CHEA Standards and Procedures for Recognition

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Approval supersedes prior Standards, Policies and Procedures
CHEA MISSION STATEMENT

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) serves its members, students, and society through advocacy for the value and independence of accreditation, recognition of accrediting organizations, and commitment to quality in higher education.

CHEA DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a nonprofit service organization, cultivates and supports an environment that demonstrates appreciation for and values the diversity of its institutions of higher education, accreditors, board and staff, and all who are served by these groups. We believe that life experiences and heritages of these groups contribute to the richness of CHEA’s policies, procedures, and daily operations.

CHEA’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness guides its mission and its support for equitable treatment for institutions of higher education, families, and students.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are rooted in the cultural identity and lexicon of a civil society. However, in 2020, these words became aggressively polarizing among groups in America. Along with polarization, Americans either became fearful of their neighbors, separated from those who were different, or moved to a new awakening that there is much work to be done to reaffirm that America is indeed one nation, with liberty and justice for all.

CHEA believes in justice for all and supports the rights of every person to pursue their course of happiness in a just society. Colleges and universities are the bedrocks of change and foster free thinking, individualism, and freedom of just the simple right to “be.”

CHEA’s commitment to higher education, families, students, and other communities is grounded in the assurance of academic quality. We believe that the rich values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are inextricably linked to quality assurance in higher education. Additionally, CHEA affirms that diversity, equity, and inclusion contribute to student success and that student success contributes to a better, healthier, and more enlightened, progressive society.
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The references to the *CHEA Standards and Procedures for Recognition* and the Recognition Standards or Standards are used interchangeably and refer to the same document.

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PREFACE

This Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) document, *CHEA Standards and Procedures for Recognition* (Standards) provides guidance to accrediting organizations interested in pursuing CHEA recognition. The Standards, Procedures, and Key Terms specific to the CHEA recognition process are included in this document.

The CHEA recognition process is a rigorous examination of the aspiring accrediting organization or reexamination of an accrediting organization seeking continued recognition.

ABOUT CHEA

CHEA was formed in 1996 as an organization committed to enhancing higher education through strengthened accreditation. Accreditation is a process of external quality review that is created and used by higher education that includes rigorous evaluation of institutions and programs for quality assurance and improvement. Recognition by CHEA conveys that the accrediting organization meets the CHEA recognition standards.

Accrediting organizations are entities structured to review and evaluate institutions or programs for the purpose of rendering accreditation judgments. CHEA recognizes non-governmental regional, national career- or faith-related, and programmatic accrediting organizations. Recognition by CHEA affirms that the standards, structures, and practices of accrediting organizations promote ethical practices and integrity in decision-making, academic quality, improvement, accountability and needed flexibility and innovation in the institutions or programs that are accredited.

CHEA serves members, students, and society through advocacy for the value and independence of accreditation, recognition of accrediting organizations, and commitment to quality in higher education. CHEA affirms that diversity, equity, and inclusion are inextricably connected to quality assurance.

CHEA recognition is separate and independent from that of the U.S. Department of Education.
RECOGNITION OVERVIEW

PURPOSES

Recognition signifies to the higher education community and the public that the accrediting organization:

A. serves institutions and programs with the highest regard for integrity of practice and ethical behavior and demonstrates a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
B. promotes academic quality and continuous improvement;
C. serves higher education, students, and the public by communicating its accreditation decisions;
D. makes determinations about academic quality in higher education;
E. implements and enforces its standards and policies; and
F. acknowledges and affirms the institution and program mission and purposes.

SCOPE OF RECOGNITION

The accrediting organization’s scope of recognition statement is used to inform the higher education community and the public of its CHEA-recognized accreditation activities. The scope statement must include the following information:

A. types of institutions or programs;
B. degree levels—CHEA recognition is available to accrediting organizations only if a majority of institutions or programs the organization accredits grant degrees at the associate degree level or higher; and
C. geographic boundaries of accreditation activity.

Only information related to degree-granting accreditation activities are included in the recognition scope statement. Non-degree accreditation activities should not be included in the recognition scope statement.

TERM OF RECOGNITION

The maximum term of CHEA recognition is seven years.

A CHEA-recognized accrediting organization undergoes a recognition review every seven years or such other period as designated by the Board.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RECOGNITION

The accrediting organization, regardless of whether it is seeking initial or continued recognition, must meet all CHEA standards and requirements and prescribed timelines throughout the period of recognition. Noncompliance can result in the withdrawal of recognition in accordance with these procedures.
REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUED RECOGNITION

A CHEA-recognized accrediting organization is required to submit an Interim Report at the midpoint of the recognition term.

Additionally, a CHEA-recognized accrediting organization submits a Substantive Change notification as detailed in the Recognition Procedures.
COMMITTEE ON RECOGNITION

RESPONSIBILITIES. The Committee reviews accrediting organizations applications for initial and/or continued recognition and makes recognition recommendations to the Board. The Committee also has the responsibility to take Independent Actions, as listed below or otherwise approved by the Board.

MEMBERSHIP. Members of the Committee are appointed by the Board upon recommendation of the CHEA staff. The Committee is composed of individuals who represent higher education leadership, faculty, accrediting organizations and others with expertise and experience in accreditation and academe. The Committee consists of nine members, each serving a three-year term. Members may be re-appointed for a maximum of two additional terms. Current Board members are ineligible for service on the Committee.

MEETINGS. The Committee, in consultation with CHEA staff, establishes the time, place, and procedures for its meetings including with respect to public comment and in accordance with the Recognition Procedures. The Committee considers all materials submitted by the accreditation organization and other materials relevant to the review. The Committee meets in open session to clarify the accrediting organization’s application for recognition and/or for public comment and in closed session as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD. The Committee shall recommend one of the following actions:

A. recognition of the accrediting organization: The applicant demonstrates substantial compliance with the CHEA standards;
B. denial of recognition: The applicant for initial recognition does not demonstrate substantial compliance with the CHEA standards; or
C. withdrawal of recognition: The recognized accrediting organization no longer demonstrates that it meets the CHEA standards for recognition.

INDEPENDENT ACTIONS. The Committee has the authority to:

A. approve submitted materials (e.g., Request for Change in Scope, Interim Reports, Follow-up Reports);
B. request additional information;
C. defer decision-making specific to recognition;
D. modify the review cycle (e.g., review out of sequence); and
E. take action as approved by the Board.
RECOGNITION STANDARDS
RECOGNITION STANDARDS

CHEA requires that an accrediting organization comply with and provide evidence that it meets Standards 1-3 and Standard 4 if the accrediting organization engages in international accreditation activities:

STANDARD 1 - Academic Quality and Student Achievement
STANDARD 2 - Accountability and Transparency
STANDARD 3 - Accreditation Structure and Organization
STANDARD 4 - Capacity and Compliance for International Accreditation

STANDARD 1. ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Advancement of academic quality and continuous improvement are at the core of accreditation. To be recognized, the accrediting organization provides evidence that it implements and enforces standards, policies, and procedures which:

1.A. advance academic quality using quantitative and/or qualitative measures;
1.B. detail in its policies, procedures, and/or standards how it supports the autonomy of an institution or program in determining academic quality as it relates to the mission of the institution or program;
1.C. require resources that only are specific to ensuring adequate student preparation and health and safety; and
1.D. support implementation of innovative practices.

STANDARD 2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

The accrediting organization implements and upholds standards, policies, or procedures that require:

2.A. the accrediting organization to inform the public of the institution’s or program’s accreditation status and the reason(s) for the accreditation action(s) in a timely and readily accessible manner;
2.B. accredited institutions and programs to provide timely, readily accessible, accurate data to the public regarding student learning outcomes and/or achievement data;
2.C. a timely response by the accrediting organization to public concerns and complaints regarding an institution, a program, or the accrediting organization; and
2.D. the accrediting organization to take timely action to prevent substantially underperforming institutions or programs from maintaining accreditation.

STANDARD 3. ACCREDITATION STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

A recognized accrediting organization demonstrates that it:

3.A. manifests a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and ensures ethical practices in its operations;
3.B. bases its accreditation decisions on how well an institution or program meets its accreditation standards;
3.C. requires that all standards be met within a specified period of time;
3.D. makes clear distinctions between required actions and suggested actions for institution or program improvement;
3.E. has a process for consistency in accreditation reviews and accreditation actions while allowing for varying institutional or programmatic mission, purpose, and operation;
3.F. engages in regular self-evaluation of its performance, standards, procedures, and policies and, where warranted, uses that information for improvement;
3.G. maintains independence from any sponsoring and/or parent organization with respect to all accreditation reviews and all accreditation actions and decisions;
3.H. has sufficient financial, staff, and operational resources to perform and sustain its accreditation functions efficiently and effectively;
3.I. ensures procedural due process in accreditation activities;
3.J. publishes an appeals policy that informs the institution or program of the process to be used and actions that may be taken;
3.K. has a conflict-of-interest policy that covers all accrediting organization staff, site visitors, and members of accreditation-recommending and decision-making bodies; and
3.L. requires opportunities for participation by higher education professionals, the public, and practitioners in accreditation activities, such as accreditation reviews, decision making, policy setting, and review and revision of accreditation standards.

**STANDARD 4. CAPACITY AND COMPLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION**

In addition, to demonstrating compliance with Standards 1-3, the accrediting organization that accredits outside of the United States is required to demonstrate that it:

4.A. has the capacity and competence to engage in international accreditation activities;
4.B. notifies the appropriate international authorities of its intent and seeks guidance regarding the accrediting organization’s current and proposed activities; and
4.C. applies standards that are substantially comparable to U.S. institutions and programs and if modifications are necessary, that information will be made public.
ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST. CHEA upholds the principle that members of the Committee and the Board and consultants, such as readers, observation site visitors, and experts (collectively, for purposes of this Paragraph, “CHEA representatives”), will be impartial and objective in considering the recognition of accrediting organizations.

A. When there is an actual or apparent conflict of interest, CHEA expects its representatives to recuse themselves from consideration of an accrediting organization as a matter of personal and professional integrity. The CHEA representative will have primary responsibility for compliance with this policy.

B. CHEA representatives will recuse themselves from consideration of an accrediting organization where the CHEA representative receives monetary compensation from the accrediting organization as an employee or consultant or otherwise or holds a position of authority or a governance role within the accrediting organization, such as commission member, director, or officer, whether paid or unpaid.

C. In deciding whether to recuse themselves from consideration of an accrediting organization, CHEA representatives will take into account whether they:
   1. had in the recent past, or expect to have, a financial relationship or governance role with the accrediting organization applying for recognition;
   2. are participating in an accreditation review by the accrediting organization applying for recognition;
   3. have a financial relationship or governance role with an accrediting organization that is a direct competitor of an accrediting organization applying for recognition;
   4. have or have expressed a predisposition concerning an accrediting organization applying for recognition that would impair objectivity in the recognition process;
   5. have a close relative with a pertinent relationship, role, or predisposition concerning an accrediting organization applying for recognition; or
   6. other considerations they deem pertinent.

D. In the event a CHEA representative, with respect to an apparent or actual conflict of interest, does not voluntarily recuse himself or herself, the Board may take such action as the Board considers appropriate.

PERSONAL GAIN. In the course of their CHEA service, CHEA representatives will observe high standards of personal integrity. For example, CHEA representatives will not solicit or accept, for themselves or any other person, gifts, gratuities, entertainment, loans, or other consideration from persons who are associated with an accrediting organization applying for recognition, an institution or program accredited by the accrediting organization, a direct competitor of the accrediting organization, or any other third party that the CHEA representative knows intends to comment on the accrediting organization in the recognition review; provided that this Paragraph does not bar acceptance of items of insubstantial value, consistent with personal integrity, in the ordinary course of service as a CHEA representative.
COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY. CHEA representatives will maintain the confidentiality of information pertaining to the recognition process. During the recognition process, a CHEA representative will not discuss any confidential aspect of an application for recognition with the accrediting organization applying for recognition, an institution or program accredited by the accrediting organization, a direct competitor of the accrediting organization, or any other third party that intends to comment on the accrediting organization, except as required in order to discharge the responsibilities of the CHEA representative in the recognition review. CHEA representatives will refer inquiries concerning the recognition process to CHEA staff. CHEA will communicate the results of the recognition review to the accrediting organization and the public.

AMENDMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

AMENDMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION. CHEA reserves the right to amend the CHEA Standards, in whole or part, as it deems appropriate. Revisions to the CHEA Standards are approved by the Board and implemented at a specific date, as established by CHEA.
RECOGNITION PROCEDURES
RECOGNITION PROCEDURES

SECTION A: ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR RECOGNITION

To be eligible for CHEA recognition an accrediting organization must:

A. be a non-governmental, U.S.-based organization;*
B. have current legal authority to operate as a corporation and have a governing board;
C. accredit institutions or programs that have legal authority to:
   1. operate as higher education institutions or programs; and
   2. confer a majority of degrees at the associate degree level or higher.**
D. have a written mission statement, bylaws, policies, procedures, and standards that are appropriate for accrediting higher education institutions and/or programs;
   1. approved by its governing board; and
   2. readily accessible to the public.
E. have accredited at least two institutions or programs at the time of application.

* The Board may, at its discretion, consider request(s) for recognition application(s) from non-governmental, international accrediting organizations.

** CHEA recognition does not extend to accreditation activities that are not at the associate degree level or higher.

In accordance with the process outlined in the Guidelines for Preparation of an Application, the CHEA recognition process requires that the accrediting organization submit:

A. a scope of recognition (refer to Recognition Standards); and
B. an Application Narrative with accompanying documentation that demonstrates compliance with the CHEA Recognition Standards.

The Committee on Recognition is responsible for reviewing the Application Narrative and making a recommendation to the Board. In addition, to recommending recognition, denial or withdrawal of recognition, the Committee has the option to defer recognition.

The Committee may defer a decision to forward a recommendation regarding recognition to the Board when it finds an application for recognition to be incomplete or insufficient to make a recommendation.

The following policies govern deferral:

A. An applicant for recognition can only be deferred once. The applicant has a maximum of one year to respond to the deferral.
B. If an initial applicant is unable to respond to the Committee’s request within one-year, the accrediting organization may withdraw its application and re-apply in 12 months. If the accrediting organization chooses not to withdraw its application, the Committee may recommend a denial of recognition to the Board.
C. A deferral of recognition for an accrediting organization seeking continued recognition results in the extension of the term of recognition by one-year. If an applicant for continued recognition is unable to respond to the Committee’s
request within one-year, the accrediting organization may voluntarily withdraw from CHEA recognition and re-apply in 12 months. If the accrediting organization chooses not to withdraw its application, the Committee may recommend a denial of recognition to the Board.

The CHEA recognition process, from application to a decision on recognition by the CHEA Board of Directors may take 12-18 months. CHEA staff are available to provide technical assistance and guidance throughout the process.

The accrediting organization must be responsive and compliant with all requirements and prescribed timelines. Non-compliance can result in deferral or withdrawal of recognition.

CHEA reserves the right to attend a decision-making meeting of the governing board, without notice.
SECTION B: THE APPLICATION AND RECOGNITION PROCESS

To be eligible for CHEA recognition an accrediting organization must:

1. **INITIATE RECOGNITION.** For initial recognition, the accrediting organization seeks consultation with CHEA staff regarding the application, recognition process and adherence to the eligibility requirements.

   For continuing recognition, CHEA initiates the process approximately 18 months prior to the first of the calendar year in which the current term of recognition expires. (All terms of recognition expire on December 31 regardless of the date of Board action.)

2. **APPLICATION FORM AND FEE.** After the staff consultation, the accrediting organization begins the formal recognition process by submitting the CHEA application form and the recognition fee.

3. **SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION NARRATIVE FOR RECOGNITION.** The Application Narrative, using the provided template, requires the provision of written evidence that the accrediting organization meets the eligibility requirements and complies with each of the CHEA recognition standards.

4. **CALL FOR THIRD-PARTY COMMENT (CHEA RESPONSIBILITIES).** No fewer than 90 days prior to the Committee meeting at which the accrediting organization will be under consideration for recognition, CHEA publishes a call for third-party comments. All comments must be received by CHEA no later than 45 days prior to the Committee’s meeting.

   Third-party comments must:

   A. be submitted in writing;
   B. include the name and affiliation of the individual(s) making the comment;
   C. be received by the announced deadline;
   D. be limited to concerns related to the accrediting organization’s adherence to the CHEA recognition standards; and
   E. indicate desire to provide an in-person comment(s).

   Accrediting organizations are provided the opportunity to review and respond to all third-party comments. All third-party comments and the accrediting organization’s responses are submitted to the Committee in advance of its meeting to render a recommendation.

   When in-person comments are made, the accrediting organization is afforded the opportunity to respond to those comments during the meeting.

5. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR THIRD-PARTY COMMENT (ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES).** The accrediting organization is required to:

   A. publish on its website (using the CHEA third-party comment statement) that the organization is engaged in the CHEA recognition process;* and
B. provide CHEA evidence of compliance with this requirement.

*If an accrediting organization does not have a website, it must present evidence of how its engagement in the CHEA recognition process has been publicly shared with its communities of interest.

6. ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION PUBLIC PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE. The Committee holds a public session as part of its regular meeting for those accrediting organizations engaged in the CHEA recognition process. The accrediting organization is expected to participate in the public session. The accrediting organization will have the opportunity to make opening and closing comments, offer information in support of its application and to respond to the Committee’s questions. The public session is the final opportunity for the accrediting organization to provide information supporting its application for recognition to the Committee.

CHEA is to be notified of the names and titles of the individuals representing the accrediting organization no later than 45 days prior to the meeting.

Following the public session, the Committee meets in closed session to discuss the accrediting organization’s written materials and responses provided in public session.

A transcript/recording of the public session is available upon request.

7. WRITTEN NOTICE BY THE COMMITTEE. After the Committee meeting to review an application, the Committee submits its findings and recommendations to the CHEA Board with notification to the accrediting organization. The accrediting organization is afforded thirty days to respond to the recommendation of the Committee. The timing of receipt of the response by the accrediting organization may affect the accrediting organization’s schedule of review by the Board.

8. WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION APPLICATION. An application may be withdrawn by the accrediting organization up to 48 hours prior to the meeting where the Board is scheduled to take action. If an accrediting organization withdraws an application for recognition, a new application cannot be submitted for at least one full year from the formal date of withdrawal of the application.

9. ACTION BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The Board considers the application, Committee’s findings, and recommendations at its next regular meeting. Board actions include the following:

   A. grant initial or continuing recognition;
   B. deny initial recognition;
   C. withdraw recognition; or
   D. others as deemed appropriate.

   The Board’s decision may or may not be congruent with the Committee’s recommendation.

10. WRITTEN NOTICE BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The accrediting organization is notified of the Board’s decision within 30 calendar days of the Board’s meeting.
If the Board recognizes an accrediting organization, the notice will specify the accrediting organization’s CHEA-recognized scope of accreditation, the period of recognition, and any reporting requirements. If the action is to deny or withdraw recognition, the notice will detail the reason(s) for that action and the process for reconsideration.

11. PUBLIC NOTICE. Board actions are made public and include a summary of the reason(s) for the decisions. If the Board decision is to deny or withdraw recognition, the decision is not final or made public until the period for reconsideration has lapsed.

12. RECONSIDERATION OF BOARD ACTION. An accrediting organization may request reconsideration of the Board’s action based on any of the following:

   A. any asserted procedural errors in the recognition process; and/or
   B. any asserted factual errors.

The request for reconsideration must be received, in writing, by CHEA within 21 calendar days of receiving notification of the Board’s action. The Board reserves the right to grant or deny the accrediting organization’s request for reconsideration. If the reconsideration request is granted, the accrediting organization must appear before the Board. A time for appearance before the Board will be scheduled by CHEA. The accrediting organization may have counsel present to advise during its appearance before the Board, but counsel may not speak unless requested to do so by the Board.

Only decisions to deny or withdraw recognition may be reconsidered.

13. APPLICATION AFTER DENIAL OR WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION. An accrediting organization may not reapply for at least one full year from the date of denial or withdrawal of recognition.
SECTION C: REPORTS FOR CONTINUED RECOGNITION

14. INTERIM REPORT. A recognized accrediting organization submits the Interim Report at the mid-point of the term of recognition. The due date of the Interim Report is provided in the Board letter granting CHEA recognition. A reminder of the Interim Report deadline is provided six months prior to the due date of the report.

The Interim Report provides information:

A. regarding its capacity to fulfill the accrediting organization’s CHEA-recognized scope;
B. that it continues to make public the reasons for its accreditation decisions; and
C. that student learning outcomes and/or achievement data are readily accessible to the public.

15. FOLLOW-UP REPORT. A recognized accrediting organization may be required to submit a Follow-up Report if its Interim Report or Application Narrative is insufficient.

Note: An accrediting organization is subject to withdrawal of recognition if it fails to submit the Interim or Follow-up Report by the required deadline. The recommendation of the Committee to withdraw recognition is submitted to the Board for action. The accrediting organization will be notified in writing of the pending recommendation prior to it being submitted to the Board.
SECTION D: SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

16. CHANGES REQUIRING NOTIFICATION. The accrediting organization is required to notify CHEA of substantive change(s) to the following:

A. governance;
B. financial condition;
C. mission;
D. operations;
E. relationship with parent or sponsoring organization;
F. standards, policies, or procedures; and
G. editorial changes to the CHEA-recognized scope.

Accrediting organizations must notify CHEA of all substantive changes (A.-G.) within 60 days of implementation of the change(s). Substantive changes will be reviewed by CHEA to determine if such changes affect compliance with the standards. CHEA notifies the accrediting organization of the review status of the substantive change(s).

17. CHANGES REQUIRING COMMITTEE APPROVAL. Change in scope requires approval by the Committee. Proposed changes can be submitted at any time. Substantive changes to the CHEA-recognized scope include:

A. change in the type(s) of institutions and programs;
B. addition or removal of a degree level;
C. change of geographical boundaries of accreditation activity (i.e., United States and international locations); and
D. addition or removal of a professional field of study.

A change in the CHEA-recognized scope of accreditation requires that the accrediting organization submit the following:

A. current CHEA-recognized scope statement;
B. proposed CHEA-scope statement;
C. reasons for the proposed change(s);
D. evidence that the proposed change(s) were made public;
E. evidence that the decision-making body has approved the change;
F. evidence that the new proposed scope has been effectively implemented at a minimum of two institutions or programs; and
G. evidence that the accrediting organization’s capacity is adequate to accommodate the proposed change in scope.

The Committee reviews the request at its next scheduled meeting providing that the request is received at least 45 days prior to the scheduled meeting. CHEA notifies the accrediting organization of the Committee’s decision to approve, deny or seek additional information.
SECTION E: GRIEVANCE POLICY

18. GRIEVANCE POLICY. CHEA only reviews grievances that are in writing, signed and dated by the complainant, and specific to alleged non-compliance of the CHEA Standards and Procedures. As appropriate, the written grievance is provided to the accrediting organization with the complainant’s identifying information redacted.

Response(s) from the accrediting organization must be submitted to CHEA within 30 business days. CHEA reviews the grievance and the accrediting organization’s response, which may result in further action in accordance with CHEA’s Recognition Standards and Procedures. All grievances and accrediting organization responses are provided to the Committee.

Upon review, CHEA provides all parties with its findings and recommendations for resolution.
KEY TERMS
KEY TERMS

This section describes key terms in the Standards. The terms apply only to the Standards and are not intended for use with any other statement or policy.

**Academic Quality:** The evidence of performance associated with teaching, learning, research, and service, including the integrated way in which learning, practice, and discovery are fostered by institutions and programs. Academic quality includes the expectations that institutions or programs have of students and the effort those institutions and programs accord to the promotion of student success.

**Accrediting Organization:** An entity whose purpose is to monitor the academic and administrative quality of its members, which are either institutions or academic programs.

**Accreditation Action:** The decision made by the accrediting organization resulting from an institutional or program review.

**Accreditation Status:** The classification granted to an institution or program by the accrediting organization as a result of a review. Such status may include, but is not limited to, accredited or reaffirmed, candidacy or pre-accreditation, provisional accreditation, probationary accreditation or other classification defined in the accrediting organization's policy.

**Committee on Recognition:** Appointed by the CHEA Board of Directors for the purpose of reviewing applications for recognition and other required reports.

**Conflict of Interest:** Circumstances, whether real or perceived, that may compromise the professional judgment or actions of any individual who could influence decision making.

**Deferral (for initial consideration of recognition):** Granting of additional time to a new applicant accrediting organization to demonstrate compliance with the CHEA Standards.

**Extension of Recognition (for continuing recognition):** An extension of time (one calendar year) given to an accrediting organization that is currently recognized by CHEA to demonstrate compliance with the CHEA Standards.

**Follow-up Report:** A report required, subsequent to the Interim Report or Recognition Review process.

**Innovation:** Designing, implementing, and/or supporting initiatives that advance academic quality.

**Interim Report:** The report to be submitted at the midpoint of the CHEA recognition term. The Interim Report addresses specific criteria defined by CHEA to demonstrate continued compliance with the CHEA Standards.

**Practitioner:** A member of an accrediting decision-making body who is actively engaged in a specific discipline or profession represented by the accrediting organization.

**Public Accountability:** The responsibility to provide readily accessible, accurate, and consistent information to the public.
**Public:** Any individual who is not associated with the profession that is represented by the accrediting organization.

**Readily Accessible:** The ease with which information provided by institutions, programs, or accrediting organizations can be identified, located, and obtained by the intended public.

**Recognition or Recognized:** The status granted by the CHEA Board of Directors after an accrediting organization successfully completes the CHEA review process.

**Recognition Standards:** The requirements that an accrediting organization must meet to achieve CHEA recognition.

**Sponsoring and/or Parent Organization:** An organization with a direct or indirect affiliation or agreement with the accrediting organization. The affiliation may include any management, financial, or other oversight capacity but does not limit, influence, or control accreditation activities.

**Substantive Change:** Any significant modifications to governance, financial condition, mission, operations, relationship with parent or sponsoring organization, standards, policies, or procedures.

**Transparency:** Public accessibility to information regarding the accreditation process, results of accreditation reviews, and student achievement.