



COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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Accreditation Liaison Officer

An accreditation liaison officer is appointed by the chief executive officer of each affiliated institution to work with appropriate individuals and agencies on matters of accreditation. The liaison officer should be a member of the full-time professional staff and have an institutional perspective, visibility on campus and an interest in accreditation. The liaison officer serves at the pleasure of the institution's chief executive officer and does not replace the chief executive officer as the Commission's official point of contact with the institution. At some institutions, the chief executive officer may elect to serve in this role.

The liaison officer has two broad functions. First, this person will serve as a liaison between the Commission and the institution on a variety of matters, particularly during the self-study and evaluation process. Second, it is expected that the liaison officer will be a source of information on the campus about accreditation and the institution's accrediting agencies.

Among the suggested duties for the liaison officer are the following:

1. provide an identified place on campus where information can be disseminated and questions answered about accreditation;
2. interpret for the institution the policies and procedures of the Commission and to call attention to matters that may have application to the institution, particularly when the Commission adopts or revises policies;
3. undertake the institution's accreditation planning and assure the logistics of accreditation work are accomplished at the institution;
4. serve as the chair or resource person for the self-study committee, coordinate preparations for evaluation visits, and oversee follow-up studies resulting from the evaluation;
5. maintain a file of all accreditation material;
6. attend the Annual Meeting of the Association and meetings of liaison officers in order to receive information and to participate in policy development;

7. prepare the institution's annual report to the Commission;
8. notify the Commission in advance of substantive changes that are planned by the institution.

The staff of the Commission is available to provide advice and counsel to liaison officers as they carry out these and other accreditation-related tasks.

With a suitable degree of visibility on campus in carrying out the above duties, the liaison officer can enhance the relationship between the institution and the Commission and give the institution a more participatory role in accreditation.

*1983
September, 2001*