance structure(s) with reporting lines. Institutions must include owners, shareholders, members, partners, and administrators.
7. list of key staff with designated school official(s) identified and verification that the PDSO and DSO(s) meet SEVIS requirements for such officials
8. contact information for the person responsible for ensuring continued compliance with the *CEA Standards*
9. plans for development of the program or institution following the change
10. a statement to be signed by the new primary authority acknowledging familiarity with the *CEA Standards* and making a commitment to continue the site's compliance with the standards
11. a list of the *CEA Standards* that are likely to be affected by the change in control or ownership with a brief narrative description of how each standard was met prior to the change and how it will be met following the change
12. for institutions: the change of ownership fee stated on the CEA Fee Schedule

9.4.2. Review of application

Upon receipt, CEA staff will review the application.

a. If it is substantially complete, staff will issue a letter verifying continuance of accreditation of the previously accredited entity until the next available Commission meeting, at which the Commission will consider the application for action. The letter will specify any remaining items due along with a date of required submission.

b. Within 90 days after application for continuance of accreditation following a change of control or ownership, the new persons or owners with oversight responsibilities must submit two items:

    1. Following consultation with CEA staff to establish the extent of reporting necessary, a substantive change report based on the list of affected standards provided with the application. Such substantive changes are reported to the Standards Compliance Committee as required by the substantive change policy.

    2. A complete response, including required financial documents, to Administrative and Fiscal Standards 11 and 12 demonstrating that they continue to be met.

c. At its next scheduled meeting, the Commission will review the application for continuance of accreditation, any substantive change reports submitted, and the response and documents verifying continued compliance with AFC 11 and 12. The site will be informed in writing of the Commission's decision to approve the

continued accreditation, defer a decision pending receipt of additional information, or deny continued accreditation. The Commission may issue reporting requirements.

d. If the application is not substantially complete, staff will acknowledge the notification. However, verification of continuance of accreditation will not be issued until additional documentation is submitted so that the application is substantially complete and can be evaluated.

e. Depending on the time remaining in the site's current accredited status, the Commission may require a special follow-up site visit within 12 months following the approval of change of control or ownership. (See the fee schedule on the CEA website for a special site visit.) The Commission will state the documentation that must be submitted prior to the site visit. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, the following:

    1. a narrative report that affirms the mission of the program or language institution
    2. a list of courses offered, along with curriculum documents
    3. a list of faculty, with qualifications and teaching assignments
    4. a copy of any faculty, student, or administrative policy handbooks, with any changes noted since the change of ownership or control
    5. copies of promotional materials
    6. verification that student advising and other student services continue to be provided in compliance with the standards
    7. current financial statements and other documentation showing that Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standards 11 and 12 continue to be met.

f. Following any required visit, the Commission will use the site's report, the site visit report (if applicable), and the response by the site to determine whether to approve the continued accreditation, defer a decision pending receipt of additional information, or deny continued accreditation.

g. The new owners or persons with oversight responsibilities are responsible for any requirements of accreditation and are liable for all accreditation fees due either prior to or following the change of control or ownership.

9.4.3. Failure to file a timely application of change of control or ownership

If the complete application is not received 30 days prior to the change of control or ownership, the Executive Committee will review the application.

a. The Executive Committee will determine whether the application is complete and continuance of accreditation of the accredited entity under the changed control or ownership is warranted.

b. The continuance action will be sent to the Standards Compliance Committee for inclusion in the committee's report to the full Commission at the next Commission meeting.

c. The effective date upon which the change of ownership will be included in the institution's grant of accreditation will be the date upon which the ownership changed if the decision to include the change in the grant of accreditation is made within 30 days of the change.

d. If the Executive Committee determines that the application is not complete, it will initiate a review of the accreditation status of the program or institution to establish whether continued accreditation is warranted.

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10. Withdrawal from the Accreditation Process

10.1. Voluntary withdrawal by in-process sites prior to the site visit

Programs and institutions may voluntarily withdraw from seeking initial accreditation at any time prior to the accreditation decision. Applicable fees are lost. The site may re-engage with the process at any time; however, depending on the amount of time that has passed since withdrawal, the site may be required to re-establish eligibility, attend a workshop, or repeat other steps in the accreditation process.

10.2. Voluntary withdrawal after the site visit and before the Commission decision

An in-process site that withdraws from the accreditation process after the site visit has been conducted and the review team report has been provided to the site, but before the Commission decision, must consult with CEA staff regarding the requirements for re-engaging in the process. A special consultation or workshop and an updated self-study report will be required before the site will be permitted to undergo another site visit. The site may not undergo another site visit for at least one year from the time of the initial site visit.

10.3. CEA action to withdraw applicant from the process

CEA may withdraw active applicant status from in-process sites if

a. the site does not send a representative to the workshop within one year of approval of eligibility.
b. the site does not submit the plan for the self-study within six months of attendance at the workshop.
c. the self-study is not completed within 16 months of workshop attendance and an extension (of up to eight months) was not requested.

Depending on the amount of time that has passed since withdrawal of active status, the site may be required to reestablish eligibility, attend a workshop, or repeat other steps in the accreditation process.

10.4. Other withdrawal from the process

Sites engaged in the process for continued initial accreditation of an additional branch or for reaccreditation may withdraw from the process at any time. In such cases, policies regarding expiration of accreditation or voluntary withdrawal from accreditation apply, as stated in Section 7.6. Expiration of a grant of accreditation, voluntary withdrawal from accredited status, or closure.

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11. Special Site Visits

11.1. Types of special site visits

CEA may schedule a special site visit related to the following events

a. accreditation decisions, including as part of one-year or continued accreditation, deferral of an accreditation decision, or initial accreditation of an additional branch

b. compliance with reporting requirements, including as part of a substantive change or as part of the review of the interim report

c. an investigation or other part of a warning, probation, show cause, or withdrawal of accreditation action

d. investigation of a complaint or investigation of information which indicates that a site is out of compliance with *CEA Standards* or policies

e. any other event deemed by the Commission or executive director to warrant a special site visit.

11.2. Policies for scheduling special site visits

CEA's practice is to schedule site visits in cooperation with and at the convenience of the program or institution. Announced special site visits will be preceded by a letter to the site specifying the purpose(s) of the visit, policies underpinning the visit, procedures related to the visit and any subsequent reporting, logistical details, and any relevant fees.

11.3. Unannounced special site visits

CEA reserves the right to conduct an unannounced special site visit at the discretion of the executive director or the Commission, when deemed necessary, including to ensure ongoing compliance with CEA's standards or policies or to investigate information received from any source that may affect a site's accreditation status. Unannounced visits will be documented and the site will be required to respond to any findings.

11.4. Fees for special site visits

Fees for special site visits are stated on the published Fee Schedule.

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12. Advisory and Adverse Actions

12.1. Advisory actions

Upon evidence that an accredited program or institution appears to fail to maintain adequate compliance with *CEA Standards* or adhere to *CEA Policies and Procedures*, the Commission will take actions as follows (warning, probation, show cause) to ensure that the accredited site addresses the issue in a timely manner. In any advisory action, the site receives a written notice of the issue and is given an opportunity to respond before the Commission takes further action. The written notice will specify the timeline for the site's response and next Commission action(s).

12.1.1. Special site visit

For any advisory action, a special site visit, announced or unannounced, may be conducted.

12.1.2. Commission review

For any advisory action, the Commission will review the site's response to the action, following procedures stated in the *CEA Policies and Procedures* where relevant, and

a. if the issue is resolved, end the action
    i. with reporting requirements, or
    ii. without reporting requirements.

b. if the issue is not resolved,
    i. continue the current action step, with reporting requirements, or
    ii. proceed to the next action step.

12.2. Warning

A warning action may be taken when there is evidence that an accredited program or institution appears to fail to

1. maintain adequate compliance with *CEA Standards*
2. adhere to *CEA Policies and Procedures* regarding the obligations of a site in accreditation status, including failure to report substantive changes
3. respond by stated deadlines to any requirement issued by the Commission.

Evidence leading to a warning action may include, but is not limited to

1. the result of knowledge received through an anonymous complaint, information from commissioners or CEA staff, or any public means, including the U.S. government
2. the results of investigation of a complaint
3. the results of any investigation initiated by the executive director, as authorized by the Commission
4. the accredited site's inadequate response or failure to respond to reporting requirements issued by the Standards Compliance Committee by stated deadlines
5. inadequate reporting at the time of the interim report
6. other instances of noncompliance or failure to adhere to CEA policies.

A warning action, designated an administrative warning, may be issued by the executive director if an accredited program or institution

1. fails to respond to annual report requirements, including financial reporting, by stated deadlines
2. fails to pay annual sustaining fees by stated deadlines.

Following a warning action and after consideration of the accredited site's response, the Commission will determine whether

1. the issue for which the warning action was taken, including an administrative warning action, is resolved,
2. the issue for which the warning action was taken, including an administrative action, is not resolved and the warning action is continued, or
3. the issue is unresolved and a probation action will be taken.

12.3. Probation

A program or institution placed on probation continues in accredited status. However, probation is a serious status which endangers accreditation. A probation action requires a program or institution to respond by stated deadlines to the Commission's letter outlining the basis of the probation action.

1. During any period of probation, the program or institution loses its voting privileges in the Constituent Council.
2. The probation action is reported to state, federal, and other accrediting agencies, and to the public, per CEA policies stated in Section 16: Public Notification and Disclosure.

Following a probation action and after consideration of the accredited site's response, the Commission will determine whether

1. the issue for which the probation action was taken is resolved, in which case state, federal, and other agencies, and the public are so notified, or
2. the issue for which the probation action was taken, including an administrative action, is not resolved and the probation action is continued,
3. the issue is unresolved and a show cause action will be taken.

12.4. Show cause

A show cause action is the last action before accreditation may be withdrawn. The site continues in probation status and conditions of probation apply. A show cause action requires a program or institution to

1. respond by stated deadlines to the Commission's letter outlining the basis of the show cause action, and
2. explain why, with documentation, the Commission should not withdraw accreditation.

Following a show cause action and after consideration of the accredited site's response, the Commission will determine whether

1. the issue for which the show cause action was taken is resolved, in which case state, federal, and other agencies and the public are so notified,
2. the issue is unresolved, and a withdrawal of accreditation action will be taken, or
3. the issue is not fully resolved, and an extension for good cause is granted.

   An extension for good cause may be granted under the following conditions:

   a. The site has made significant progress and now is in adequate compliance. There are remaining aspects of the reporting requirement that must be monitored and finalized; these aspects are not of a number, depth, or nature to endanger adequate compliance.
   b. A remaining issue is a limited part of a standard, or one part of a standard for a limited number of standards.
   c. The nature of the standard involved requires that the site be given more time to collect and provide additional data or evidence of implementation and effectiveness of a procedure or plan, including those put in place in response to a reporting requirement or substantive change.
   d. The reporting requirement relates to pending Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) actions which have not been completed by the time of the reporting requirement due date through no fault of the site.
   e. Other conditions for which there is evidence of extenuating circumstances which affect the reporting timeline.

12.5. Adverse action: Withdrawal of accreditation

Withdrawal of accreditation is an adverse action which is the culmination of the site's failure to resolve the issues documented throughout the warning, probation, and show cause process, and when an extension for good cause has not been granted.

Withdrawal of accreditation

1. is reported to state, federal, and other accrediting agencies and to the public, per CEA policies stated in Section 16: Public Notification and Disclosure.
2. is appealable, per CEA policies stated in Section 13: Appeals.
3. is not final until an appeals process, if applicable, has concluded.

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13. Appeals

13.1. Right of appeal

A program or institution may appeal a decision that

a. denies eligibility for accreditation

b. denies accreditation for

1. initial accreditation or reaccreditation
2. four-year continued accreditation
3. nine-year continued reaccreditation
4. continued initial accreditation of an additional branch

c. withdraws accreditation

13.2. Appeal of denial of eligibility

A decision regarding the eligibility of an applicant is not an accreditation decision. Eligibility is not a form of preaccreditation and is not based on evidence of compliance with *CEA Standards*. It confirms only that an applicant program or institution and the educational programs it offers fall within CEA's scope and that other eligibility requirements as specified in the *CEA Policies and Procedures* are met.

The eligibility decision is made by CEA staff, based on the following documents of record:

1. The Application for Eligibility and attached documents submitted by the applicant
2. Additional documents provided by the applicant upon CEA staff request
3. Correspondence between CEA staff and the applicant site to clarify any application matters

The scope of appeal of denial of an application for eligibility is limited to specific grounds. It must be based on evidence that CEA misinterpreted factual information that was submitted by the program or institution in support of its application for eligibility.

13.3. Process for appeal of denial of eligibility

a. Within 15 days of the date of the letter denying eligibility, the applicant must inform the executive director in writing of the intent to appeal and the grounds for appeal. The appropriate deposit must be included.

b. Within 3 days, the executive director will confirm whether the applicant has grounds for appeal and will notify the applicant in writing.

c. If the applicant has grounds for appeal, within 15 days of confirmation by the executive director, the applicant will provide an appeal document with evidence that CEA misinterpreted factual information submitted with the applicant's application for eligibility.

d. Within 15 days of receipt of the appeal document(s), the voting members of the Executive Committee will review the following documents

    1. the original application for eligibility and attached documents

    2. any additional documents submitted by the applicant and the correspondence between the applicant and CEA prior to the decision to deny eligibility

    3. the applicant's appeal document(s)

e. The Executive Committee will make one of the following decisions.

    1. Uphold the denial of eligibility, in which case it will provide a written statement for doing so.

    2. Overturn the denial of eligibility, in which case it will provide the rationale in writing and direct the executive director to issue an eligibility letter to the applicant, permitting the applicant to begin the accreditation process.

The decision of the Executive Committee is final.

13.4. Appeal of decisions to deny or withdraw accreditation

13.4.1. Appealable decisions

The following accreditation decisions may be appealed:

a. Denial of initial accreditation or reaccreditation

b. Denial of four-year continued accreditation or nine-year continued reaccreditation

c. Denial of continued initial accreditation of an additional branch

d. Withdrawal of accreditation

A grant of one-year initial accreditation instead of five-year accreditation, or one-year reaccreditation instead of 10-year reaccreditation may not be appealed.

13.4.2. Scope of appeal

Appeals of these decisions are limited to the specific following grounds, which must be based on one or more of the following claims:

a. The Commission based its decision on factual information that was

   i. substantially incorrect
   ii. not related to the Commission's criteria for such decisions
   iii. not supported by the record
   iv. of insufficient weight to support the decision.

   If the grounds for the appeal is factual error, the appellant program or institution must demonstrate that it sought to correct these errors in its response to the review team report or that the error is otherwise plain on the face of the record.

b. The Commission, in making its decision, departed substantially from its procedures and protocols established in writing or by custom, including, but not limited to, those concerning fairness.

c. The Commission's decision was arbitrary and capricious.

d. Bias or other procedural error not on the face of the record affected the decision.

13.4.3. Appeals Board

a. Appointment

   When an appeal is submitted, the Commission chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will appoint an Appeals Board, which functions independently from the Commission. In determining the size and composition of the Appeals Board, the Executive Committee will take into consideration the nature of the appeal and the scope of activities of the program or institution making the appeal. In no case will any member of the Appeals Board have been involved in review of the appellant program or institution at any point leading to this or any other decision under appeal, or have any other conflict of interest with the appellant program or institution.

b. Composition

   The Appeals Board will comprise four members with the following characteristics:

   i. former commissioners, appointed as academics or administrators (if the appellant site is an institution) or as educators or practitioners (if the appellant site is a program) according to their roles either when they served on the Commission or at the time the Appeals Board is appointed.

   ii. at least one member will represent the type of program or institution making the appeal in addition to fulfilling requirements for one of the other criteria.

   iii. a public member, who may be but is not required to be a former commissioner.

   iv. optionally, no more than one CEA reviewer who has served successfully on several site visits and is not a former commissioner.

c. Conflict of Interest

Members of the Appeals Board will sign a CEA Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Agreement for Appeals Board members. In particular, no member of the Appeals Board hearing a particular appeal may have participated in the Commission's earlier decision or have any indirect interest, personal or professional, in the site that has filed the appeal of a Commission decision.

d. Purpose and authority

The Appeals Board functions as an independent, separate, and objective third-party body that is representative of the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages. The Commission does not participate in the appeal. The Appeals Board must follow the procedures stated throughout this policy in order to render a fair decision. The decision of the Appeals Board is final.

e. Appeals Board orientation

To fulfill their roles and responsibilities, members of the Appeals Board receive an orientation to the appeals process that includes:

i. a memo outlining the Appeals Board's obligations and the appeal procedure
ii. the history of the decision under appeal
iii. the timeline for the appeal at hand

f. Appeals Board meeting

The Appeals Board may meet in person or virtually.

13.4.4. Possible Appeals Board actions

The range of actions that the Appeals Board may take is limited to the following:

a.	Affirm	This action affirms the Commission decision.
b.	Amend	This action amends the Commission decision.
c.	Reverse	This action reverses the Commission decision.
d.	Remand	This action remands the case back to the Commission for further consideration based on specific issues identified by the Appeals Board, which the Commission must address in keeping with the decisions and instructions of the Appeals Board.

A decision to do other than affirm the decision of the Commission requires a determination by the Appeals Board that the Commission committed an error within the scope of appeal stated in these policies and that the Commission's decision would likely have been different absent the error.

13.5. Appeals procedures

a. All accreditation decisions of the Commission will be communicated to programs and institutions by email with delivery and read confirmation requested, or by other means for which receipt is subject to verification.

b. A program or institution is entitled to appeal any decision of the Commission listed in Section 13.1. Right of appeal by submitting a written notice of appeal to CEA, which must be received at the CEA office within 30 days of the receipt of the Commission decision and must include the required deposit. The notice must identify the decision being appealed and the grounds for the appeal.

c. Within 30 days of receiving the notice, the chair of the Commission will send the appellant a list of proposed Appeals Board members. Within 10 days of receiving the list, the appellant may object to individuals from the list upon the basis of conflict of interest. The chair of the Commission will determine if an actual conflict of interest exists and, if determined to exist, will remove that person from the list of those proposed. From the remaining names on the list, the chair will appoint members of the Board and inform the appellant. If the appellant does not report a conflict, the list is considered approved by the appellant after 10 days.

d. Once the Board is convened it will receive the full written record upon which the Commission based its decision, comprised of

    1. the site's self-study report, including responses to financial standards
    2. the review team report and the financial review report
    3. the site's response to the review team and financial reports
    4. in the case of a complaint, the record of the complaint
    5. the accreditation decision and related Commission findings
    6. in the case of withdrawal of accreditation, the record of the advisory and adverse actions leading to withdrawal

e. The appeal will be based entirely upon the written record, subject solely to the addition of documents related to claims of bias or other procedural error not on the face of the record and will not include any appearance by the subject program or institution, although the site will have the right to make a written submission.

f. The site will have and will be informed of the right to retain counsel, at its own expense, to assist it in preparing its submission to the Appeals Board. However, the role of counsel is limited, and other than through writing, counsel is prohibited from directly contacting CEA staff, commissioners, and members of the Appeals Board. The appellant will be provided with a copy of the CEA document "Role of Appellant's Counsel" which outlines the role in detail.

g. Within 30 days of filing its notice of appeal, the appellant must file with the Appeals Board a detailed appeals document, explaining the reasons that it believes the Commission's decision was in error. The explanation must be based upon the written record, as listed in Section 13.5.d above, which formed the basis of the Commission decision, except in the event that the grounds for appeal is a claim of bias or other procedural error not appearing on the face of the record that was before the Commission. In such case, the appellant must present in writing as part of the appeals document any additional factual materials in support of its contention.

h. Although formal rules of evidence will not apply, any statement offered to prove a fact necessary to the disposition of the appeal must be in the form of a statement verified by the source and containing their name, address, telephone number, and email address if relevant.

i. A program or institution against which an adverse action is based solely on failure to meet financial standards may seek review of additional significant financial information one time only if that information was not available prior to the final adverse action and bears materially on the financial deficiencies identified through the review process. Any determination by CEA upon review of the new financial information is not separately appealable.

j. The Appeals Board conducts its deliberations in executive session. There is no formal hearing or trial-type proceeding, no witnesses, and the rules of evidence are not applicable.

   i. However, the Appeals Board may in its sole discretion permit an informal oral statement to be made by the appellant virtually at a time established by the Appeals Board.

   ii. The appellant is expected to represent itself. However, the appellant's counsel may be permitted to participate, subject to the Appeals Board's sole discretion. Should the Appeals Board determine in its sole discretion that counsel's participation has exceeded its reasonable scope, the Appeals Board may at any time terminate counsel's participation.

k. The Appeals Board may seek additional information from the appellant, from the Commission, or from other knowledgeable parties, but it may not base its decision on a change in factual circumstances that has occurred subsequent to the Commission decision or on factual evidence not presented to the Commission when it was making the decision under appeal. If additional information is sought, the Appeals Board may extend the deadline for completion of the appeal for a reasonable time in order to permit the collection and consideration of the additional evidence.

l. Any decision must have the concurrence of the Appeals Board. In the event that a majority of the Appeals Board cannot agree on a particular resolution of the appeal, the decision of the Commission will be affirmed.

13.6. Resolution of appeals and notification of decisions

a. At a time in keeping with the timeline established for the appeal process, after its deliberations the Appeals Board will issue a written statement of its findings and instructions if any, to the Commission for final disposition.

   i. If the Board affirms the prior decision of the Commission, there is no further remedy available.

   ii. If the Board amends or reverses the decision, the Commission will take the specified action the next available Commission meeting.

   iii. If the Board remands the matter, the case will finally be disposed of when the Commission takes final action on remand.

b. The Appeals Board decision and the Commission's final action will be sent to the appellant program or institution by a means for which receipt is subject to verification.

c. Following the Commission's final action, CEA will publish the decision in conformity with the CEA policy on notifying sites and the public, and as required by law.

13.7. Effective date of action

The status of the appellant site at the time immediately prior to the Commission decision under appeal will remain in place from the date the appellant files the notice of appeal until the Appeals Board makes its final decision. The Appeals Board decision will then determine the status of the program or institution and will be effective and final on the date the Commission acts on the Appeals Board decision. The final decision may not be challenged in any other CEA forum.

13.8. Fees for appeals

a. Appeal of denial of eligibility

A deposit in the amount stated on the CEA Fee Schedule must be made at the time the intent to appeal is filed. The program or institution filing the appeal bears all direct costs involved in reviewing the appeal, including travel and subsistence, if any, of the Executive Committee voting members, as well as CEA counsel fees if participation by CEA's counsel is required in the appeal process.

b. Appeal of an accreditation decision

A deposit in the amount stated on the CEA Fee Schedule must be made at the time the intent to appeal is filed. The program or institution filing the appeal bears all direct costs involved in convening the Appeals Board, including travel and subsistence, if any, of the Appeals Board members, as well as CEA counsel fees if participation by CEA's counsel is required in the appeal process. CEA will invoice the site for any expenses of the appeal not covered by the deposit.

c. Retention and refunds

Actual expenses of an appeal, plus a 25% processing fee, will be deducted from the deposit, with any excess returned to the site. If the site withdraws its appeal at any time, CEA will retain 50% of the deposit or the amount needed to recover CEA expenses, whichever is greater.

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14. Fees

Each program or institution seeking accreditation or reaccreditation pays fees related to the process. In addition, each is assessed an annual sustaining fee, based on student weeks. Income from these fees allows CEA to carry out its mission, provide necessary activities and services, recover costs of doing business, and ensure CEA's financial stability. All CEA fees are reviewed annually by the Commission, may be revised as necessary, and if revised become effective on January 1 of the following year. The current CEA Fee Schedule is available on the CEA website. The fee schedule states each fee, when it is due, conditions of the fee, and whether it is refundable or non-refundable. Fee options for multisite programs and institutions are outlined on the Fee Schedule.

14.1. Initial fees

Programs and institutions seeking initial accreditation pay fees at the following times in the process of initial accreditation, in the amounts indicated on the current CEA Fee Schedule, available on the CEA website.

14.1.1. Eligibility fee

A program or institution seeking accreditation must submit a completed application for eligibility, documents showing evidence of its eligibility, and the eligibility application fee.

14.1.2. Accreditation workshop fee

Eligible programs and institutions are required to send at least one representative to an accreditation workshop. Participation requires payment of a fee for each representative at the time of registration. Special fees are charged for a customized accreditation workshop.

14.1.3. Plan for the self-study fee

The fee covers costs related to review of the plan for the self-study, consultations with CEA professional staff during the period of self-study, and review of the self-study report. The fee is due at the time the program or institution submits its plan for the self-study.

14.1.4. Site visit fees

The fee covers costs related to the site visit including those related to transportation, food, and lodging for the review team; the financial review; the CEA site visit representative; and CEA administrative costs. In addition to the set fee, a site with additional courses/programs undergoing review may pay a fee related to the extension of a visit or the appointment of an additional team member, if needed, to carry out the review. The site visit fee must be submitted according to CEA's timeline for scheduling site visits. The site visit fee must be paid in full prior to the site visit. CEA reserves the right to cancel or postpone the site visit if payment is not received.

Multiple locations in a multisite institution which are undergoing site visits at the same time have the option to pay the set fee per site or a set fee for the first site plus direct expenses for additional sites. The multisite fee policy options will be provided to affected sites at the accreditation workshop and at the time site visits are planned.

International sites pay a set fee plus direct expenses for the review team, including the CEA representative.

14.2. Sustaining fees

Sustaining fees must be paid by the stated deadlines. Failure to pay the sustaining fee by the deadline may result in a 10 percent late fee and possible administrative warning.

14.2.1 Initial sustaining fees

The program or institution pays a sustaining fee at the time initial accreditation is granted. For sites accredited at the spring or summer meetings of the Commission, the fee is based on the calculation of sustaining fees that would apply for the remainder of that calendar year and is due within 30 days of notification of the accreditation decision. Sites accredited at the December meeting pay sustaining fees for the next calendar year.

Additional branches granted initial accreditation at the spring or summer meeting pay a set fee, due within 30 days of notification of accreditation.

14.2.2. Annual sustaining fees

An accredited program or institution must pay an annual sustaining fee by the stated deadline to maintain its status. Sustaining fees include a base fee and a fee calculated on student weeks or the equivalent. General Information about annual sustaining fees is on the CEA Fee Schedule, and information about calculations, including for multisite institutions, is provided in the annual report package issued each year.

14.3. Reaccreditation fees

Programs and institutions undergoing reaccreditation pay the following fees in the amounts indicated on the CEA Fee Schedule, available on the CEA website.

14.3.1. Application fee

A reaccreditation fee is due at the time an accredited program submits its application for reaccreditation. The fee covers costs related to review of the site's eligibility and status to begin the reaccreditation process.

14.3.2. Accreditation workshop fee

Attendance at an accreditation workshop is required for reaccreditation. See Section 14.1. Initial fees for details.

14.3.3. Reaccreditation timeline and plan fee

Following the workshop, the site must submit the reaccreditation timeline and plan. The corresponding fee covers costs related to review of the timeline and plan, consultations with CEA professional staff during the period of self-study, and review of the self-study report.

14.3.4. Site visit fee

The site visit fee must be submitted according to CEA's timeline for scheduling site visits. The site visit fee must be paid in full prior to the site visit. CEA reserves the right to cancel or postpone the site visit if payment is not received. See Section 14.1. Initial fees for details.

14.3.5. Interim report fee

In the fifth year of a 10-year term of reaccreditation, programs and institutions submit an interim report. The corresponding fee covers costs related to review of the interim report.

14.4. Special site visit fees

CEA may, at times, call for a special site visit related to matters resulting from

- accreditation decisions or deferrals
- applications for additional branches
- substantive changes
- interim reports
- complaints
- advisory actions such as warning, probation, or show cause
- other matters

The executive director may also call for a site visit at any time it is deemed warranted. Fees for each type of special site visit are on the CEA Fee Schedule, available on the CEA website.

14.5. Late charges and refunds

Sustaining fees must be paid by the stated deadlines. A penalty for late submission applies. Nonpayment of fees by deadlines may result in an administrative warning, which can lead to withdrawal of accreditation. Fees are nonrefundable unless otherwise noted.

The workshop fee is fully refundable up to 30 days before the workshop. Workshop fees are not refunded after that time, but they may be applied toward the fee for participating in a future accreditation workshop.

In the event that the site cancels or postpones an already scheduled visit, CEA will retain 50% of the fee or the amount needed to recover CEA expenses, whichever is greater.

Refund policies for other fees are stated on the CEA Fee Schedule, available on the CEA website.

14.6. Other fees

Fees for international workshops and site visits are based on a flat fee plus direct expenses, as stated on the CEA Fee Schedule.

Fees for appeals are stated on the CEA Fee Schedule. The conditions of these fees, including refund policies, are stated in Section 13: Appeals.

Fees for applications for changes of ownership and for additional branches are stated on the CEA Fee Schedule. The conditions of these fees are stated in the relevant sections of these *CEA Policies and Procedures*. Contact CEA staff for details.

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15. Complaints

15.1. Complaints against accredited programs and institutions

Accredited programs and language institutions are expected to continue to meet the *CEA Standards* during the term of accreditation. A student, faculty or staff member, or any individual outside the program or institution who may have knowledge of an accredited program or institution's alleged failure to maintain the *CEA Standards* may file a complaint with CEA. In reviewing a complaint, CEA's policies intend to provide judicious review of the complainant's concern regarding compliance with the *CEA Standards* while ensuring due process for the site.

15.1.1. Notice requirements

Each accredited program or institution is required to post the *CEA Standards* in a public place accessible to all students, faculty, staff, and the public. In addition, CEA requires the site to post the procedures for filing a complaint, which are provided by CEA. The document includes information on why a complaint may be filed, who may file, how to file, and how complaints are adjudicated.

15.1.2. Failure to report substantive change

If an accredited program or institution is delinquent in reporting a substantive change, a complaint may be filed. Such complaints may be filed by anyone who believes the site has failed to report such a substantive change regardless of whether this change has resulted in noncompliance with the *CEA Standards*. Such complaints should explain how, in process or content, the program or institution has substantively changed since it was accredited, as well as the nature of any alleged failure to maintain the *CEA Standards* as a result of this change. Any available documents showing the changes should be included.

15.2. Investigation of complaints

15.2.1. Informal or undocumented information or complaints

Upon receipt of anonymous or undocumented information or complaint, the executive director will promptly provide a copy of the CEA complaints policy to the sender, if contact information is available. Depending on the nature of the information, the executive director may inform the site of the information and undertake investigation of the matter through a written information request to the site. If the basis of the information warrants, the executive director will inform the Executive Committee (EC), which will decide whether to advance the information to complaint status and to the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) for further action. The SCC will act within the policies stated in these *Policies and Procedures*. The executive director can initiate a special site visit based on information received by any means.

15.2.2. Formal complaints

A formal complaint must be written, must not be anonymous, must refer to a specific standard(s), and must document the nature of the noncompliance. If submitted by mail, the complainant's signature, address, and phone number must be submitted on a separate piece of paper. If submitted by secure electronic means, the complainant's name, address, and contact information must be available with the submission.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the executive director reviews the complaint in a timely manner in order to establish that it is actionable under the *CEA Policies and Procedures*, and specifically that it:

a. relates to compliance with *CEA Standards* or adherence to the *CEA Policies and Procedures*
b. is appropriately addressed to CEA rather than another agency
c. is not capricious, frivolous, or inappropriate for action by CEA
d. is not based on personal or other grievance or commercial disputes, but rather on an alleged violation of the *CEA Standards*
e. relates to activities that have occurred while the site has been accredited by CEA
f. relates to events or practices that are sufficiently recent to support investigation, and
g. is appropriately documented.

15.2.3. Review of formal complaints

The executive director may review the complaint with the chair in making a determination whether the complaint is actionable. The executive director will inform the complainant in writing of whether the complaint is actionable.

a. If the complaint is not actionable, the executive director will provide a written explanation to the complainant of the reasons.
b. If the complaint is actionable as a formal complaint, the following steps are taken:
    i. The executive director will send the original copy of the complaint, in which the sender is de-identified, to the contact person for the program or institution with a copy of the *CEA Policies and Procedures*, and invite a written response to be submitted within 30 days of receipt by the contact person.
    ii. Within 30 days after the program or institution receives the complaint, the reply, along with any accompanying documentation, must be received by CEA.
    iii. In a timely manner upon receipt of the response, a true copy of the complaint and the response will be forwarded to the Standards Compliance Committee (SCC).
    iv. The SCC will review the material and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee (EC) in a timely manner.
    v. Upon receipt of the recommendation from the SCC, the EC will act on the recommendation.

15.2.4. Possible Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) recommendations

a. The SCC may recommend any of the following actions to the Executive Committee (EC):

   i. Recommend dismissal of the complaint without reporting requirements if it determines that the program or institution remains in compliance with the *CEA Standards* and there has been no violation of the *Standards*.

   ii. Recommend dismissal of the complaint with reporting requirements and/or recommendations if it determines that the program or institution remains in adequate compliance with the *CEA Standards* but with minor standards-related deficiencies, which will be addressed in the reporting requirements and/or recommendations.

   iii. Recommend additional investigation if it determines that more information is required to verify that the program or institution is in compliance with the *CEA Standards.* The SCC will specify what matters require investigation and indicate the additional investigation recommended (e.g., conducting a site visit, requiring additional documentation, meeting with personnel, meeting with the complainant, or other action).

b. Upon receipt of the SCC's recommendation, the EC may take any of the following actions:

   i. Approve the recommendation for dismissal, with or without reporting requirements and/or recommendations. In this case, CEA will notify the program or institution and the complainant of the decision; the action is over.

   ii. Approve the recommendation for additional investigation.

   iii. If the EC does not approve the SCC's recommendation, it may order a different form of investigation, dismiss the action, or order other appropriate action.

15.2.5. Additional investigation of the complaint

If the Executive Committee (EC) approves a Standards Compliance Committee (SCC) recommendation for further investigation or orders a different form of investigation, it will allocate resources appropriate for the investigation. The executive director may conduct the investigation in any reasonable manner, including in-person or virtual interviews, announced or unannounced site visits, additional factual research, or other steps to adequately investigate the matter. The SCC may consult with legal counsel. The investigation will be carried out expeditiously.

a. The investigation will be conducted and the findings of the investigation as determined by the executive director will be provided to the SCC. The SCC will review the findings and prepare a written report of the results.

b. The written report of the investigation will be sent to the program or institution, which will be given an opportunity to respond to the written report and must respond within 30 days of receipt of the report.

c. Based on its review of the report of the investigation and the response from the program or institution, the SCC may recommend any of the following actions to the EC:

    i. Recommend dismissal of the complaint without reporting requirements if it determines that the program or institution remains in compliance with the *CEA Standards* and that there has been no violation of the Standards

    ii. Recommend dismissal of the complaint with reporting requirements and/or recommendations if it determines that the program or institution remains in adequate compliance with the *CEA Standards* but with minor standards-related deficiencies, which will be addressed in the reporting requirements and/or recommendations.

    iii. Recommend review by the full Commission for specific action.

d. Upon receipt of the SCC's recommendation following the additional investigation, the EC may take any of the following actions:

    i. Approve the recommendation for dismissal, with or without reporting requirements and/or recommendations. In this case, CEA will notify the program or institution and the complainant of the decision, in which case the action is considered to be complete.

    ii. If the SCC recommends a specific action, the EC will review and approve the recommendation for review by the full Commission.

        1. The review by the full Commission will be scheduled for the next regular meeting of the Commission.
        2. The full Commission may rely on the SCC and the prior investigation or may conduct a de novo review to consider the entire complaint record, including the original complaint, the response of the site, and any materials developed as a result of investigation, including the responses of the site.
        3. The full Commission will then vote on a specific action to be taken. Actions may include dismissal of the complaint with or without reporting requirements, or placing the site on warning with a time frame for taking specific corrective actions.
        4. If a warning is issued and the conditions are not met within the stated time frame, the site may be subject to probation, show cause, and withdrawal of accreditation.
        5. In the case of withdrawal of accreditation, a program or institution has the right to appeal, as described in Section 13: Appeals.

15.2.6. Time frame

Complaints may be filed at any time. CEA will investigate complaints according to the procedures outlined. The resolution of a complaint may take several months, depending on whether a site visit is required and when the complaint is filed in relation to the next scheduled Commission meeting.

Notice of the Commission's decision with regard to a complaint will be made to the program or institution in writing and in accordance with the rules regarding accreditation decisions.

15.3. Complaints against CEA

Formal complaints about CEA's performance in relation to its own procedures and policies may be forwarded to the executive director. Complaints must be in writing, relate to a specific policy or procedure, include appropriate documentation, and be signed by the complainant. Complaints may be filed at any time.

The CEA executive director will seek to resolve the matter with the complainant.

a. If a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved within a reasonable period of time, the executive director will forward the complaint to the voting members of the EC.
b. The chair, on behalf of the voting members of the EC, will investigate and respond to the complainant.
c. Should the complainant seek further redress, the record of the complaint, including the initial written complaint and any follow-up by the executive director or the voting members of the EC, will be forwarded to the full Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
d. The complainant will receive a response to the complaint within 30 working days following that meeting.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, CEA will provide contact information for the U.S. Department of Education's Accreditation Group. CEA maintains complete records of any complaints against itself, as well as their resolution. Records are available for inspection at the CEA office upon request.

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16. Public Notification and Disclosure

CEA keeps records of the review of each program and institution seeking accreditation. Records are retained according to CEA's records retention policy, which conforms to legal and business requirements. CEA's complete records retention policy, which includes a list of documents retained by CEA and specified timelines for each is available upon request from the CEA office.

16.1. Ownership of site materials

All materials produced by the program or institution at any point during the accreditation process, including, but not limited to, self-study reports, annual reports, interim reports, and responses to reporting requirements are considered to be the property of the site and will not be shared by CEA with any outside entity except as expressly approved by the site or as required by law, including but not limited to federal and state agency regulations, responding to subpoenas, inquiries, court orders, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Sites are free to share their CEA-related materials as they so determine.

16.2. Confidentiality

All commissioners, site reviewers, and CEA staff sign confidentiality agreements stating that any and all information and materials related to sites must be maintained in a confidential manner, maintained in adherence to CEA's records retention and destruction policies, and disclosed only as expressly directed by CEA and in fulfillment of CEA policies. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event information and materials related to sites are disclosed as required by law, such disclosed information and materials may not be deemed confidential.

16.3. Public records

16.3.1. Accreditation criteria

CEA makes publicly available on its website written materials describing each type of accreditation that it grants and the criteria and procedures it uses to determine whether to grant, reaffirm, reinstate, deny, restrict, revoke, or take any other action related to each type of accreditation.

16.3.2. Governance and employees

CEA lists the names and relevant employment affiliation of the members of the Commission, the executive director, and other staff on its website. CEA will provide academic and professional qualifications upon request.

16.3.3. Accredited sites

Accredited sites, along with the current period of accreditation for each, are listed on the CEA directory on the website.

16.4. Upcoming reviews and public comments

At least 30 days before the accreditation decision, CEA informs the public of the date of the next Commission meeting and provides a list of the programs and institutions which will be reviewed. In keeping with U.S. Department of Education regulations, public comments regarding programs and institutions coming up for review are solicited at this time, to be considered by the Commission as part of the review process.

16.5. Public notification of Commission decisions

No later than 30 working days following the accreditation decision, CEA publishes the results of the Commission's accreditation decisions to sites, the public, and appropriate agencies.

16.6. Notifications following grants of accreditation

CEA provides written notice of any grant of accreditation to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency (if any), appropriate accrediting agencies, the professional community, and the public no later than 30 working days following the decision.

16.7. Notifications following probation and adverse actions

Specific notification timelines apply in the following cases:

a. a decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate accreditation

b. a decision to place an accredited site on probation or show cause

c. a final decision to uphold a decision to deny following an appeal or the expiration of the time for filing of an appeal of actions for which there is a right of appeal

For these types of decisions,

1. no later than 30 working days after it reaches a decision and within one working day of notifying the program or institution, CEA provides written notice to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, the appropriate office at the Department of Homeland Security, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency (if any), accrediting agencies, and the public.
2. within seven working days of receipt, the program or institution must disclose the probation decision to current and prospective students.
3. CEA provides language which must be used by the site when announcing probation actions to current and prospective students. The announcement must be posted visibly on the program or institution's website, provided to current and prospective students, and shall remain posted until the probation action is vacated by CEA.

16.8. Additional notifications following final decisions to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate accreditation

Following a final decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate accreditation (See Section 13.6. Resolution of appeals and notification of decisions), CEA prepares a statement summarizing the reasons for the agency's final determination. This statement is sent to the site, which may make comments that respond to the reasons for the denial, withdrawal, suspension, or termination. The site's responsive comments conclude the exchange and will not constitute a basis for reconsideration of the decision.

No later than 60 days after the final decision, CEA's statement and the site's responsive comments will be forwarded to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, the appropriate office at the Department of Homeland Security, applicable licensing agencies, and to the public through posting on the CEA website. If no response is made, evidence that the affected program or institution has been offered the opportunity to comment will be provided in lieu of a response. CEA reserves the right to redact inflammatory language from the responsive comments before public posting.

16.9. Distance education headcount

CEA provides a report within 30 working days after being notified to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education for any accredited institutions with an increase in distance education learning headcount enrollment of more than 50%.

16.10. Other notifications

For the following decisions, CEA provides written notice within 10 working days to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, the Department of Homeland Security, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, and accrediting agencies.

a. a decision by a program or institution to withdraw voluntarily from accreditation

b. a decision by a program or institution to let its accreditation expire at the end of the period of accreditation

c. a decision by a program or institution to close

16.11. Reporting to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education

On its website, CEA will make continuously available to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) an updated list of accredited programs and institutions. CEA will provide the Secretary with any annual report CEA prepares. It will submit for Department review any proposed changes in CEA's policies, procedures, or accreditation standards that might alter its scope of recognition or compliance with the criteria for recognition. CEA will also provide such information at any time upon request by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

CEA does not accredit institutions that participate in Title IV Higher Education Act programs. However, if CEA has any reason to believe that an institution in which a CEA-accredited program resides is failing to meet its Title IV responsibilities or is engaged in fraud or abuse, CEA will inform the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. CEA will also respond to any request for information from the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education related to an institution's compliance with its Title IV responsibilities.

CEA will notify the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education within 30 days of CEA action as a result of adverse actions by other accrediting agencies and federal or state agencies as discussed in Section 8: Maintaining Accredited Status.

16.12. Reporting to other agencies

16.12.1. Accreditation status

CEA provides directory information about accredited programs and institutions to appropriate agencies upon request, including the name of the accredited program or institution, physical address, term of accreditation, date of next review and whether or not the program or institution is in good standing.

CEA does not share information about sites in the process of seeking accreditation, except as indicated in fraud reporting below.

16.12.2. Possible fraud/serious irregularities

CEA will submit to appropriate state, local and federal authorities, any information indicating that an accredited program or institution, or a program or institution that has applied to CEA for accreditation or is in the process of seeking accreditation, may be engaged in fraud and/or serious irregularities that would jeopardize its ability to achieve or maintain accreditation.

16.12.3. Accreditation status requests

Upon request, CEA makes available to federal agencies, and recognized accrediting and state approval agencies, information about the status of any program or institution and any adverse actions it has taken against an accredited program or institution.

16.13. Other public information

CEA's published materials, including the *CEA Policies and Procedures,* the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*, the current Fee Schedule, and a summary of each Commission meeting are available to the public on the CEA website.

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17. Site Reviewers

The role of site reviewers is to verify information in the self-study report, evaluate whether the program or institution appears to meet the *CEA Standards*, and prepare a review team report for the Commission. Reviewers are peer professionals from the field. They serve as unpaid volunteers. Reviewers are obligated to follow procedures that will enhance the nature and protect the integrity of the accreditation process. Reviewers must adhere to legal principles that protect CEA's interests.

17.1. Reviewer qualifications

CEA site reviewers are identified and selected on the basis of their professional experience and integrity. Site reviewers understand the function of English language programs and institutions within the broader context of postsecondary education. Specifically, site reviewers are

1. academically qualified, having earned graduate degrees in disciplines related to language instruction and educational administration
2. knowledgeable professionals who have gained the respect of their peers through their involvement in professional activities
3. experts who have one or more domains of expertise related to program or institution operations
4. experienced evaluators or analysts, having conducted self-studies, reviewed educational programs, or served with other accreditation programs
5. effective communicators who possess demonstrated skills in communication, team building and collaborative decision-making, and report writing
6. respectful professionals who demonstrate a capacity to act without bias, maintain confidentiality, and exercise balanced judgment

17.2. Solicitation and recruitment of reviewers

CEA publicizes a call for prospective reviewers in informational sessions held at various professional meetings and through notices on the CEA website and in TESOL, NAFSA, UCIEP, and EnglishUSA publications. In addition, anyone may nominate specific individuals who are then contacted by CEA staff and asked to apply to become site reviewers. Individuals may contact CEA directly for information about applying to serve as a site reviewer. Each potential reviewer is informed of eligibility requirements and the application process.

17.3. Reviewer selection

An ad hoc committee of two commissioners, appointed by the Commission chair, reviews the initial applications of prospective site reviewers. The Commission chair ensures that the committee has continuity and training from year to year. The members of the committee review applications and evaluate each applicant's qualifications. The committee's charge and operating procedures are outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

17.4. Reviewer training and appointment

Applicants deemed qualified are invited to attend a CEA reviewer training workshop, where they are further evaluated for appropriate skills, experience, and knowledge. Those then selected for the pool of qualified and trained reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Agreement and are considered for site visit assignments. Detailed information about training and assigning reviewers are maintained in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

17.5. Evaluation of site reviewers

Upon completion of the site visit, the site reviews the performance of reviewers, with additional focus on the team leader. Reviewers complete evaluations of each other, and the CEA site visit representative completes an evaluation of the reviewers and the site visit. Evaluations are written and submitted to CEA to be used in determining future slates of reviewers, training topics, and other reviewer management needs.

17.6. Ethical considerations

Reviewers have direct, hands-on contact with a site's materials self-study reports, program forms, and documents) and have face-to-face interaction with personnel and students at the site. Ethical issues, such as conflict of interest and confidentiality, and considerations related to communicating with their colleagues, handling confidential reports and materials, and performance during site visits apply to reviewers because of the nature of their work. To respect the confidentiality of the accreditation process and assure that this process will not be compromised, reviewers must agree that they will

1. ensure that trust is established and maintained at all times
2. respect the human dignity and legal rights of all individuals throughout the accreditation process
3. conduct a review that is thorough, accurate, objective; that applies the *CEA Standards*; and that adheres to all CEA policies and procedures
4. be sensitive and responsive to real and potential conflicts of interest and report such conflicts to CEA
5. refrain from publicly criticizing any individual participating in an accreditation review
6. avoid using involvement in the accreditation process for personal gain or aggrandizement

7. avoid revealing the name and location of a program or institution under review to anyone other than review team members or CEA
8. refrain from seeking counsel or discussing any observations or findings about a site with anyone other than members of the review team, CEA commissioners, or staff
9. secure all documents related to a particular site review, including, but not limited to, the self-study report and any materials related to the site review
10. return the self-study report and all other materials relating to a particular site visit to CEA staff or verify that all such materials have been destroyed

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18. Committees of the Commission

Standing committees of the Commission conduct business of the Commission as assigned. Additional standing committees may be formed. The Executive Committee may establish other committees, such as ad hoc or working committees, or subcommittees, to conduct activities related to specific tasks or charges. Procedures for standing committees are outlined in the *CEA Policies and Procedures*, and procedures for other types of committees are outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

18.1. Executive Committee (EC)

18.1.1. Charge

The Executive Committee

a. acts as necessary on behalf of the Commission between its regular meetings on all issues other than accreditation decisions

b. reviews the agenda for Commission meetings

c. reviews adverse actions against CEA-accredited institutions or against institutions in which CEA-accredited programs reside, reviews recommendations from the Standards Compliance Committee regarding formal complaints against accredited programs and institutions, and responds to complaints against CEA that cannot be resolved by staff

d. writes charges for subcommittees and ad hoc committees

e. ensures orientation for new members of the Commission

18.1.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: The Executive Committee comprises the chair, the chair-elect, the treasurer, and the secretary (the executive director, ex officio, without vote).

b. Qualifications: The chair-elect must have served as a commissioner for two years before being eligible to serve. The chair-elect becomes chair during the next year of service. The treasurer must have served at least one year on the Commission and have at least one year remaining on the Commission.

c. Election: The chair-elect and treasurer are elected by the Commission from among those commissioners eligible for each position. The election procedures are stated in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

d. Terms of Service: Each member, except for the secretary, serves in their position for one calendar year.

e. Vacancies: Vacancies are filled depending on the position that is vacated and the time remaining in the position in relation to the term of service. Procedures for filling vacancies are outlined in the Section 3: Commission Governance, Administration and Evaluation of the *CEA Policies and Procedures* and in the *Commission Procedural Manual.*

18.1.3. The chair

a. presides at meetings of the Commission and over the Executive Committee

b. appoints standing committee chairs and members, and assembles ad hoc committees, task forces, and advisory groups as necessary

c. presides over the Constituent Council

d. serves ex officio on all standing committees

e. acts as public spokesperson for CEA and represents CEA at official functions, as necessary

f. conducts the evaluation of the executive director

g. reports on behalf of the Executive Committee at each meeting of the Commission

h. reports on behalf of the Commission at each meeting of the Constituent Council

i. may assign any of these duties to the chair-elect

18.1.4. Duties of the members

a. The chair-elect

i. serves in the absence of the chair

ii. presides at meetings in the absence of the chair

iii. at the request of the chair, serves as the liaison to any standing committee, acts on behalf of CEA at official functions, serves as liaison to the Constituent Council, and performs other duties as requested by the chair, including serving ex officio on any Commission standing committee.

b. The treasurer

i. serves as chair of the Finance Committee

ii. ensures oversight of CEA's financial status through reports from the executive director

iii. conducts the Commission's review of CEA's Form 990

iv. with the executive director, presents the proposed annual budget to the Commission

c. The secretary

   i. in consultation with the chair, prepares an agenda for each Executive Committee meeting

   ii. keeps a written record of Executive Committee meetings

   iii. reports to the Commission as appropriate

18.1.5. Procedures for conducting business

a. The chair will conduct a meeting of the Executive Committee prior to each regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

b. The Executive Committee will communicate as needed between meetings of the Commission.

c. The chair will conduct a brief meeting following each meeting of the Commission.

18.1.6. Reports

a. The chair will report on behalf of the Executive Committee at each meeting of the Commission.

b. The chair will report on behalf of the Commission at each meeting of the Constituent Council.

18.2. Finance Committee (FC)

18.2.1. Charge

The Finance Committee

a. reviews the annual budget on a regular basis with the executive director
b. proposes and reviews proposed fiscal policies, including fees
c. ensures that CEA undergoes a regular external financial review or audit
d. ensures Commission review of CEA's Form 990
e. conducts other activities related to fiscal matters, as directed by the Commission chair

18.2.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: At least three members of the Commission serve on the Finance Committee. The Commission treasurer serves as chair of the committee. The executive director attends each Finance Committee meeting as staff liaison.
b. Qualifications: Any currently sitting commissioner may be appointed. Commissioners with financial expertise will be encouraged to serve.
c. Terms of service: All members serve a one-year term of service, beginning January 1 and ending December 31. Service may be renewed upon appointment of the Commission chair.
d. Appointments: The incoming Commission chair appoints all members of the Finance Committee except for the Finance Committee chair/treasurer.
e. Vacancies: Any vacancies are filled by appointment of the Commission chair from among the other commissioners. In the event that the position of treasurer is vacant and thus the Finance Committee does not have an individual filling the role of chair, the Commission chair shall appoint an acting Finance Committee chair, who will also serve as acting treasurer for the remainder of the term.

18.2.3. The Finance Committee chair or the chair's designee

a. organizes, plans, and conducts meetings of the Finance Committee
b. provides reports to and serves as a link to the Commission, the Executive Committee, and the executive director, as appropriate
c. with the executive director, presents the proposed annual budget to the Commission
d. reviews quarterly financial statements with the executive director
e. conducts Commission review of CEA's Form 990
f. reports annually to the Constituent Council

18.2.4. Duties of the members

a. review CEA's annual budget

b. review proposed fiscal policies

c. engage in other fiscal-related activities, as assigned by the Commission chair

18.2.5. Procedures for conducting business

a. The Finance Committee chair will develop an agenda for the Finance Committee meeting prior to each Commission meeting and will review the agenda with the Executive Committee.

b. The Finance Committee chair will conduct a meeting at each regularly scheduled Commission meeting and report on the meeting to the full Commission.

c. The Finance Committee will ensure development of the annual budget following procedures outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*. The executive director will provide the draft budget to the Finance Committee no later than two weeks before the fall meeting. The Finance Committee will review the draft budget with the executive director at the fall meeting, after which the Finance Committee chair and the executive director will present the budget to the Commission for discussion and approval.

18.2.6. Reports

a. The Finance Committee shall report, either in writing or through its chair, to the Commission on the Finance Committee's review of the annual budget.

b. The Commission may ask the Finance Committee to prepare other financial reports.

18.3. Nominating Committee (NC)

18.3.1. Charge

The Nominating Committee

a. solicits nominations for candidates to serve on the Commission through announcements to TESOL, NAFSA, EnglishUSA, UCIEP, the Constituent Council, and other organizations that may have a direct interest in CEA's work, and through personal contact

b. encourages individual nominations as needed

c. reviews nominations, determines candidates to advance to the slate, and prepares the annual slate

d. ensures that the annual slate results in a Commission profile that includes a range of types of program and institutions and a range of expertise and experience

e. contributes recommendations for public members to the Executive Committee for review and executive director follow-up

f. makes recommendations to the Commission chair when a vacancy occurs on the Commission, when there is more than one year remaining in the term

g. reviews nominating committee procedures annually and updates the procedures if necessary

18.3.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: Five members serve on the Nominating Committee, of which at least two must be former commissioners and at least one must be a sitting member of the Commission.

b. Qualifications: The Nominating Committee is comprised of sitting commissioners, former commissioners, and Constituent Council members from programs with 9- and 10-year reaccreditation.

c. Terms of service: All members serve a one-year term, beginning January 1 and ending December 31.

d. Appointments: The incoming Commission chair appoints all members of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee chair is appointed from among departing Commissioners, to include the departing Commission chair. One member is appointed from the sitting Commissioners. The Commission chair and the executive director identify the remaining members from among those who meet the qualifications.

e. Vacancies: Vacancies will be filled by appointment by the Commission chair from qualified candidates identified by the executive director.

18.3.3. The Nominating Committee chair or the chair's designee

a. ensures communication of Nominating Committee members through email and virtual meetings

b. convenes virtual meetings of the Nominating Committee

c. reviews the call for nominations after preparation by the executive director and ensures that nominations are widely solicited, including from TESOL, NAFSA, UCIEP, EnglishUSA, and other organizations and individuals with a direct interest in CEA's work

d. communicates with the Constituent Council to solicit nominations

e. ensures a process that results in a slate of qualified candidates that includes a range of perspectives, including ensuring consideration of Commission priorities established from year to year

f. assigns Nominating Committee members to interview applicants' references

g. arranges a discussion about applicants with other Nominating Committee members

h. confirms the qualifications of all nominees advanced to candidacy

i. submits the final slate of candidates to the executive director

j. submits written reports to the Commission chair

18.3.4. Duties of the members

a. solicit nominations

b. screen applicant materials

c. contact applicants' references as assigned by the chair

d. conduct applicant interviews

e. review and evaluate the applicants and rank them for each position

f. determine the final composition of the slate of candidates for seats on the Commission

g. recommend candidates for public member to the Nominating Committee to be submitted to the Executive Committee

h. make recommendations to the Commission chair when there is a vacant seat on the Commission and more than one year remains in the term of service.

18.3.5. Nominating Committee procedures

a. By March 1, the executive director will inform the Nominating Committee chair of the number of positions to be filled and the range of experience and expertise sought to ensure a balanced Commission profile.

b. By April 1, the call for nominations is posted on the CEA website and announced in appropriate venues.

c. From April 1 – July 1, the Nominating Committee encourages applications at appropriate venues and reviews and updates materials for screening and interviewing nominees.

d. By July 1, nominations and the candidates' supporting documents are due to CEA.

e. By August 15, Nominating Committee members screen and interview applicants, make reference checks, as assigned by the Nominating Committee chair.

f. By September 1, Nominating Committee members review and rank nominees, and select candidates to advance to the slate.

g. By September 1, the Nominating Committee chair submits the slate of candidates to the executive director.

h. By September 15, the executive director prepares the ballot and provides it to members of the Constituent Council.

i. By November 1, ballots must be submitted to CEA.

j. Any Nominating Committee recommendations and supporting documents for public members must be submitted by October 1 to the executive director.

18.3.6. Reports

a. The Nominating Committee chair submits a written report to the Commission chair for review at the Commission's third meeting of the year, including a summary of the nominating process for that year and any suggested revisions to the nominating procedures.

b. The executive director informs the Commission of election results.

18.4. Standards Compliance Committee (SCC)

18.4.1. Charge

The Standards Compliance Committee

a. reviews complaints against programs and institutions and makes recommendations to the Commission for dismissal, investigation, or specific action
b. reviews accreditation reporting requirements to determine continued compliance with the *CEA Standards* and makes recommendations to the Commission in the event that a program or institution appears to no longer meet a standard
c. reviews substantive change reports to determine if Commission action is warranted
d. reviews interim reports to determine continued compliance with the *CEA Standards* and makes recommendations to the Commission to accept the report, require additional information, or require a site visit
e. reviews the summary of annual reports and considers actions to take for any site that appears to require follow up
f. considers actions to take when annual financial reports, reviewed by CEA's financial manager, require follow-up action

18.4.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: A minimum of five members of the Commission serve on the Standards Compliance Committee, at least two of whom have served a minimum of one year on the Commission.
b. Qualifications: Any currently sitting commissioner may be appointed.
c. Terms of service: Members serve for one year, except for the chair, who is designated by the Commission chair from the previous year's Standards Compliance Committee and serves an additional year. Service as a member or as chair may be renewed upon appointment of the Commission chair.
d. Appointments: The Commission chair appoints all members.
e. Vacancies: Any vacancies are filled by the appointment of the Commission chair from among the other commissioners.

18.4.3. The Standards Compliance Committee chair or the chair's designee

a. convenes meetings of the Standards Compliance Committee
b. prepares the agenda, with support from the assigned staff liaison
c. prepares and presents reports on the business of the Standards Compliance Committee at each meeting of the Commission
d. presents written recommendations for action on any complaints to the Executive Committee, for subsequent review by the Commission
e. assembles and organizes the results of any investigation for standards compliance

18.4.4. Duties of the members

a. participate in reviewing complaints by or against programs and institutions

b. take part in discussions of complaints and decisions related to dismissal, investigation, or specific action

c. participate in, and organize and present the results of any investigation ordered by the Executive Committee

d. review reporting requirements for continued standards compliance

e. review substantive change reports to determine if Commission action is warranted

f. review interim reports and the annual report summary to determine follow-up action, if any

g. recommend advisory and adverse actions (warning, probation, show cause) to the Commission as necessary

18.4.5. Procedures for conducting business

a. The Standards Compliance Committee chair, with support from the assigned staff liaison, will develop an agenda prior to each regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

b. At each Standards Compliance Committee meeting, committee members will review, approve, or amend staff reviewer recommendation reports as follows:

   i. reporting requirements from accredited sites will be reviewed at each meeting of the Commission

   ii. substantive change reports will be reviewed at the first Commission meeting following their receipt

   iii. interim reports will be reviewed at the summer or fall meeting

   iv. the annual report summary and any individual annual reports requiring action will be reviewed at the spring or summer meeting

18.4.6. Reports

a. The Standards Compliance Committee chair will submit a written report on the committee's business to the Commission at each meeting for Commission vote to adopt.

b. The Standards Compliance Committee will present to the Commission, as appropriate, recommendations for action on any complaints and the results of any investigation for standards compliance.

18.5. Standards Review Committee (SRC)

18.5.1. Charge

The Standards Review Committee

a. plans and carries out means to assure the validity, clarity, and reliable application of the *CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*
b. reviews the *CEA Standards* either in part or as a whole, according to procedures described in the *CEA Policies and Procedures* and in accordance with USDE regulations
c. brings to the full Commission proposals from the Constituent Council for revision of the *CEA Standards* according to the procedure specified in the *CEA Policies and Procedures*
d. recommends revision of the *CEA Standards* to the full Commission as appropriate

18.5.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: Up to five members serve on the Standards Review Committee, at least two of whom have served a minimum of one year on the Commission. The chair is a member in at least their second year of service on the Standards Review Committee.
b. Qualifications: Any currently sitting commissioner may be appointed.
c. Terms of service: Members serve for one year, except for the chair, who is designated by the Commission chair from the previous year's Standards Review Committee and serves an additional year. Service as a member or as chair may be renewed upon appointment of the Commission chair.
d. Appointments: The Commission chair appoints members of the Standards Review Committee.
e. Vacancies: Any vacancies are filled by the appointment of the Commission chair from among the other commissioners.

18.5.3. The SRC chair or the chair's designee

a. convenes meetings of the Standards Review Committee
b. prepares the agenda, with support from the assigned staff liaison
c. ensures that the Standards Review Committee is following standards review polices as stated in Section 2.2. Review and revision of *CEA Standards* and collects and reviews data as required by policy
d. reports to the full Commission on issues of validity and clarity that arise in implementation of the standards
e. prepares and presents reports to the full Commission for a vote on proposed *CEA Standards* revisions
f. reports at each Commission meeting on the business of the Standards Review Committee

18.5.4. The members

a. attend Standards Review Committee meetings

b. participate in standards review activities as assigned by the chair

c. take part in discussions concerning the validity and clarity of the standards

18.5.5. Procedures for conducting business

a. The Standards Review Committee meets at each regularly scheduled Commission meeting.

b. The Standards Review Committee chair, with support from the assigned staff liaison, will establish an agenda for the committee meeting in advance through review of open projects and with discussion with the committee members.

c. The chair collects and disseminates information and communicates with other members by email and scheduled virtual meetings throughout the year.

d. Procedures for the review and revision of the *CEA Standards* are included in Section 2.2. Review and revision of *CEA Standards.*

e. Specific Standards Review Committee tasks are detailed in documents prepared by the assigned staff liaison. Such documents are updated annually.

f. The Standards Review Committee chair coordinates with the assigned staff liaison regarding USDE requirements that may affect the Standards Review Committee agenda.

18.5.6. Reports

a. The chair of the Standards Review Committee will submit a report on the business of the Standards Review Committee in writing to the Commission at each Commission meeting.

b. The Standards Review Committee will submit any research reports on validity and clarity of the *CEA Standards* in any year in which such information is gathered.

c. The Standards Review Committee will propose revisions to the *CEA Standards*, with rationales and evidence of public comment if applicable, to the Commission for a vote for possible adoption.

d. The Standards Review Committee will bring to the Commission proposals from the Constituent Council and from the public on proposed changes to the *CEA Standards* in keeping with procedures outlined in Section 2.2. Review and revision of *CEA Standards.*

18.6. Policies and Procedures Committee

18.6.1. Charge

The Policies and Procedures Committee

a. reviews proposals for amendments to the *CEA Policies and Procedures*

b. prepares recommendations and drafts amended language for consideration by the Executive Committee, followed by Commission review and adoption, as stated in the *CEA Policies and Procedures*

c. reviews the full *CEA Policies and Procedures* to ensure that it is internally consistent, aligns with U.S. Department of Education (USDE) requirements where necessary, and is up-to-date.

18.6.2. Membership

a. Size and composition: At least three members serve on the Policies and Procedures Committee. The executive director serves on the committee, ex officio.

b. Qualifications: Committee members must be former Commissioners who have served at least three years on the Commission.

c. Terms of service: Members serve for one year. Service may be renewed upon appointment of the Commission chair.

d. Appointments: The Commission chair appoints members of the Policies and Procedures Committee.

e. Vacancies: Any vacancies are filled by the appointment of the Commission chair from among other former qualified commissioners.

18.6.3. The Committee

a. convenes virtually or in person, as needed, to review proposed policies and procedures

b. conducts a review of the full *CEA Policies and Procedures*

c. consults with the executive director to ensure that recommended changes align with USDE requirements, and to ensure that legal counsel reviews recommendations if needed

d. at least two weeks before the Commission meeting at which the recommendations may be considered, provides recommendations to the Commission chair, for review by the Executive Committee.

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19. Constituent Council Governing Rules

Accredited programs and institutions are considered constituents of CEA. Each single site or each branch within a multiple-site institution becomes a member of the CEA Constituent Council. A program or institution that is placed on probation or under show cause loses voting privileges until good standing is restored but continues membership in the Constituent Council. A program or institution that ceases to be accredited by CEA is automatically removed from membership in the Constituent Council.

19.1. Purpose

The Constituent Council plays an important role in the governance of CEA. Since accreditation is a process of voluntary peer review, it is incumbent upon accredited sites to participate in the governance of the accrediting body. The purpose of the Constituent Council is to

1. nominate individuals employed by an accredited program or institution for consideration by the Nominating Committee to be elected to the Commission
2. elect nonpublic members of the Commission
3. make recommendations to the Commission regarding revisions to the *CEA Standards* and the *CEA Policies and Procedures*

19.2. Representation

Each constituent program or institution must have one primary contact to maintain communication with CEA and serve as the representative to the Constituent Council. The primary contact attends meetings of the Constituent Council unless another person from the accredited site is appointed in any given year. Appointment of a designee must be reported to the CEA office no later than 15 days prior to a meeting.

As a condition of accreditation, primary contacts must ensure that their accredited programs or institutions

a. post the *CEA Standards* in a public place accessible to all students, faculty, staff, and the public, along with information about how complaints may be filed with CEA
b. maintain compliance with the *CEA Standards*
c. adhere to Commission policies and procedures
d. accurately display accredited status per the CEA Logo Guidelines and Terms of Use
e. amend and adapt their programs as government rules and regulations change
f. submit an annual report package and pay sustaining fees in a timely manner

g. submit a report responding to applicable reporting requirements

h. promptly and thoroughly report any modifications that may affect the program's or institution's eligibility for accreditation

i. promptly and thoroughly report substantive changes as cited in Section 9: Substantive Change, including any changes that substantially alter the program's or institution's ability to continue to meet any of the *CEA Standards*

j. take the necessary steps to secure reaccreditation before the end of their current term of accreditation

19.3. Role in nominations and elections

The CEA Nominating Committee will issue a call for nominations each year. The call, which is submitted to members of the Constituent Council and other associations interested in CEA's work, will include the responsibilities of commissioners, the number of positions to be filled, the required qualifications of nominees, documents required from nominees, and the deadline for submission. Constituent Council members are encouraged to make nominations of individuals employed by accredited sites.

The Nominating Committee will determine the slate from the list of nominees. Ballots will be distributed to Constituent Council members who are the primary contacts of accredited member programs and institutions in good standing. Members will vote on an unopposed slate.

19.4. Annual meeting

A meeting of the Constituent Council will be held annually at a date and place to be determined by the Commission. The meeting may be held virtually. The Commission will notify members at least 30 days in advance of the date, location, time of the meeting, and any business pending on the agenda.

19.4.1. Purpose

The primary purpose of the Annual Meeting is to report the business of the Commission since the last Annual Meeting. The meeting includes a report by the Commission chair, a management report by the executive director, a report on CEA finances by the treasurer, and other reports on the activities and affairs of the Commission. Meetings may combine these business purposes with additional educational or informational sessions.

19.4.2. Representation

The primary contact attends meetings of the Constituent Council; however, another representative from the accredited program or language institution may attend the meetings in their absence. The primary contact, or designated representative, of each accredited program or institution has voting rights at a meeting of the Constituent Council. Other guests may be invited to attend the Annual Meeting, but only the primary contact or designee represents the program or institution and has voting rights.

19.4.3. Governance

The chair of the Commission presides over the Constituent Council. The chair-elect may be assigned this task at the will of the chair. The secretary of the Commission will record the meeting. A record of the meeting will be sent to members and commissioners.

19.4.4. Voting

Should any matter require a vote of the members, CEA's bylaws pertain. The presence of 25% of members constitutes a quorum, a majority of votes carries any action, and proxy voting is not permitted.

19.4.5. New business

Primary contacts may submit recommendations for business to be conducted at the Annual Meeting. Proposed amendments to the *CEA Standards* must be submitted to the secretary in writing, for referral to the Standards Review Committee, 90 days before the Annual Meeting in order to be considered for inclusion as new business. Other new business must be submitted to the secretary in writing 60 days before the Annual Meeting in order to be considered for inclusion in the agenda. Any proposed agenda items that relate to suggested changes in the *CEA Standards* or in the *Policies and Procedures* must be discussed at the meeting and following a vote of approval by a majority of representatives with voting rights present, will be forwarded to the Commission for consideration.

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20. Bylaws of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation

ARTICLE I

1. Name. The name of the organization is the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (hereinafter the "Commission" or CEA), a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of Virginia.

2. Location. The principal office shall be within or without the state of Virginia, as determined by the Commission.

3. Nature. The Commission is a nongovernmental, voluntary, nonprofit, and non-stock corporation.

4. Purpose. The purpose of the Commission is to affirm quality education through the development of standards and the accreditation of English language programs and institutions.

ARTICLE II

1. Members. Accredited English language programs and institutions are considered constituents of the Commission and voting members of the Constituent Council.

2. Annual Meeting. A meeting of the Constituent Council is held annually at a time and place determined by the Commission. Notice of the meeting, specifying the business to be conducted, shall be provided to constituents at least thirty days in advance of the meeting. The presence of 25% of the members constitutes a quorum. A majority of votes carries any action, except where provided otherwise by law or by these Bylaws. Proxy voting is not permitted.

3. Special Meetings. The Chair of the Commission may call other special meetings of the Constituent Council. The rules for such special meetings are the same as provided for annual meetings in this Article II.

ARTICLE III

1. Commission. There shall be thirteen members of the Commission. Eleven are elected by the Constituent Council for three-year terms. Two other "public" members are appointed by the Commission.

2. Authority. The Commission provides leadership, determines policies, and maintains CEA and its programs. The Commission delegates to the Executive Committee, comprising the Chair, Chair-elect, Treasurer, and Secretary, responsibility for leadership of CEA when the Commission is not in session, consistent with any policies established by the Commission. The day-to-day oversight of the activities and programs of CEA shall be administered by the executive director.

3. Meetings. The Chair shall call regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission. Notice of such meetings shall be provided to commissioners at least thirty days in advance of the meeting. The chair may call special meetings with the approval of a majority of the commissioners. At either a regular or a special meeting, the presence of a majority of commissioners constitutes a quorum. A majority of votes carries any action, except where provided otherwise by law or by these Bylaws.

4. Removal. A commissioner may be removed for cause or for nonperformance by a two-thirds vote of the Constituent Council. The Commission fills any vacancies on the Commission, according to guidelines prescribed in the *CEA Policies and Procedures.*

ARTICLE IV

1. Officers. The elected officers of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation are the Chair, the Chair-elect, and the Treasurer, who also serves as chair of the Finance Committee. The executive director serves ex officio as the Secretary of the corporation and as a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee.

2. Elections and Term of Office. All officers, except the Secretary, are elected by the commissioners for one-year terms. The Secretary, as a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee, shall not participate in the election of officers.

3. Duties. The elected officers perform those duties that are usual to their positions and that are assigned to them by the Commission. In addition, the Chair, as the chief elected officer, presides at meetings of the Commission, the Executive Committee, and the Constituent Council. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all committees. The chair-elect acts in place of the Chair as directed by the Chair or when the Chair is not available. The Treasurer is the financial officer with responsibility for oversight of revenues and expenditures, and reporting on the financial affairs of CEA to the Commission and the Executive Committee. The Secretary is the recording officer of CEA, responsible for minutes, records, notices, etc.

4. Vacancies. If a vacancy occurs among the elected officers for any reason, the Commission fills that portion of the term not yet expired.

5. Removal: A commissioner may be removed for cause or for non-performance by a two-thirds vote of the Commission. The Commission fills any vacancies on the Commission, according to guidelines prescribed in the *CEA Policies and Procedures*.

ARTICLE V

1. Standing Committees, ad hoc committees, and task forces. The Standing committees may include the Executive Committee, the Standards Review Committee, the Standards Compliance Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Nominating Committee. Individuals shall be appointed to various committees according to the *CEA Policies and Procedures.*

2. Employees. The Commission is responsible for hiring the executive director. The executive director may engage employees or outside consultants as necessary.

3. Amendments. Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any meeting of the Commission by a two-thirds vote, where notice of the proposed amendments was provided to Commissioners at least 30 calendar days in advance of the meeting.

4. Indemnification. Commissioners, officers, and other authorized employees or agents of CEA will be indemnified against claims for liability arising in connection with their positions or activities on behalf of CEA to the full extent permitted by law.

5. The fiscal year for CEA is the calendar year.

Established 2000
Amended December 2003
Amended December 2007
Review April 2018, no amendments
Last review August 2025, no amendments

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21. Amendments to the *CEA Policies and Procedures*

21.1. Maintenance

The *CEA Policies and Procedures* will be maintained in compliance with U.S. Department of Education (USDE) regulations regarding accrediting institutions and the requirements of the Department of Homeland Security for institutions issuing the Form I-20. Any proposed revisions that affect Department criteria for recognition will be submitted to the Department for review prior to adoption.

21.2. Review

The Policies and Procedures Committee will review the document as needed throughout the year, with a formal review taking place annually prior to the December Commission meeting. Non-substantive changes such as those which improve clarity will be made by the Policies and Procedures Committee and reported to the Commission chair, who will review and approve them. Should the chair determine that the changes are in fact substantive, the chair will require that the changes be addressed as substantive changes as outlined in relevant procedures.

21.3. Amendments

Committee chairs, the Executive Committee, the Constituent Council, and the executive director may propose amendments to the *CEA Policies and Procedures.* Proposed amendments for substantive changes are submitted to the Policies and Procedures Committee for initial review. The committee prepares a recommendation for adoption of the changes, to be presented to the Commission chair for review by the Executive Committee.

21.4. Approval

The Commission chair and executive director present recommended amendments for discussion at the next meeting of the Commission. The Commission must approve any substantive change to the document.

21.5. Distribution

The *CEA Policies and Procedures* are available to the public on the CEA website. Substantive changes will be announced to members of the Constituent Council, programs and institutions in the process of seeking accreditation, and reviewers. The revised document will be posted to the CEA website for public reference within 30 days of approval of the change.

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22. Plagiarism

22.1. Types of plagiarism

Any language or document submitted to CEA which is taken from another source and is not properly attributed to that source will be considered as an act of plagiarism. Any application, report, or other submission to CEA that contains plagiarized content will not be processed by CEA.

22.2. Process

The site will be informed of the alleged plagiarism and be asked to respond.

22.3. Consequences of plagiarism

Depending on the extent of the alleged plagiarism and the nature of the response,

a. The site will be absolved of plagiarism, and the application, report, or other submitted documents processed.

b. If alleged plagiarism is verified, and the site is

   i. an applicant for eligibility, the site will be denied eligibility until the plagiarized content is removed and replaced by accurate original content;

   ii. in process, the site will be suspended from the process until the plagiarized content is removed and replaced by accurate original content;

   iii. accredited, the site will be subject to advisory action.