

Code of Good Practice in Accreditation

In accord with other regional accrediting organizations, the New England Commission of Higher Education follows these guidelines:

- A. arranges evaluations or other visits in consultation with institutional officers;
- B. recognizes the right of an institution or program to be appraised in the light of its own stated purposes so long as those purposes demonstrably fall within and adequately reflect, the expectations of institutions defined by the Commission in the *Standards for Accreditation* and Requirements of Affiliation;
- C. states criteria for accreditation in terms that are manifestly relevant to the quality of an institution, respecting institutional autonomy in other matters;
- D. uses relevant qualitative and quantitative information in its evaluation process;
- E. assists and stimulates improvement of the educational effectiveness of an institution;
- F. encourages sound educational experimentation and permits innovations;
- G. designs the evaluation process and requests for information not only to obtain information for visiting teams and the Commission but also to stimulate an institution to evaluate and improve itself;
- H. conducts evaluation visits by competent and knowledgeable reviewers, qualified by education or experience, under conditions that assure impartial, valid, and objective judgment;
- I. appoints team members in consultation with an institution, while retaining the final authority in the formation of evaluation teams and other visitors.
- J. cooperates with other accrediting agencies so far as possible in scheduling joint visits when an institution so requests;
- K. provides for ample consultation during the visit between the evaluation team and the faculty and staff of an institution, including the president, his or her designated representatives and members of the governing board;
- L. provides opportunity for interviewing students during evaluation visits;

- M. provides the president of an institution being evaluated an opportunity to read a draft of the report prepared by the visiting team, and to comment on its accuracy before it is sent to the Commission;
- N. regards the text of the evaluation report as confidential between an institution and the accrediting agency; the institution is encouraged to make the report widely available on campus and is permitted to otherwise make the entire report public;
- O. considers decisions relative to accreditation only after the institution has submitted a formal response to the evaluation report, when the president and the chairperson of the visiting team is present or their views are otherwise adequately represented;
- P. refrains from conditioning accreditation upon payment of fees for purposes other than membership dues or actual evaluation costs;
- Q. notifies an institution as quickly as possible regarding any accreditation decision;
- R. withdraws accreditation only after advance notice has been given to the president of an institution that such action is contemplated, and the reasons therefore, sufficient to permit timely rejoinder and to pursue established procedures for review and appeal;
- S. permits the withdrawal of a request for initial accreditation at any time (even after evaluation) prior to final action;
- T. notifies the U.S. Department of Education, appropriate State agencies, and the public of the accreditation status of institutions in accordance with NECHE policy and federal regulation.

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