

SPECIAL SESSION:

COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION *RECOGNITION POLICY AND PROCEDURES*

January 27, 2020

**CHEA** Council for  
Higher Education  
Accreditation

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CHEA International Quality Group

**CIQG**<sup>®</sup>

# AGENDA

- CHEA Purpose
- Policy Overview
- The *Standards*
- Frequently Asked Questions
- CHEA Process Overview
- Resources
- Questions

# CHEA PURPOSE

CHEA *Recognition of Accrediting Organizations Policy and Procedures*(2019) (*Recognition Policy*), Paragraph 5, states,

Recognition signifies that the accrediting organization embraces the value of periodic external review of its accreditation activities. Recognition:

- Holds accrediting organizations responsible for meeting all CHEA standards of academic quality, accountability, transparency and effective organization and practice;
- Affirms the fitness of accrediting organizations to promote academic quality and serve higher education, students and the public, now and in the foreseeable future; and
- Serves as evidence to the public that the recognized accrediting organizations are credible sources of judgment about academic quality in higher education.

# CHEA PURPOSE (CONTINUED)

*CHEA Recognition of Accrediting Organizations Policy and Procedures(2019) (Recognition Policy), Paragraph 6, states,*

A CHEA-recognized accrediting organization bases accreditation judgments principally on the performance of institutions or programs in relation to student achievement. In addition, an accrediting organization bases accreditation judgments on the institution's or program's mission, structure, operation and capacity. The Recognition Policy and Procedures emphasizes self-study and peer review as central to judging institutions or programs based on quantitative or qualitative information with external verification, as appropriate. Accrediting organizations also sustain effective means of communicating with the public and within the profession about their accreditation judgments. Recognized accrediting organizations provide evidence that their standards and policies are implemented and enforced. A recognized accrediting organization carries out its accrediting activities while acknowledging and valuing institution or program mission and independence.

# CHEA PURPOSE (CONTINUED)

## A CHEA-recognized accrediting organization:

- Awards or continues accredited status only for institutions or programs that demonstrate effective performance in relation to student learning and that make information on this public. Effective performance with regard to students will entail a wide range of evidence, as pertinent, such as completion, graduation, retention, success with academic transfer, success with entry to graduate school, success in moving into the world of work and other evidence, as appropriate. This policy does not establish explicit quantitative indicators for performance expectations. Performance expectations may emanate from the accrediting organization working with its institutions or programs, or from an institution or program or from both.
- Provides to the public readily accessible and easily understandable information about the accreditation status of institutions or programs and what this accreditation status signifies, including length of a term of accreditation, reasons for awarding accreditation status, information about any deficiencies in relation to accreditation standards and policies and reasons for conditioning or denying accreditation.
- Requires that all accreditation standards be met in order for an institution or program to obtain and maintain accredited status.
- Utilizes means to identify and act on institutions or programs that are ineffective with regard to student learning, based on expectations set by the accreditor, the institution or program or from both.
- Maintains a strong quality improvement capacity.
- Sustains ongoing attention to mission and appropriate innovation in institutions and programs and in the carrying out of its own standards, policies and procedures.

# CHEA PURPOSE (CONTINUED)

In summary:

The purpose of CHEA recognition is to provide assurance to the public that accrediting organizations are competent to engage in quality review of institutions and programs based on the standards that CHEA has developed, which are presented in the 2019 *CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*.

# RECOGNITION POLICY OVERVIEW

The CHEA *Recognition Policy and Procedures* include:

- Key Terms
- Background
- CHEA Purposes
- CHEA-Recognized Scope of Accreditation
- Recognition Standards
- Committee on Recognition
- Recognition Review
- Application Process
- Additional Provisions
- Amendment and Implementation

# THE RECOGNITION STANDARDS

As stated in Paragraph 9 of the *Recognition Policy* (2019) a recognized accrediting organization provides evidence that it:

- Promotes academic quality and advances student achievement (Standard 10);
- Demonstrates public accountability for performance and transparency (Standard 11);  
and
- Sustains an effective accreditation structure and organization (Standard 12).



# KEY TERMS

(Recognition Policy, p. 1)

## ☐ Accountability

The responsibility of an accrediting organization is to (1) have standards, policies and procedures that require accredited institutions and programs to provide, at a minimum, readily accessible, accurate and consistent aggregate information to the public about institutional or program performance, student achievement and the reasons for accreditation decisions; and (2) make its accreditation standards, policies, processes and decision-making outcomes readily accessible to the public.

## ☐ Readily Accessible

The ease with which information provided on institution or program or accrediting organization Websites can be identified, located and obtained by the public. Ease of access includes obvious and accurate labeling of links to pertinent information, no required self-identification or membership and as few steps as possible needed to access the information.

## ☐ Transparency

Public accessibility to information about the accreditation process, the results of accreditation reviews and student achievement.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Generally speaking, CHEA gets two types of questions from the accrediting organizations it recognizes:

1. Procedural (e.g., How do we...? or What is required to...?)
2. Clarification (What does this mean? What is needed?)

CHEA gets a variety of questions from the public. Including,

1. How do we know if an institution or program is accredited?
2. Is accreditation important?
3. Is one accreditor better than another?
4. What happens if I don't graduate from an accredited program or institution?
5. How do I determine if one program or institution is better than another?
6. What is the difference between recognition by the United States Department of Education and CHEA?

# CHEA PROCESS OVERVIEW

The term of CHEA recognition is a maximum of 7-years and includes an Interim Report at the mid-point of the recognition term.

Generally speaking, the CHEA recognition process includes:

1. An initial consultation
2. Submission of application and fee
3. Completion and submission of a written application narrative
4. Observation visit
5. Third Party Comment process
6. Committee on Recognition (preliminary analysis and recommendation)
7. Board of Directors (preliminary analysis and recognition decision)
8. Interim Report

# RESOURCES

The CHEA website (<https://www.chea.org/chea-recognition-accrediting-organizations>) has a variety of resources for accrediting organizations and the public, including:

- The CHEA *Recognition Policy*
- Directory of CHEA Recognized Accreditors
- CHEA Recognition Decision Summaries
- CHEA/USDE Recognition Chart
- Frequently Asked Questions: CHEA Recognition of Accrediting Organizations
- Steps in Recognition Process
- Guidelines for the Interim Report and Application Narrative

Additional general information about accreditation can be found at <https://www.chea.org/about-accreditation>

# Questions?

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