

THIRD-PARTY COMMENTS DURING COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS

The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions is concerned with institutional integrity and with performance consistent with its standards and policies. For that reason, in compliance with federal regulations, the Commission publishes the year when an institution is undergoing a comprehensive evaluation for accreditation or candidacy and provides an opportunity for third-party comments in writing concerning the institution's qualifications for accreditation or candidacy.

The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions has adopted the following procedures to provide the means by which such announcements are made and to describe the process by which any resulting comments received are taken into consideration during each institution's comprehensive review.

PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THIRD-PARTY COMMENTS

1. With the purpose of providing an opportunity for third-party comments, institutions undergoing a comprehensive evaluation for continued accreditation are asked to publicize the Commission's review at least one month before the visit will take place. Appropriate publications for this announcement are those whose readership includes substantial numbers of persons who are knowledgeable of and interested in the institution, such as alumni magazines, campus newspapers, and local newspapers.

The Commission does not prescribe specific language for the public notification of an impending visit. However, at a minimum, the announcement should include the following elements:

- The purpose of the forthcoming visit
- The dates of the visit
- The institution's current accreditation status with the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions
- The year of the most recent comprehensive evaluation and an invitation to send comments directly to the Commission, which includes the Commission's address and the date by which comments must be received (no later than the final date of the visit)

A sample notice is provided with these procedures.

2. The names of institutions undergoing comprehensive reviews for accreditation or candidacy are listed on the NEASC home page of the World Wide Web as follows:

OPPORTUNITY FOR THIRD-PARTY COMMENTS

The federal regulations require that accrediting agencies provide for public comments on the qualifications of those institutions under consideration for initial accreditation or reaffirmation.

Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on those institutions, listed below, which will be considered by the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions at its (date) meeting. The list is accurate as of the date of this publication. Under special circumstances, an institution may be removed from the list and considered by the Commission at a later date. To receive the most up-to-date information about any institution, you may contact the Commission office.

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions cannot settle disputes between individuals and institutions, whether those involve students, faculty, administration, or members of other groups.

All comments are due in the Commission office by (date). In keeping with Commission policy, the written comments, along with the name(s) of the person(s) submitting those comments, will be forwarded to the institution, which will be given the opportunity to reply prior to the Commission meeting.

A copy of the relevant Commission policy may be obtained from the Commission office.

List of Institutions

3. A comment received by the Commission is acknowledged in writing upon receipt.
4. The comment is reviewed by the Director of the Commission who takes one of the following actions:
 - If the comment is found not to be within the scope of Commission policy, as articulated in the public announcement, the author of the comment will be so informed and the matter closed.
 - If the comment appears to be within the scope of Commission policy, a copy of the comment, including the identity of its author, will be forwarded to the institution's chief executive officer, who will be asked to provide a response. The author of the comment will be notified of the action at that time.

5. The institution is asked to provide a response to any comments forwarded by the Director of the Commission within one month of their receipt.
6. The comments and any institutional response will be referred to the Commission for consideration as a part of its review of the comprehensive evaluation of the institution.
7. The Commission will make every effort to adhere to the above time line. In cases where circumstances beyond its control necessitate its modification, the involved parties will be so informed.

The following statement is offered as sample language that could be used in the announcement of a forthcoming evaluation:

SAMPLE ANNOUNCEMENT

(Name of Institution) will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit (date of visit), by a visiting committee representing the Commission on Technical and Career Institutions of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions is one of eight accrediting commissions in the United States that provide institutional accreditation on a regional basis. Accreditation is voluntary and applies to the institution as a whole. The Commission, which is recognized by the U. S. Department of Education, accredits institutions in the six-state New England region and Europe.

(Name of Institution) has been accredited by the Commission since (year of initial accreditation) and was last reviewed in (date of last comprehensive evaluation). Its accreditation by the New England Association encompasses the entire institution.

For the past year and a half, (name of institution) has been engaged in the process of self-study, addressing the Commission's Standards of Membership. A committee will visit the institution to gather evidence that the self-study is thorough and accurate. The visiting committee will recommend to the Commission a continuing status for the institution; following a review process, the Commission itself will take the final action.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the institution to the following address: **Public Comment on (name of institution)**

**Commission on Technical and Career Institutions
New England Association of Schools and Colleges
209 Burlington Road, Suite 201
Bedford, MA 01730-1433
e-mail: pbento@neasc.org**

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution. Comments will not be treated as confidential.

Written, signed comments must be received by (last day of evaluation). The Commission cannot guarantee that comments received after that date will be considered. Comments should include the name, address, and telephone number of the person providing the comments.

The Commission cannot settle disputes between individuals and institutions, whether those involve faculty, students, administrators, or members of other groups. Individuals considering submitting complaints against an affiliated institution should request the separate policy and procedures, [Complaints Against Affiliated Institutions](#), from the Commission office.