

EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF PROPRIETARY INSTITUTIONS

Accreditation is a status which indicates that an institution is offering its students, on a satisfactory level, educational opportunities implied in its objectives. Accreditation may be applied to public and non-profit proprietary institutions by the appropriate regional accrediting association. The primary determinant for accreditation shall be the quality of the institution and its technical offerings. The nature of ownership is not a factor unless such ownership affects adversely the quality of the institution and its educational offerings.

In defining guidelines for institutional accreditation, regional accrediting associations do not wish to duplicate or preempt the responsibilities or interests of other CHEA recognized accrediting bodies. Also, accrediting associations do not advocate a change in the traditionally voluntary nature of the accreditation process by shifting the initiative for seeking accreditation away from the individual institution.

To be considered for accreditation, all institutions, including proprietary, must

- have a charter, license and/or formal authority from an appropriate governmental agency to award a certificate or diploma.
- be legally constituted as a corporate entity, with an appropriate governing board, to assure continuity and stability.
- have within its governing or advisory board representatives of the public who have no vested interest or other institutional affiliation, and who possess a demonstrated ability and willingness to serve.
- demonstrate financial stability, beyond tuition income, to include income fluctuation and unusual expenditure requirements. Important to the review of financial stability is the availability of the institution's latest audited financial statement prepared by a certified independent accountant, indicating fiscal resources adequate to support its current and future offerings.
- demonstrate that an adequate proportion of its budget is expended for the instructional program.
- offer one or more educational programs of at least one academic year in length or the equivalent at the postsecondary level, with clearly defined and published educational objectives, as well as a clear statement of its means for achieving them.
- include general education when appropriate at the postsecondary level as a prerequisite to, or an essential element of, its principal educational program.
- have clearly defined and published ethical student policies pertaining to admissions, tuition and reasonable refunds.

- have completed at least one cycle of its principle programs prior to an on-site visit.
- submit an institutional self-study.