

## PART 601 [RESERVED]

## PART 602—THE SECRETARY'S RECOGNITION OF ACCREDITING AGENCIES

### Subpart A—General

Sec.

- 602.1 Why does the Secretary recognize accrediting agencies?
- 602.2 How do I know which agencies the Secretary recognizes?
- 602.3 What definitions apply to this part?

### Subpart B—The Criteria for Recognition

#### BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 602.10 Link to Federal programs.
- 602.11 Geographic scope of accrediting activities.
- 602.12 Accrediting experience.
- 602.13 Acceptance of the agency by others.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 602.14 Purpose and organization.
- 602.15 Administrative and fiscal responsibilities.

#### REQUIRED STANDARDS AND THEIR APPLICATION

- 602.16 Accreditation and preaccreditation standards.
- 602.17 Application of standards in reaching an accrediting decision.
- 602.18 Ensuring consistency in decision-making.
- 602.19 Monitoring and reevaluation of accredited institutions and programs.
- 602.20 Enforcement of standards.
- 602.21 Review of standards.

#### REQUIRED OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 602.22 Substantive change.
- 602.23 Operating procedures all agencies must have.
- 602.24 Additional procedures certain institutional accreditors must have.
- 602.25 Due process.
- 602.26 Notification of accrediting decisions.
- 602.27 Other information an agency must provide the Department.
- 602.28 Regard for decisions of States and other accrediting agencies.

### Subpart C—The Recognition Process

#### APPLICATION AND REVIEW BY DEPARTMENT STAFF

- 602.30 How does an agency apply for recognition?
- 602.31 How does Department staff review an agency's application?

#### REVIEW BY THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

- 602.32 What is the role of the Advisory Committee and the senior Department official in the review of an agency's application?
- 602.33 How may an agency appeal a recommendation of the Advisory Committee?

#### REVIEW AND DECISION BY THE SECRETARY

- 602.34 What does the Secretary consider when making a recognition decision?
- 602.35 What information does the Secretary's recognition decision include?
- 602.36 May an agency appeal the Secretary's final recognition decision?

### Subpart D—Limitation, Suspension, or Termination of Recognition

#### LIMITATION, SUSPENSION, AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

- 602.40 How may the Secretary limit, suspend, or terminate an agency's recognition?
- 602.41 What are the notice procedures?
- 602.42 What are the response and hearing procedures?
- 602.43 How is a decision on limitation, suspension, or termination of recognition reached?

#### APPEAL RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES

- 602.44 How may an agency appeal the subcommittee's recommendation?
- 602.45 May an agency appeal the Secretary's final decision to limit, suspend, or terminate its recognition?

### Subpart E—Department Responsibilities

- 602.50 What information does the Department share with a recognized agency about its accredited institutions and programs?

AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 1099b, unless otherwise noted.

SOURCE: 64 FR 56617, Oct. 20, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General

#### § 602.1 Why does the Secretary recognize accrediting agencies?

- (a) The Secretary recognizes accrediting agencies to ensure that these agencies are, for the purposes of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), or for other Federal purposes, reliable authorities regarding

## § 602.2

## 34 CFR Ch. VI (7-1-02 Edition)

the quality of education or training offered by the institutions or programs they accredit.

(b) The Secretary lists an agency as a nationally recognized accrediting agency if the agency meets the criteria for recognition listed in subpart B of this part.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

### § 602.2 How do I know which agencies the Secretary recognizes?

(a) Periodically, the Secretary publishes a list of recognized agencies in the FEDERAL REGISTER, together with each agency's scope of recognition. You may obtain a copy of the list from the Department at any time. The list is also available on the Department's web site.

(b) If the Secretary denies continued recognition to a previously recognized agency, or if the Secretary limits, suspends, or terminates the agency's recognition before the end of its recognition period, the Secretary publishes a notice of that action in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The Secretary also makes the reasons for the action available to the public, on request.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

### § 602.3 What definitions apply to this part?

The following definitions apply to this part:

*Accreditation* means the status of public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an educational institution or program that meets the agency's standards and requirements.

*Accrediting agency* or *agency* means a legal entity, or that part of a legal entity, that conducts accrediting activities through voluntary, non-Federal peer review and makes decisions concerning the accreditation or preaccreditation status of institutions, programs, or both.

*Act* means the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

*Adverse accrediting action* or *adverse action* means the denial, withdrawal, suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation or preaccreditation, or any comparable accrediting action an agency may take against an institution or program.

*Advisory Committee* means the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity.

*Branch campus* means a location of an institution that meets the definition of branch campus in 34 CFR 600.2.

*Distance education* means an educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, between instructor and student. The term includes courses offered principally through the use of—

(1) Television, audio, or computer transmission, such as open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite transmission;

(2) Audio or computer conferencing;

(3) Video cassettes or disks; or

(4) Correspondence.

*Final accrediting action* means a final determination by an accrediting agency regarding the accreditation or preaccreditation status of an institution or program. A final accrediting action is not appealable within the agency.

*Institution of higher education* or *institution* means an educational institution that qualifies, or may qualify, as an eligible institution under 34 CFR part 600.

*Institutional accrediting agency* means an agency that accredits institutions of higher education.

*Nationally recognized accrediting agency*, *nationally recognized agency*, or *recognized agency* means an accrediting agency that the Secretary recognizes under this part.

*Preaccreditation* means the status of public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an institution or program for a limited period of time that signifies the agency has determined that the institution or program is progressing towards accreditation and is likely to attain accreditation before the expiration of that limited period of time.

*Program* means a postsecondary educational program offered by an institution of higher education that leads to an academic or professional degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential.