IHEA COUNCIL
Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation

The 2024 Guide to

Accreditation for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability

Overview

Table of Contents

Preface

This manual is under development by the 2020–2025 Think College National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup in partnership with the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council.

The Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC) is an independent accrediting agency for college and university programs who serve students with intellectual disability (ID). The purpose of the IHEAC is to promote standards-based quality programming for students with ID who attend colleges and universities. The agency is approved as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

The Think College National Coordinating Center is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts. It is funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education, US Department of Education to provide knowledge development, technical assistance, training and dissemination, and leadership and collaboration for Transition and Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grantees supporting the growth and enhancement of postsecondary options for students with intellectual disabilities throughout the United States.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) created new opportunities for students with intellectual disability (ID) to access federal financial aid. The HEOA also authorized both new model programs and a National Coordinating Center (NCC). The NCC, administered by Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, is charged with providing technical assistance, coordination, and evaluation of the model programs. The NCC is also required to convene an Accreditation Workgroup to develop and recommend model criteria, standards, and components of higher education programs for students with ID. The NCC created three Accreditation Workgroups (2011, 2015, 2020) and continues to provide significant direction and leadership to the field of postsecondary education for students with ID.

The first Accreditation Workgroup convened in 2011 under the leadership of long-time policymaker and advocate Stephanie Smith Lee. During her decade-long leadership, the Accreditation Workgroup developed the model program accreditation standards. This process included research of accreditation organizations, field testing of standards, and multiple rounds of input and feedback from programs and families throughout the United States.

Think College published the Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability: Progress on the Path to Education, Employment, and Community Living in 2021.

The current Accreditation Workgroup, chaired by Martha Mock, convened in early 2021 and was charged with creating the process by which higher education programs serving students with ID could apply for accreditation. The creation of this accreditation process includes developing this manual and piloting and refining the procedures and tools needed to implement the accreditation process.

In addition, to achieve the goal of program accreditation, the launch of an independent program accreditation agency was necessary. In March 2023, this major milestone was achieved with the incorporation of a nonprofit agency to serve as the accrediting entity for postsecondary education programs for students with ID, the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC). Pioneers and experts in inclusive postsecondary education and notably, all parents of amazing individuals with ID, Stephanie Smith Lee (Board President), Madeleine Will (Vice-President), Elise

McMillan (Clerk), and Tom Sannicandro (Treasurer), are the founding board of directors for the Council. Martha Mock was appointed by the IHEAC Board as the founding director. This historic accomplishment was highlighted in an article from [Inside Higher Education](#).

For questions about this guide, contact us by email at: iheac@iheacouncil.org.

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Learn more about the work of the [Think College NCC Accreditation Workgroup](#).

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- Cathryn (Cate) Weir, Program Director, Think College National Coordinating Center

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Section 1

Introduction to Accreditation

The purpose of this guide is to provide comprehensive information about the accreditation process to personnel in postsecondary programs who are interested in pursuing program accreditation.

The following factors guide the framework for the accreditation process:

- An emphasis on accreditation as a continual process of quality improvement, rather than a one-time event

- A commitment to clarity and fidelity of the Program Accreditation Standards and interpretive guidance

- An acknowledgment that accreditation is a year-long process from initiation to determination

- An outline of clear expectations throughout the accreditation process

- A commitment to collaboration and collegiality throughout the process of program accreditation

Purposes and Goals of Accreditation

The primary purposes of accreditation are to support quality assurance and quality improvement, and to ensure accountability, including the following core elements:

a. a self-study based on standards

b. a peer review of evidence

c. a determination by an accreditation agency

Accreditation offers a way to indicate that a program is meeting basic quality standards in several key areas. Program accreditation creates quality benchmarks for programs that help students and their families who are in search of high-quality higher education programs. Accreditation also provides recognition for programs that meet the standards and guidelines for colleges and universities considering establishing high-quality programs.

In addition, accreditation provides programs with the official recognition of meeting Program Accreditation Standards. As implemented, the goal of the standards is to move the field forward by offering accreditation to college programs that enroll students with an ID.

The Program Accreditation Standards, found in Section 3 of this guide, are available for voluntary usage and implementation by higher education programs that enroll students with ID. The field of inclusive higher

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Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation

education is a collaborative one. Program staff, including university and college faculty and staff, policymakers, and advocates have worked together for decades with the common goal of increasing college opportunities for students with ID. The approach to accreditation is similarly collaborative. The IHEAC uses a self-study and peer review process, including a campus site visit, as essential elements of the accreditation process. Higher education programs know best what they offer to students on their campus. The accreditation process is an opportunity to tell your story and engage students, alumni, staff, faculty, college leadership, and parents in the conversation about quality.

Accreditation is a process that has a beginning, middle, and end, with the goal of continuous improvement. Programs may be accredited for a period of up to seven years. Programs at institutions of higher education (IHE) begin the process by completing the application for program accreditation. The Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC) staff review this application for completeness, and programs receive information to assist and support them in the pre-accreditation and accreditation processes. Next steps could include creating a plan and timeline to pursue accreditation in the future. You can find a more detailed description of the three phases of accreditation later in this guide.

You can find a Glossary of Terms at the end of this guide.

Accreditation Eligibility

Review the following questions to determine if your program meets the criteria to apply for accreditation. The IHEAC accredits programs at accredited institutions of higher education (IHE) that serve students with intellectual disability (ID) as defined in the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (as amended, HEA).

Is your program eligible to apply for accreditation?

Is your program located at an accredited IHE?

Does your program meet the definition of a Comprehensive Transition Program?

Does your program serve students with an intellectual disability?

Has your program existed for at least 3 years and had at least 2 cohorts of graduates?

Does your program offer a credential issued by the IHE?

Programs must meet all the criteria to apply for accreditation.

To apply for accreditation, the program must:

- be located at and operated by an accredited public or nonprofit private IHE
- serve students with ID as defined in the HEA

IHEA COUNCIL
Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation

- meet the criteria for a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program (CTP) in the HEA. (The program does not need to be an approved CTP program.)

- be operating for at least three consecutive years immediately prior to application

- graduate a minimum of two cohorts of students

- award an educational credential issued by the IHE (e.g., degree, certificate, or non-degree credential)

If you have questions about whether your program meets these criteria, contact us at iheac@iheacouncil.org.

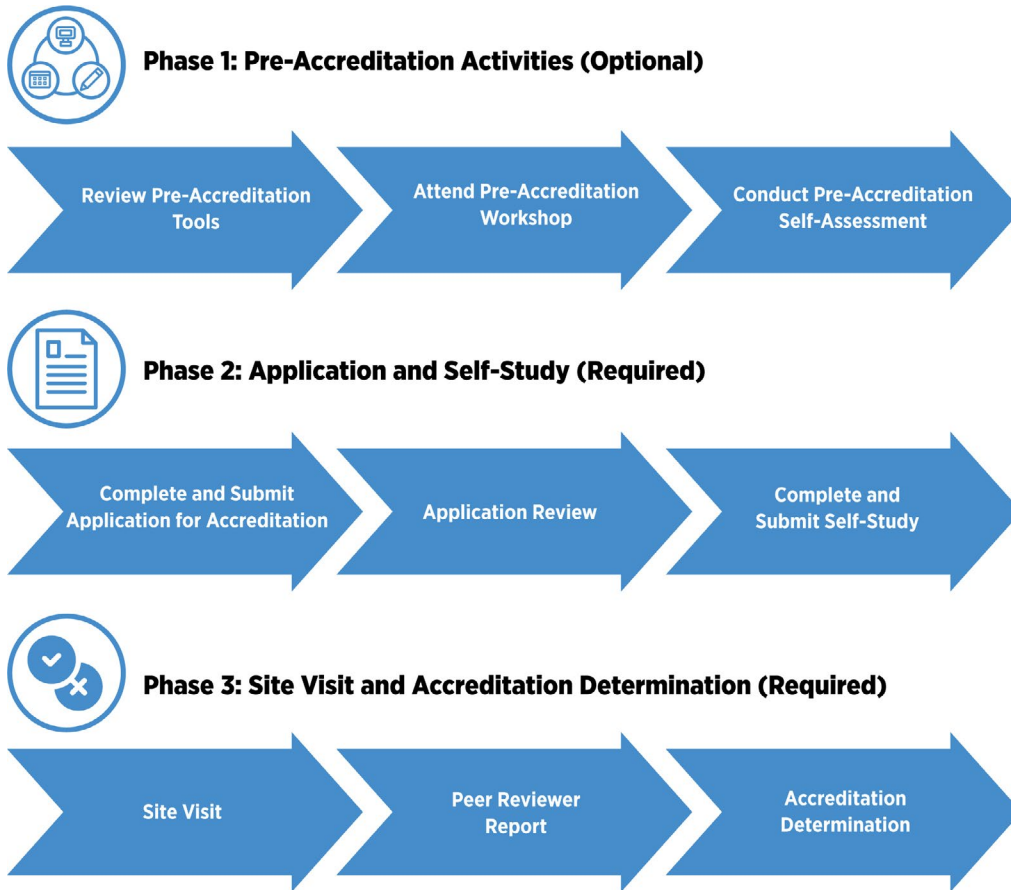Readiness for embarking on the accreditation process also involves ensuring support and internal administrative approval to undergo the accreditation process and identifying the support you will need to pursue the accreditation process.

Depending on your program's readiness, the full pre-accreditation and accreditation process could take 12–24 months. We provide an overview of the process in Section 2 of the Guide.

Section 2

The Accreditation Process

This section provides information about the key steps and activities related to accreditation.

Phase 1: Pre-Accreditation Activities (Optional)

Review Pre-Accreditation Tools → Attend Pre-Accreditation Workshop → Conduct Pre-Accreditation Self-Assessment

Phase 2: Application and Self-Study (Required)

Complete and Submit Application for Accreditation → Application Review → Complete and Submit Self-Study

Phase 3: Site Visit and Accreditation Determination (Required)

Site Visit → Peer Reviewer Report → Accreditation Determination

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Phase 1: Pre-accreditation Activities (Steps 1–3)

If your program meets all the eligibility requirements outlined in Section 1, we recommend the following three steps as optional, preparatory activities that may increase a program's chances to be successful in its accreditation pursuit.

Step 1. Use the Pre-Accreditation Tools and Becoming Accreditation Ready online course

The Think College National Coordinating Center developed several tools, including an online course that provides programs with in-depth information about the standards and helps programs prepare for the accreditation process.

Step 2. Attend a Pre-Accreditation Workshop

The IHEAC offers virtual and in-person workshops periodically throughout the year, so program directors may connect with others who are interested in program accreditation and learn more about the process.

Step 3. Conduct a Pre-Accreditation Self-Assessment

Programs determine their readiness to pursue accreditation by conducting a pre-accreditation self-assessment. Programs should consider their readiness for accreditation by reviewing status relative to each standard area and requirements for evidence (i.e., existing program data, program policy manuals, and processes).

Phase 2: Application and Self-Study (Steps 4–6)

The next three steps (steps 4–6) are required elements in the accreditation process.

Step 4. Application for Accreditation

Programs apply to the IHEAC for accreditation. The application is the first formal step in the accreditation process. The accreditation application requires targeted information about the program (e.g., contact information, meeting eligibility criteria, years of operation, cohorts graduated).

Step 5. Application Review

The IHEAC staff reviews all applications for completeness and provides information and technical assistance to support the applicant. Staff share a list of programs who apply for accreditation with the IHEAC Board. The program applicant and Council staff collaboratively develop a plan and timeline.

Step 6. Complete and Submit the Self-Study Report

The Self-Study Report explains in detail how the program meets each standard. Although the Pre-Accreditation Self-Assessment (in Step 3 of the pre-accreditation preparatory phase) is optional, the Self-Study Report is a mandatory component of accreditation. Programs that opt to conduct a Pre-Accreditation Self-Assessment will likely find it useful in developing their Self-Study Report.

The Self-Study is available in Weave, a secure electronic portal managed by the IHEAC. The IHEAC assigns a Weave log-in to the program director and designees. Weave provides a secure web portal, software, and electronic workspace to assist programs and agencies in assembling all materials needed for accreditation review. Weave partners with the IHEAC to provide an efficient electronic format to manage the Self-Study portion of the program accreditation process. The Self-Study Report describes how the accreditation standards are met and includes evidence that demonstrates attainment of each standard. The Self-Study is divided into three parts:

1. Introduction and Background

2. Program Standard Narratives

3. Evidence Documents

1. Self-Study Introduction and Background

This is a short background and history of your program, including programmatic information, such as the length of the program, number of years in existence, type of institution, size of the institution, size of the program, enrollment, number of students served, on-campus and off-campus student housing (if any), student support options, general curricular structure, and credential(s) that students are eligible to earn. You may also include college and university contextual information.

In this section of the Self-Study, tell your story, frame your program's history, and highlight what you believe are the major accomplishments of your students. You will have additional space within each of the standards to provide relevant information and additional details about how you meet the accreditation standards.

As part of the introduction, programs complete Table 1 (see Appendix A).

2. Self-Study Program Standard Narratives

Weave lists all the standards, guidance, and evidence required for review. Only the program director and their team can view the working document and evidence prior to the Self-Study submission. Weave also provides a workspace for internal program communications. Only the program director and their team can view the communications about the Self-Study.

Narratives are the written portion of the Self-Study where programs explain how their program meets the standard areas and standards.

There are 10 Program Standard Areas:

- Mission
- Student Achievement
- Curriculum
- Faculty and Staff
- Facility, Equipment, and Supply
- Administrative and Fiscal Capacity
- Student Services
- Length and Structure of Program of Study
- Student Complaints
- Program Development, Planning and Review

Across the 10 standard areas, there are 38 standards as shown in Section 3 of this guide. For each of the 38 standards, programs provide a narrative that discusses how the program meets the standard. In addition, some standards have required tables (see Appendix A) that you must complete and insert into the narrative. The narratives must also contain references to documents submitted as evidence. Programs must identify the specific location within the evidence documents by including page numbers and copying and inserting text from the document.

While there is not a word count limit on each narrative, the IHEAC welcomes concise, informative narratives. Evidence documents may be linked to multiple narratives within the Self-Study. The narrative may also include external weblinks. You must clearly label and name all evidence.

3. Self-Study Evidence Documents

Evidence refers to information that programs provide to demonstrate or illustrate how they are meeting a standard. Ideas for relevant evidence are included in Section 3 of the guide. Here is a list of examples of evidence documents that programs may include:

- Policy Manuals
- Admissions Materials
- Photos (with appropriate permissions)
- Website screen shots
- Redacted student schedules and programs of study

- Minutes from meetings demonstrating a policy implementation

- Existing Annual Reports

Once your program submits the completed Self-Study Report, the IHEAC staff conducts a completeness review of the Self-Study. The IHEAC may request additional information to ensure completeness. The IHEAC staff makes all materials available to the Peer Review Team approximately ten weeks prior to the scheduled site visit. Then, they conduct an independent, individual review. Upon completion of the review and at the first Peer Reviewer meeting, reviewers may seek clarification or more information from the applicant.

Helpful Tips for the Self-Study

Get Started – You can start gathering evidence and writing narratives at any time. You do not need to wait until you have applied for accreditation to begin gathering the policies, procedures, and information about your program. Use the Pre-Accreditation Google Drive folder structure to get yourself organized.

Make a Plan – Set aside dedicated time to work on the narratives and organize evidence. Plan out at least a semester to work on the narratives. If you work with a team, divide the work and set a weekly time to check-in.

Ask for Help – If you have a question about Weave or a procedural question, reach out to IHEAC staff. While they are not able to provide feedback on your narrative or evidence, they are able to help problem solve and offer guidance.

Phase 3: Site Visit and Accreditation Determination (Steps 7-9)

Step 7. Site Visit

The IHEAC conducts a 2-day site visit to confirm information and evidence submitted in the application and Self-Study. Prior to the site visit, the IHEAC staff assists the program and the Peer Review Team to establish a site visit schedule that determines when the required stakeholders will be available for interviews (see Sample Site Visit Schedule). Required groups include currently enrolled students, alumni, current and alumni family members, program leaders, staff, faculty, employers, campus partners, and college or university leadership. The site visit is an essential part of the accreditation review. Discussing the program with the program director and staff, current students, alumni, families, campus partners, and university leaders is essential to understanding the quality of the program.

Based on the Peer Review Team's findings during the site visit, the applicant may be asked to provide additional documentation related to the standards. The applicant should provide this information during the site visit or shortly thereafter. To conclude the site visit, the Peer Review Team conducts an exit meeting with the program leaders to provide clarification and review the remaining steps in the accreditation process.

Sample Schedule Day 1 - Program Accreditation Site Visit

Time	Details/Focus Area	Details/Focus Area	Details/Focus Area	Meeting Location
8:00−8:30 am	Welcome, Introductions, and Site Visit Overview (Program Director and Staff + Site Visit Team)			Conference Room
8:30−9:30 am	Brief Campus Tour with Students, Alumni, Staff, and Peer Mentors			Locations across campus
9:45−10:45 am	Group 1 Meet with Peer Mentors	Group 2 Meet with Campus Partners	Group 3 Meet with Peer Mentors	See each Group location and names of attendees
10:45−11:00 am	Break and travel to meeting locations			
11−11:45 am	Group 1 Meet with Campus Partners: Employers	Group 2 Meet with Faculty	Group 3 Meet with Faculty	See each Group location and names of attendees
12noon−1:00 pm	Lunch and Peer Reviewers Meeting			Conference Room
1:15−2:00 pm	Group 1 Meet with Current First Year Students	Group 2 Meet with Campus Partners	Group 3 Meet with Faculty	See each Group location and names of attendees
2:15−3:00 pm	All Together Meeting with University Leadership (e.g., Dean of the College of Education)			University Hall 1
3:00−3:15 pm	Break			Conference Room
3:15−4:00 pm	Group 1 Meet with Alumni via Zoom	Group 2 Meet with Current Parents via Zoom	Group 3 Meet with Program Staff	See each Group locations and names of attend
4:00−4:30 pm	Peer Reviewers Meeting			Conference Room

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Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation

Step 8. Peer Reviewer Report

The Peer Reviewer Report is submitted within seven working days of the completed site visit. The Peer reviewers compile all findings from the Self-Study and site visit into the report and submit it to the IHEAC Board for their consideration. Peer reviewers provide information about how the program meets the standards based on the Self-Study and site visit. The peer reviewers use Peer Reviewer Report Rating when evaluating the Self-Study evidence and site visit information. This evidence can be provided in the Self-Study via Weave, during the site visit, and/or during the site visit completion process.

Evidence is defined as documentation provided by the program to the peer reviewers through the Self-Study and/or the site visit. Peer reviewers may request additional evidence as needed from the program during the site visit process. Peer reviewers will use their professional knowledge and expertise when considering all verbal and written evidence.

Step 9. Accreditation Determination

As highlighted in this guide, the approach to accreditation embodies collaboration and focuses on quality improvement and assurance. The accreditation determination decision lies with the Board of the IHEAC.

Overview of the Accreditation Decision Making Process

Upon review of the Self-Study and the Peer Reviewer Report, the IHEAC Board determines the level of accreditation a program receives, see IHEAC Accreditation Determination. The IHEAC Board meets via video conference as often as is necessary to make decisions in a timely manner, generally within 6-8 weeks of a site visit. At the meeting, the Executive Director (or staff designee) presents an oral summary of the case, and a quorum of board members must be present at the determination meeting.

Peer Reviewer Report Rating

Evidence	Exceeds	Met	Partially Met	Not Met
Quantity	The number of pieces of evidence presented for the standard surpasses what is needed to determine that the standard was met.	The number of pieces of evidence presented for the standard is sufficient to determine that the standard was met.	The number of pieces of evidence presented for the standard is sufficient to determine that the majority of the criteria for the standard were met.	The number of pieces of evidence present for the standard is inadequate to determine that the standard was met.
Quality	The characteristics of the evidence presented for the standard surpasses what is needed to determine that the standard was met.	The characteristics of the evidence presented for the standard is sufficient to determine that the standard was met.	The characteristics of the evidence presented for the standard is sufficient to determine that the majority of the criteria for the standard were met.	The characteristics the evidence present for the standard is inadequate to determine that the standard was met.

IHEAC Board Members render all IHEAC accreditation decisions. A majority of Board Members must agree to the determination. The Executive Director (or staff designee) attends the meeting and witnesses the IHEAC's discussion and decision in real time. In each accreditation case, IHEAC Board Members base their decision on the evidence contained in the program's Self-Study Report and in the Peer Reviewer Evaluation Report. The IHEAC Board applies standards and evidence expectations to award, deny, or revoke accreditation.

IHEAC Accreditation Determination
The IHEAC Board may take one of the following actions:

Accreditation Level	Definition
Accredited	The IHEAC finds that all 10 standard areas are met. The program is accredited for the full term of **seven years**.
Provisionally Accredited	The IHEAC finds that all 10 standard areas are provisionally met, and program is accredited for a term of **three years**.
Not Accredited	The IHEAC finds that the program does not meet all 10 standard areas and does not qualify for accreditation for reasons specified in the decision letter.

Findings of accredited and provisionally accredited are affirmative findings. No further action is needed for findings of *accredited*. A finding of *provisionally accredited* requires the program to complete a follow-up report by a specified date and a focused site visit at the IHEAC's discretion. A finding of *not accredited* is an adverse finding. If the IHEAC Board makes a finding of not accredited, they will outline future steps and guidance in the accreditation determination letter to the program.

Accreditation Terms and Notations
A full accreditation term is seven years. Provisional accreditation is for three years. Accreditation terms take effect immediately at the time of the decision. Terms expire in the designated year at the close of the semester when the site visit took place (June 30 for site visits conducted between January 1 and June 30; December 31 for site visits conducted between July 1 and December 31).

Notification of Decision: IHEAC will send an official communication (i.e., letter via email) to the program director copied to the designated university leader(s) explaining the accreditation decision and the term of accreditation, and/or the date for any required reply by the program.

Appeal of Decision: If a program decides to appeal an IHEAC accreditation decision, the program director must email the IHEAC Board President and the IHEAC Executive Director to notify the IHEAC of the program's decision to appeal. The program director must submit a letter summarizing the reason(s) for appeal within 10 working days of the notification of accreditation determination.

Required Annual Report: To maintain accreditation status, all accredited programs must complete and submit an IHEAC Annual Report. The due date of the annual report is specified as either July 1 or January 1, based on when the program was awarded accreditation.

Public Notification: All IHEAC accreditation determination decisions are posted publicly on www.iheac.org within one week of the decision.

Section 3

Program Standards, Guidance, and Evidence Required for Review

The program accreditation standards reflect a significant step forward in creating authentic and high- quality higher education programs for students with ID. This section includes the complete standards, guidance, evidence requirements, and additional details about required evidence.

Evidence Requirements and Guidance

The purpose of providing evidence in the accreditation process is to ensure reviewers have a full understanding of how the program demonstrates attainment of each standard. Items selected as accreditation evidence provide a concrete, objective and/or measurable demonstration of program policies, procedures, and related materials.

Selecting Evidence

Evidence provides an opportunity for programs to demonstrate quality programming for students to help them complete the program.

There are two key aspects of selecting evidence:

1. Identifying the evidence critical to the review process

2. Determining how much evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the standard is met

Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment plans for program goals

- Brochures and materials about the program Publications about the program

- Website links to the university or program specifics

- Email communications (student names redacted)

- Aggregate student data (e.g., applicants, student yield, time to completion, retention)

- Program data (e.g., courses, internships)

- Program outcome data (e.g., graduation rates, job placement rates)

- Policies and procedures

- Presentation slides (e.g., student orientation, family orientation, staff training)

- Program handbooks (e.g., student, parent, staff handbooks)

- List of college courses that students have enrolled in, including a link to the course catalog with course descriptions

Program Accreditation Standards

with Guidance and Review Requirements

JUMP TO>>>

Mission Standards

Student Achievement Standards

Curriculum Standards

Faculty and Staff Standards

Facility, Equipment, and Supply Standards

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standards

Student Services Standards

Length And Structure Of Program Of Study Standards

Student Complaints Standards

Program Development, Planning, And Review Standard

Mission Standards

Mission Standard 1:

The program has a written mission statement that is consistent with the Higher Education Act (HEA) requirements that the program is a "degree, certificate, or non-degree program at an accredited institution that is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities (ID) who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction" to obtain competitive integrated employment (CIE).

Guidance

The mission statement must be consistent with the statutory and regulatory requirements in the HEA. However, a mission statement is not required to explicitly include the language from the definition of a "student with an intellectual disability" and the definition of a "Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities" (CTP) in the HEA. The intent of this standard is to ensure that the mission standard aligns with the law and does not contradict it. For instance, the HEA states that programs must serve students with ID. A mission statement that affirms that the program serves students with a variety of disabilities would be contradictory to the intent and language in the HEA. See glossary for CTP, ID, and CIE definitions.

The term "gainful employment" is used in the CTP definition in HEA. However, the US Department of Education (ED) no longer considers CTPs to be gainful employment programs. The updated term "competitive integrated employment" is used instead, as it is defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Required for Review

- Provide the mission statement.
- Describe how the mission aligns to the HEA ID and CTP definitions.
  - Provide documentation that the institution is accredited, including the name of the recognized accrediting agency that has accredited the institution
  - Include the weblink to the institution's accreditation or institutional assessment page

Mission Standard 2:

The program communicates the written mission statement to prospective and current students, families, staff, faculty, and the public, and reviews the statement at least every third year, or sooner if there are significant changes to the program.

Guidance

The program communicates the mission statement to a variety of stakeholders through multiple communication channels. There must be a process in place that outlines the schedule and conditions under which the mission statement is reviewed by both internal and external stakeholders, and revised, if necessary, on a regular basis.

Required for Review

- Indicate how the mission statement is communicated to prospective students, students, families, staff, faculty, and the public.

    - Marketing or recruitment materials, or a link to the mission statement

    - Student and/or parent handbooks where mission is referenced

- State when the current mission statement was written or last reviewed, and by whom.

    - Meeting agendas or other documentation indicating when the current mission statement was developed, updated, or reviewed

- State the process and timeline for periodic evaluation of the mission statement.

    - Policy indicating when the current mission statement will be reviewed and by whom

Student Achievement Standards

Student Achievement Standard 1:

The program has established a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy that includes criteria for evaluating student progress in academics, socialization, independent living, and career development, and the impact of such evaluation on student advancement toward program completion. The program specifies how students advance through a full course of study and maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Guidance

The federal definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress is: "A required measurement of a student's academic progress toward their academic goal. Progress must be measured by both grade-based (qualitative) and time/pace of completion (quantitative) standards. For programs lasting one year or less, SAP must be assessed at the end of each payment period. For programs lasting more than one year, SAP must be assessed annually (corresponding with the end of a payment period). SAP must be measured cumulatively."

The preceding federal SAP definition addresses measurement of a student's academic progress, based on substantial public input. SAP for these programs must also address measurement of student progress in the areas of socialization, independent living, and career development.

Required for Review

- Provide the institution's SAP policy and describe how this is applied to students in the program.
- Provide the program SAP policy, including information about how SAP is measured in academics, socialization, career development, and independent living.
    - Weblink and materials that indicate the program's SAP policy, such as admissions materials, orientation materials and presentations, agendas, or other materials that state and explain the SAP policy to students
    - Documentation of the policy and process followed when students fail to meet SAP
    - Description of criteria used to determine SAP in work-based experiences and the process for remediation when students fail to meet SAP

Student Achievement Standard 2:

The program has established a program level Student Learning Outcomes assessment plan and a process that allows it to measure student achievement in varied domains, including academics, social, independent living, and career development.

Guidance

Student learning outcomes articulate what students know and can do in various domains upon completion of the program. Student learning outcomes should be appropriate to the nature of the program, clear, concise, measurable, and observable. The process/plan will include written student learning outcomes expected of all students in the program, the methods used to assess the extent to which the student learning outcomes are met, and a schedule that indicates when data are collected and analyzed.

The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan must contain the following elements:

- Written student learning outcomes, which include the following key elements:

    - Who: (the student) "Upon completion of this program, students will be able to…"

    - What: skill/information

    - How learning/attainment is demonstrated: (e.g., by exam, project, presentation, portfolio, participation in social clubs, completion of internships)

    - Description of the methods the program will use to assess the extent to which the student learning outcomes are met, (e.g., letter grades, rubric graded, pass/fail)

- Data the program will collect

- A schedule that indicates when data are collected and analyzed (at least annually).

Required for Review

- State the student learning outcomes for the program.

    - Weblink to the student learning outcomes

- Describe the assessment plan and process used to determine if the student learning outcomes are achieved.

- Provide the schedule for collecting and analyzing the data.

- Provide documentation that the program tracks student learning outcomes according to schedule for all metrics (academics, social, independent living, career development)

- Indicate how information regarding the achievement of student learning outcomes is shared and with whom

Student Achievement Standard 3:

The program provides an individualized learning plan for each college catalog course a student attends that identifies what the student is expected to learn; how the student will be evaluated; and supports, strategies, accommodations, or modifications that are needed for the student to master essential learning.

Guidance

All students in the program participating in college catalog courses must have a learning plan for the course. "College catalog course" refers to courses in the college catalog that are taken by matriculating students for credit toward a degree or certificate. Supports, strategies, and accommodations identified in the student's person-centered plan are included in the learning plan.

Programs must have a process to outline the individual learning goals and expectations for each student in each college class that is based on the course syllabi and the learning goals for all students in the class, with accommodations and modifications as needed. Note that modifications are only allowed if the course is being audited or otherwise not taken for credit toward a degree. The program will share the learning plan with the student and with the faculty member teaching the course. The program staff will support the student in learning the material, if needed, and to the extent possible will collaborate with the faculty member on evaluation of student learning.

The individual learning plans must be developed by a professional staff person or faculty member. If undergraduate or graduate students are involved, they must be under the supervision of professional staff.

Required for Review

- Describe the process for analyzing syllabi and course expectations, identifying what individual students are expected to learn, and how they will be evaluated and supported.

- Provide several redacted examples of such plans, including the course syllabi upon which it is based.

- Indicate the position(s) of the individuals who conduct this process (e.g., faculty, program staff, graduate students).

Student Achievement Standard 4:

The program provides students with a written report at the end of each academic term (e.g., quarter, semester, trimester), understandable to the student, that clearly indicates evidence of student progress in the areas of academics, socialization, independent living, and career/employment.

Guidance

The program reviews written reports with the student at a minimum at the end of each academic term. The program retains these records for a period of seven years.

Required for Review

- Provide a description of the program's assessment to determine student achievement. (e.g., rubrics, pass/fail, academic grades, portfolios) in each area.

- Provide a copy of the report format that the program reviews with the student, the timeline for report review, and a description of how the report is made understandable to the student.

- Provide several samples of redacted student reports.

Student Achievement Standard 5:

The program sets goals for student pace of completion and retention rates that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to the mission of the program. The program monitors and reports pace of completion and retention rates.

Guidance

Completing the program within a reasonable period of time is important for student retention and success. Retention is also a key factor in determining if a program is meeting the needs of its students and for accountability purposes.

Required for Review

- Provide the goals set by the program for student pace of completion (the amount of time it takes students to complete the program). Provide the actual results—the number and percentage of students who completed the program on time during recent years. For students who did not complete the program on time, provide information about how long they took to complete the program (by year of enrollment).

- Provide the goals set by the program for student retention rates (the number and percentage of students who remain in the program) by year of enrollment and the actual results for the last three years. Indicate the reasons students provide for leaving the program prior to program completion.

- Provide documentation that the data are made publicly available.

  - Provide weblink where data are posted

Curriculum Standards

Curriculum Standard 1:

The program has an inclusive program of study that aligns with the statutory and regulatory requirements for a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program (CTP) in the HEA law and regulations and is consistent with the program's mission and program outcomes.

Guidance

An "inclusive program of study" refers to the courses, expectations, and requirements needed to earn the credential awarded by the program and for program completion. It must align with the HEA requirements in the definition of a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program, although it is not necessary to include the HEA language in the inclusive program of study description. An individual student's course of study within the program will be determined through a person-centered plan.

Various standards cover specific aspects of the CTP program definition. With respect to the inclusion requirements in the CTP program definition, students in the program must be socially and academically integrated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent possible. The program must ensure and document that students meet the minimum 50% inclusion requirements in the HEA, which states that at least half of the students' time must focus on academic components through one or more of the following:

1. Coursework with students without disabilities, including taking courses for credit; or auditing (or otherwise participating in courses for which the student does not receive regular, academic credit); or taking non-credit bearing, non-credit courses.

2. Participating in internships or work-based training in settings with individuals without disabilities

The inclusive program of study describes a list of courses, additional learning experiences (including campus membership, social engagement and independence development activities), and career development and employment activities that make up the requirements that all students must complete to earn the credential.

Students use person-centered planning to choose courses and other learning activities to participate in that support their personal goals, while still meeting the overall requirements of the inclusive program of study. Students complete the number of hours and the range of experiences that are required but have choice within that structure to the greatest extent possible. In the case where they are pursuing a course of study that leads to an industry recognized credential (such as childcare assistant) it is likely that they will need to complete specific, required courses in order to earn the credential.

As indicated in the introduction, this standard applies regardless of whether the US Department of Education (ED) approved the program as a CTP program for financial aid purposes. If ED has approved the program as a CTP program, the program still must provide evidence of meeting this standard. CTP program approval from the ED is not required for the program to be accredited.

Required for Review

- State the intended program outcomes for the program (broad program goals).

- Provide a description of the inclusive program of study that includes a clear and detailed outline that illustrates all required activities of the inclusive program of study that leads to a program credential.

- Provide the program of study description that clearly documents that the students spend at least half- time in courses with students without disabilities, or internships or work-based learning experiences, which may include apprenticeships or paid jobs, in settings with individuals without disabilities.

- Provide redacted documentation of student schedules that demonstrate that students spend at least 50% of their time in inclusive academic coursework or work-based settings.

Curriculum Standard 2:

The program utilizes and documents a person-centered planning approach that provides for maximum choice for the student within the inclusive program of study.

Guidance

In the context of inclusive higher education, person-centered planning (PCP) is used as a framework to plan activities, courses, supports, and problem-solving, that include specific goals that serve as an action plan to achieve the student's vision for their future. Programs may use a variety of planning tools for PCP, and some programs develop their own tools. Visit The Project 10 Transition Education Network to learn more information about PCP and to read descriptions of various PCP planning tools. The PCP should be written in understandable, plain language.

The PCP is a "living document" that is reviewed and, if needed, updated each academic term (e.g., quarter, semester, trimester). A few states have specific requirements regarding PCP for the use of Self- Determination Funds. The PCP requirement in this standard is not intended to duplicate other PCPs the student may be involved in, nor is it intended to create bureaucratic requirements. Rather, the intent is to have the student's educational experience guided by a student-focused plan with specific goals and action steps that will lead to the student's vision for their future.

The PCP must include a description of "what works" for the student, including learning strategies, accommodations, and individualized supports and services. There is no expectation or requirement that the PCP be a lengthy document.

Required for Review

- State the tool or process that is used for person-centered planning.

- If the program has developed a program-specific planning tool, share that tool.

- Describe how person-centered planning informs the individual course of study for each student (i.e., how does it inform course selection, employment experiences, or social experiences).

- State how often the program reviews and updates PCPs.

- Provide PCP review documentation (such as meeting minutes, emails, presentations) from each academic term with students.

- Share several completed PCPs, with personal information redacted.

Curriculum Standard 3:

Students with intellectual disabilities (ID) participate in a wide array of postsecondary level courses from multiple disciplines and departmental/college units that are part of the curriculum for degree or certificate programs.

Guidance

Students must have a wide array of course options to choose from. Limiting students to a few options, such as only physical education courses, is not acceptable.

However, some programs may have a set curriculum that leads to a credential in a specific career, which would by necessity limit choice in terms of academic courses. In those cases, the required curriculum may be used, but the program must still meet the requirements in the law, as outlined in Curriculum Standard 1, that students spend at least 50% of their time in courses with non-disabled students or work settings with non-disabled individuals.

Required for Review

- If restrictions exist that limit course access for students in the program at the institution, provide the access policy.

- Provide a list of the college catalog courses that are part of the curriculum for degree or certificate programs that students in the program are or have taken (for credit, audit, or other participation), indicating how many students in the program have taken these courses in the recent past.

- The list must indicate the course department or discipline. The college catalog courses included in the list must not be "specialized" courses only for students with ID.

- Share several examples of redacted transcripts that clearly show the college catalog courses the students have taken.

- If the program uses a set curriculum for a career-specific certificate, provide the curriculum and information about how the students' participation meets the minimum 50% requirement.

Curriculum Standard 4:

The inclusive program of study is delivered to students physically attending the institution, with some distance learning allowable if it is applicable to and benefits students with ID.

Guidance

The CTP program definition in the HEA regulations states that the program "(2) Is delivered to students physically attending the institution". The preamble to the HEA Title IV regulations states "The Department does not wish to regulate to preclude all distance courses for students with intellectual disability and may permit a limited number of courses to be delivered via distance, as long as the institution explains why it believes the course is applicable to, and benefits, students with intellectual disability. Similarly, we wish to clarify that a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program may include an internship for students or other activities that are located off-campus—the physically-attending requirement does not exclude these activities."

Therefore, the program may offer off-campus learning opportunities, including internships, apprenticeships, or other work experiences. A limited number of courses may be permitted via distance learning, as long as the institution explains why it believes the course is applicable to, and benefits, students with ID. Learning may also include some online aspects of in-person classes.

The requirement limiting distance learning does not apply when the institution of higher education is closed for public health reasons or due to a natural disaster. In such cases, distance learning is allowed, however institutions must still provide social and academic inclusion and individualized supports for students.

Required for Review

- Indicate if students participate in any distance learning, and if so, detail what percentage of students' time is spent in distance learning.

- For any distance-learning courses, indicate why the course is applicable to, and benefits, students in the program.

- If the institution is or was closed due to a natural disaster or public health reason, indicate how distance learning is occurring and how students are provided social and academic inclusion as well as individualized supports.

Curriculum Standard 5:

The inclusive program of study includes instruction, internships, apprenticeships, or work-based learning, and other career development activities necessary to enable students to achieve and sustain competitive integrated employment (CIE) aligned with person-centered goals.

Guidance

The instruction and activities must be geared toward enabling the student to achieve CIE, instead of non- work, sheltered work, and/or work at subminimum wage. (See glossary for CIE definition.)

Required for Review

- Describe the portion of the inclusive program of study related to internships, apprenticeships, work- based learning, or other practices that will enable students to achieve and sustain competitive integrated employment (CIE).

- Provide a list of internships, volunteer or paid employment, or apprenticeships, and other employment- related instruction and practices provided in the current and previous three years.

- For a percentage of students, include a sample of internship profiles, including start and end dates, hours worked per week, and documentation of supports provided (e.g., letters of agreement, observations, logs). Explain the process of determining individualized supports (e.g., job coaching) and how those supports are provided in the workplace.

- Provide data on the employment outcomes of program alumni for the past three years, including data on the number and percentage of students who obtain CIE.

Curriculum Standard 6:

The inclusive program of study includes student engagement in inclusive social experiences and other campus-based activities. Individualized support, instruction, or activities necessary to enhance student social competence must be included in the inclusive program of study.

Guidance

The program adheres to the HEA requirements that students must receive individual supports and services for academic and social inclusion in academic courses, extracurricular activities, and other aspects of the institution of higher education's regular postsecondary program. This standard is intended to address how student engagement is a part of the inclusive program of study, not just what students are allowed to do or access.

The standard also addresses the requirement that each student's person-centered plan must provide and guide individualized support for active campus membership, social engagement, and the development of social competence.

Social competence refers to the ability to handle social interactions effectively and involves communicating and interacting appropriately and effectively with others. Factors in achieving social competence include the development of social skills, self-regulation, interpersonal knowledge and skills, positive self-identity, and planning and decision-making skills. Social engagement includes developing and maintaining reciprocal, meaningful relationships. Social competence and engagement improve the quality of interpersonal relationships and the ability to live interdependently in the community. Social competence and engagement is an important factor in employment success.

Required for Review

- Describe how student engagement is incorporated in the inclusive program of study.

- Describe how campus membership is supported in the inclusive program of study.

- Provide a list of clubs, teams, student activities, or other campus activities each student has participated in for the past two years. Indicate if any students did not participate in any campus activities, and if so, why not.

- Describe how social engagement and meaningful relationships are facilitated and by whom.

- Describe how your program addresses improvement in each student's social engagement and social competence in a manner that is individualized, planned, facilitated, and evaluated.

Curriculum Standard 7:

The inclusive program of study includes individualized support, instruction, or other activities designed to support development of students' independent living skills and to be guided by each student's person- centered plan.

Guidance

The CTP definition in HEA includes supporting students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue independent living instruction. Various programs use a variety of approaches to support students in increasing their independence through, for example, individualized learning activities, such as instruction in technology tools. Nothing in this standard is intended to require the use of separate classes to teach independent living skills.

Examples of areas of independent living skills include, but are not limited to, skills in the following areas that help individuals live and work in the community:

- self-advocacy and self-determination

- "soft skills" competencies, such as critical thinking and problem solving

- financial management

- personal care and management of the home

- health and safety

- nutrition

- use of transportation

Required for Review

- Describe how students are supported to become more independent through aspects of the inclusive program of study (for example, individualized learning activities, such as instruction in the use of technology tools, or using calendars to schedule activities and classes). Provide redacted examples.

- Indicate what specific areas of independent living skills are considered for each student.

- Describe how the improvement in each student's independent living skills is addressed by your program in a manner that is individualized, planned, facilitated, and evaluated and guided by person- centered planning.

Faulty and Staff Standards

Faculty and Staff Standard 1:

Staff and other professionals that work directly for the program have education and training commensurate with their roles and responsibilities and participate in ongoing professional development and training.

Guidance

This standard does not refer to IHE faculty who teach college catalogue courses that the students attend. It refers to the staff and other professionals who work directly for the program, such as a director, academic support staff, administrative and support staff, job specialist, job developer, or job coach.

Professional development and training must include information about intellectual disability (ID) and how ID may impact students' learning, communication, written and oral language, and behavior. It must also include strategies for effectively supporting students, such as positive behavior supports, communication strategies, effective use of technology tools, universal design for instruction, and more.

Required for Review

- Provide an organizational chart that illustrates your program staffing.

- Provide resumes or CVs for all staff.

  - Provide a maximum of two pages per staff with relevant educational background, experience

- Share information on professional development and training provided including materials, schedules, and evaluations of the training.

  - Provide documentation of staff participation in professional development and training

Faculty and Staff Standard 2:

The program must ensure coordination of services and supports between the program and staff and other professionals who do not work directly for the institution, but who serve in a support or instructional capacity for the students.

Guidance

It is essential that meaningful coordination occurs. This standard refers to those programs that have agreements with non-institution agencies, organizations, school districts, or individuals to instruct or support students in the program. Examples are school district employees who act as educational coaches, personnel that provide assistance in activities of daily living, or job specialists who work for an outside agency. This standard does not apply to individual therapists, for example, who work with an individual student at the student's request.

Required for Review

- Indicate if any staff or professionals or outside agencies work directly with the students as part of the program.

- If so, describe the coordination that takes place between the agency and the program.

- Share Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) (if they have been established) between agencies and the program.

- Provide documentation that the outside agencies are fulfilling their MOUs or other written agreements (e.g., the number of students receiving support and the type of support received).

Faculty and Staff Standard 3:

Program staff receive a job description that lists roles and responsibilities. Performance criteria are clear, and evaluation is conducted on a regular basis, consistent with the policies of the institution.

Guidance

The program must provide a clear job description in writing, and performance criteria and procedures for evaluation at the onset of the evaluation period. Evaluations must be regular, fair, and objective and the results shared with staff in writing in a timely manner.

Required for Review

For each position, provide the following:

- A job description that includes roles and responsibilities

- A description of the education and training required for this position

- The process for regular evaluation of this position.

Faculty and Staff Standard 4:

Program management and leadership are retained for a reasonable period of time.

Guidance

Retaining program management and leadership is one of the hallmarks of a quality program. It is recognized that graduate teaching assistants serving in management or leadership roles may leave for other positions upon receiving their graduate degree, so they are not necessarily expected to remain with the program. The program plans for and manages staff turnover and succession.

Required for Review

Indicate the program management and leadership positions (such as Director, Program Coordinator) and indicate how long the person in that position has been serving in that role.

Faculty and Staff Standard 5:

Other individuals who work with students, such as peer mentors and pre-professionals or professionals-in- training (i.e., individuals training to become educators, counselors, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, or physical therapists) are trained and supervised.

Guidance

Peer mentors, pre-professionals, and professionals-in-training provide a variety of important supports and activities in programs and may be paid or volunteer. This standard is intended to address the need for appropriate roles, training, and supervision of such individuals. While these peers and professionals-in- training often play a critical and meaningful role within programs, it is important that they are assigned responsibilities that take their current level of experience and knowledge into account. Professional staff must regularly supervise all such students working directly with students in

the program. For instance, while a peer mentor may be a good academic coach, a professional must develop meaningful learning strategies, accommodations, and modifications for students.

Required for Review

- Provide training schedules and agendas, roles and responsibilities, job postings, and recruitment materials. Indicate who is responsible for providing the training and supervision.

- Provide supervision practices and schedules.

- Provide information about the process that mentors and support personnel can use to request additional support from professional staff, and state how your program effectively conveys that process to mentors and support personnel.

- Provide information about the process that students in the program can use if they believe they are not receiving appropriate support or guidance from peer mentors or support personnel, and state how your program effectively conveys that process to students in the program.

Faculty and Staff Standard 6:

Training and technical assistance are provided to the institution's faculty and staff to develop learning environments, courses, and instruction according to the principles of universal design for learning (UDL).

Guidance

While programs are not in a position to require higher education faculty to deliver instruction in any particular manner, to meet this standard, individuals knowledgeable about UDL must provide training and technical assistance about UDL and how it can support the learning of students with ID. The program, the IHE, an outside agency, or individuals may provide this UDL training and technical assistance. For information on the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) see the UDL Center website or the UDL on Campus website.

Required for Review

- Indicate who is providing the training and technical assistance.

- Provide training agendas, schedules, and evaluations.

- If provided by the program, indicate how many faculty/staff are trained or provided technical assistance per year.

- Provide documentation of the process that faculty and staff can use if they need technical assistance or training.

Faculty and Staff Standard 7:

Information and support about the impact of an individual student's disability on learning, and strategies to support, instruct, and assess the student, are offered to the institution's faculty and staff to improve and optimize the student's learning in courses taught by that faculty or staff.

Guidance

Faculty and Staff Standard 1 addresses general UDL training. Standard 7 addresses information and technical assistance regarding individual students, and it may include UDL as well as other areas. Information regarding "what works" for individual students is developed with student input and the student must agree to the information being shared prior to the information being provided to others. This is part of the person-centered planning that is conducted for each student and is designed to ensure that the student is well-supported by all campus faculty and staff and not just program staff. This kind of respectful and positive information about students will allow them to become full members of the campus community and be understood by a wide range of people on campus.

Information and technical assistance may be provided by the program, the disabilities services office, or by other trained professionals. Such information and technical assistance may involve academic, behavioral, communication, technology, or other types of support. It is not appropriate for undergraduate students to provide technical assistance to faculty and staff.

While the program or institution shall offer information and technical assistance, it is recognized that a program is not in a position to require faculty and non-program staff to utilize it.

Required for Review

- Describe the process the program uses to ensure that faculty and staff are provided such information and technical assistance.

- Indicate the professionals who provide the information and technical assistance, including their titles and qualifications to do so.

- Provide information about the type of information and technical assistance that is provided.

- Describe how the student is involved in developing the information relevant to themselves that is shared with the faculty.

- Explain the process for providing job performance feedback to students from the job/internship supervisor, and provide documentation that students receive regular performance reviews for all work- based experiences.

Facility, Equipment, and Supply Standards

Facility, Equipment, and Supply Standard 1:

Students in the program have access to institutional facilities, equipment, and supplies consistent with other students with the same student status.

Guidance

"Student status" refers to the status of the student in the institution, such as matriculating, degree, non- degree, certificate, continuing education, and others.

This standard only addresses facilities, equipment such as computers, and supplies. See Student Services Standard 5 to address services and social and recreational activities. Institutions are not able to require outside entities such as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to change their rules. However, except in situations controlled by outside entities, students in the program must, at a minimum, have access to institutional facilities consistent with other students with the same student status.

Required for Review

- Document that students in the program have student identification cards that provide access to institutional facilities consistent with other students with the same student status.

- Provide a checklist of the institution's facilities and indicate which facilities are accessible to students in the program on the same basis as other students with the same student status.

- Indicate the student status of the students in your program. If student status limits access, indicate how it does so.

IHEA COUNCIL
Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standards

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 1:

The program is a part of a department or unit of the institution, with a recognized place within its administrative structure.

Guidance

The program must be embedded within the institution's organizational structure. The head of the department or unit is aware of the program and its role within the department/unit.

Required for Review

- Provide an organizational chart or other description of the institution's administrative structure that indicates the department or unit in which the program resides.

- Provide evidence of engagement with key administrators (e.g., deans) of the administrative unit where the program is located.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 2:

The program seeks and considers ongoing input on program development, policies, and practices from a variety of stakeholders that includes students, alumni, and parents.

Guidance

The program has a demonstrated process for soliciting and using stakeholder input at least annually, including input from current and former students and family members. The program must demonstrate how the input impacts program development, policies, and practices, or how the program addresses or implements student and family input.

Required for Review

- Describe which categories of stakeholders are consulted at least annually, in addition to current and former students and parents (e.g., faculty, administrators, peer mentors, community leaders, employers, employment support agencies). Examples are for illustrative purposes only and each category is not specifically required.

- Provide evidence showing how the program obtains input through, for example, an advisory committee, focus groups, surveys, or interviews, and the schedule for doing so.

- Describe any supports or accommodations provided to ensure the meaningful participation of individuals with disabilities and family members.

- Provide documentation (e.g., reports, survey data) that program assessment and evaluation has been conducted.

- Identify what specific changes to program development, policies, practices, or outcomes have resulted from the input.

Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 3:

Programs have a viable plan for current and future fiscal sustainability.

Guidance

Financial resources are adequate and available to meet obligations to students, staff, and other contractual parties. Sustainability plans are adequate, reviewed annually, and updated as needed.

Required for Review

- Provide the program's fiscal sustainability/business plan.

- Describe the funding structure for the program, including sources of income and expenses.

- Provide the current and following year's program budget, including income, expenses, reserves, and emergency funds.

- If the program currently receives grant funding, indicate how the program will be funded when the grant ends.

- If the program has any contracts, MOUs, or partnership agreements with third parties, indicate the nature of any obligations to which these private or public partners have agreed. Examples of public partners include school districts,vocational rehabilitation, adult services, and Medicaid agencies.

Student Services Standards

Student Services Standard 1:

The admission policies and practices ensure that all students who are admitted meet the definition of "students with intellectual disabilities" in the HEA law and regulations.

Guidance

Institutions must adhere to the statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the definition of a student with an intellectual disability (ID) in order to be accredited and must document that it enrolls students who meet the ID definition in HEA. If the educational records for a student being considered for admission do not identify the student as having an intellectual disability, then the institution must obtain documentation establishing that the student has an ID such as: (1) a documented comprehensive and individualized psychoeducational evaluation and diagnosis of an intellectual disability by a psychologist or other qualified professional; or (2) a record of the disability from a local or state educational agency, or government agency, such as the Social Security Administration or a vocational rehabilitation agency, that identifies the intellectual disability.

Documentation of the student meeting the HEA ID definition must be retained for a period of seven years. See the glossary for the definition of students with intellectual disabilities in the HEA and the regulatory language that explains how to document an ID if the student has not been so identified in K–12.

Admissions requirements must not be so challenging that students with ID are unlikely to be admitted. Consider if your admission requirements are unlikely to be met by anyone with more than a mild ID or mild support needs. Note that admissions requirements that require students to be fully independent prior to admission are not acceptable, since supporting students in gaining independent living skills and abilities is one of the components of CTPs in the HEA.

Required for Review

- Provide admission requirements and policies.

- Provide a description of the admissions process, including the complete application for students and details about any required in-person portion of the process, if one exists.

- Provide information about the documentation used to determine that the student has an ID.

- Provide assurance that documentation records are retained for at least seven years.

Student Services Standard 2:

The program provides academic, employment, personal, and other advising and counseling, based on person-centered planning and individual interests and needs, and in collaboration with existing institutional services.

Guidance

Students need ongoing advice, counsel, and support in all aspects of their program and postsecondary experience. This includes advice, counsel, and support for students who live in dormitories or other residential life settings, if students have that opportunity.

Required for Review

- Describe the types of advising and counseling (e.g., academic, career, social, interpersonal, independent living, conflict resolution) students are provided, and how those services and supports are provided in collaboration with existing institutional services.

- List who is providing each type of advising/counseling and how the individuals are trained and supervised, including in resident life settings, if any.

Student Services Standard 3:

Students and families are included in the institution's general orientation programs and additional orientation is provided as needed.

Guidance

Students and their families are included in general IHE orientation programs and the program may provide additional orientations for students and families as needed. Pre-arrival and ongoing orientation is provided (1) to support students in their adjustment to the program and institution and (2) to help them understand the program and institutions rules, policies, and procedures, and health and safety issues.

Students may include other supporters if they do not have families or if their families are not able to be involved.

Student Services Standard 4 addresses communication regarding Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and individual students.

Required for Review

- Provide documentation regarding the orientation programs and activities in which students participate, including documentation that students participate in the general IHE orientation.

Student Services Standard 4:

General information regarding the institution and the program is communicated to students and families on an ongoing basis. The program has a stated process for family engagement and communication that reflects clearly defined roles and responsibilities for students, families, and staff.

Guidance

General information about the institution and the program is provided on a regular basis to students and families. The program also shares a written process to engage and communicate with families that clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of students, families and staff. Students and families are informed in plain language about requirements in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student control over parental involvement, and the option for students to waive FERPA requirements and how to do so.

Students who do not have families and students whose families are not able to be involved can designate other supporters to provide such general information.

Required for Review

- Provide information about the ongoing communication regarding the institution and program that is provided to students and families.

- Provide the information that is given to students and families regarding the defined roles and responsibilities of students, parents, and staff.

- Provide the plain language FERPA information that is shared with students and families and indicate how it is provided, including student control over parental involvement, and the option for students to waive FERPA requirements and how to do so. Information buried in large documents or a website link is not sufficient.

Student Services Standard 5:

Students in the program have access to services and social and recreational activities, consistent with other students with the same student status.

Guidance

"Student status" refers to the status of the student in the institution, such as matriculating, degree, non- degree, certificate, or continuing education.

This standard addresses access to services, social activities, and recreational activities only. See Facility, Equipment, and Supply Standard 1 for access to facilities. Institutions are not able to require outside entities such as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) or fraternities or sororities to change their rules. Typically, fraternities and sororities require their members to be degree-seeking students. However, except in situations controlled by outside entities, students in the program must have, at a minimum, access to the same services, social, and recreational activities as students with the same student status.

If needed, support is provided so students may meaningfully access services and social and recreational activities. Programs may also provide services that supplement those provided by the institution.

Required for Review

- Indicate the student status of the students in your program. If student status limits access, indicate how it does so.

- Provide a checklist of the institution's services, social activities, and recreational activities, and indicate which ones are accessible to students in the program.

- Provide assurance that students in the program have student identification cards that provide access to all appropriate services and social and recreational activities.

Student Services Standard 6:

Individualized supports are provided to students designed to enable the students to seek and sustain competitive integrated employment (CIE). Supports are provided based on the student's interests and person-centered plan.

Guidance

One of the key goals of college programs for students with ID is to prepare students for employment. This employment, as described in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is competitive work in integrated settings. Therefore, the supports must be individualized to meet the student's career goals, as indicated in the student's person-centered plan. See the glossary for definitions of WIOA and CIE.

Required for Review

- Provide information about the program's employment preparation/career activities and services.

- Indicate how supports are individualized to meet students' needs and career goals and provide redacted examples.

- Provide data on employment outcomes for students after program completion.

Length and Structure Of Program of Study Standards

Length and Structure of Program of Study Standard 1:

The program aligns with the college calendar and specifies the number of weeks of instructional time and the number of credit hours or clock hours in the program, including the equivalent credit hours or clock hours associated with noncredit or reduced credit courses or activities that fulfill requirements of the program credential.

Guidance

A clock hour is defined as a period of time consisting of

1. a 50- to 60-minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60-minute period;
2. a 50- to 60-minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60- minute period; or
3. sixty minutes of preparation in a correspondence course.

The definitions of credit and clock hours may be found in the most recent Federal Student Aid Handbook.

For purposes of determining credit hours or clock hours, programs for students with ID may count a broad range of activities. Audited courses, individualized instruction to support independent living, meetings with a career adviser, participating in college clubs, or attending campus events with a peer mentor are all examples of activities that could count toward the program clock hours. If these activities fulfill requirements of the program credential, they can be counted as clock or credit hours in the program. All activities included in credit hours or clock hours must have a grading/ evaluation process.

Required for Review

- Provide evidence showing that the program's calendar aligns with the institution's calendar.

  - Provide a copy of the academic calendar (e.g., weblink)

- Indicate the total number of credit hours or clock hours in the program, inclusive of all aspects of the program of study, such as college courses, specialized courses, internships, and other required learning activities.

Length and Structure of Program of Study Standard 2:

The program clearly describes the educational credential or credentials offered (e.g., degree, certificate, or non-degree credential) that the IHE issues.

Guidance

The credential(s) must have been approved through a formal process at the institution. In some cases, a credential that is approved through a state agency, commission, licensure board, or industry-recognized credential approval process may serve as a program credential if it encompasses all requirements in the accreditation program standards. Such a credential may also serve as a part of the program credential. In every case, the institution must agree to issue the credential.

Required for Review

- State the name of the credential(s) and whether it is a degree, non-degree, or certificate credential.

- Provide documentation that the credential(s) has undergone an official approval process at the institution. If all or part of the credential has been approved by a state agency, commission, licensure board, or industry, provide documentation of that approval.

Student Complaints Standards

Student Complaint Standard 1:

The program has established relationships with offices within the institution involved with student complaints or discipline, to facilitate communication and collaboration.

Guidance

The program has proactively developed ongoing relationships with various campus offices to promote a better understanding of students in the program and to develop plans for collaboration in supporting the students. The program is required to have working relationships with campus security, the Title IX office, and the office that deals with student code of conduct. Programs may also wish to work with other offices, such as student affairs, residence life, and the legal department.

Required for Review

- Describe the relationships with offices within the institution involved with student complaints or discipline, including campus security, the Title IX office, and student complaint office.

- Share information about any agreements made with these offices, or other offices, to facilitate support for students in the program who wish to file a complaint or who have a complaint filed against them, or other relevant concern.

Student Complaints Standard 2:

The institution's grievance procedures are understandable, provided to, and discussed with, students in the program and their parents.

Guidance

An accessible (i.e., written at an accessible reading level, uses graphics, explains abstract concepts) version of the code of conduct, including Title IX requirements, is provided to students and parents or other supporters, if applicable. Program staff review the code of conduct with students, related to both academic rights and responsibilities and expected student behavior in various contexts.

Required for Review

- Accessible version of code of conduct.

- Communication/information dissemination plan for sharing code of conduct with students and parents.

Student Complaints Standard 3:

Support is provided to students who have complaints lodged against them as well as students who seek to lodge a formal written complaint. Support is available throughout the grievance process and throughout any actions that result and if a student is at risk of being expelled or urged to exit the program.

Guidance

Support must be provided for a student when a complaint is filed against a student in the program, or when a student files a complaint, or when a student is in danger of being suspended, expelled, or asked to exit a program prior to program completion. Students may request support from/involvement of their parents/designated supporters in complaint procedures. Reasonable accommodations must be provided, as applicable. All due process procedures that are established by the IHE for students involved in complaints must be followed for students in the program, with support as needed.

Required for Review

- Document the procedures the program uses to help the student understand the complaint, and to support the student through the entire grievance process, including facilitating written and oral communication between the student, the family (if the student has signed a FERPA waiver), and the institution.

- Explain the process that is used to provide a clear explanation of the grievance process and assistance provided when a student wants to file a complaint.

- Provide copies of understandable materials regarding grievance procedures that are shared with the student. Documentation must include how written and oral communication is facilitated between the student, the family parents/designated supporters (if the student has signed a FERPA waiver), and the institution.

- Indicate how information is provided to the student and the parents/designated supporters (if the student has signed a FERPA waiver) when there is a violation or difficulty that could lead to suspension, expulsion, or encouragement to leave the program prior to completion.

- State the procedures followed if a student violates a program rule or institution code of conduct, or is at risk of suspension, expulsion, or early exit for other reasons, such as academic or behavioral difficulties, and what steps are taken to support the student prior to dismissal or encouragement to exit the program.

  - Include all policies and procedures related to student grievances as stated above

  - Provide communications (redacted) explaining policies

  - Provide the appeals process for students at risk of suspension, expulsion, or early exit from the IHE or the program

  - Provide student orientation presentation materials related to student grievances and appeals process

Program Development, Planning, and Review Standard

Program Development, Planning, and Review Standard 1:

The program, along with key stakeholders, evaluates its program components, student assessment practices, student services, policies, activities, student learning outcomes, and program outcomes, at a minimum of every three years. The program implements program revisions based on the evaluation for continuous quality improvement.

Guidance

Program evaluation and continuous program improvement are important components of quality programs. Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 2 addresses stakeholder input, including input from current and former students and family members. This standard addresses how that input and other ongoing program evaluation is used for continuous improvement.

Required for Review

- Provide a description of the evaluation process, including metrics used for evaluation, stakeholders involved, the agency or individual responsible for conducting the evaluation, and the timing of evaluation.
- Provide documentation of program evaluation, including stakeholder involvement.
  - Provide the most recent program evaluation or summary report of the evaluation
- Provide the date the last program evaluation took place and the schedule for the next evaluations.
- Share evidence that program policies and practices are informed by the evaluation data.

Program Development, Planning, and Review Standard 2:

The institution verifies that students who receive federal financial aid meet the definition of a student with an intellectual disability in the Higher Education Act (HEA) law and regulations.

Guidance

Only students with an ID may receive federal financial aid under the CTP program provisions of the HEA. Institutions provide evidence to accrediting agencies that only students with an ID receive Title IV aid under the HEA provisions for students with ID. Records must be retained for seven years.

The definition of ID in the HEA is in the glossary. It includes obtaining a record from a local educational agency that the student is or was found eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). If the educational record does not identify the student as having an ID, then the institution must obtain documentation as outlined in the HEA regulations and described in Student Services Standard 1.

Required for Review

- Provide documentation that only students with ID are receiving federal student aid.

- Explain the process used for verification of ID.

    - Provide the program's admissions policy, including student documentation of ID

- Indicate where records are stored and for how long the records are retained.

Appendix

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Adapted with permission from National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup Report (2021) and Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (2023).

Access
For purposes of this accreditation process, "access" means full participation with individual support.

Accreditation Action Report
An official record of actions taken by the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC) on a program's status. This report is posted publicly on the website.

Accreditation Decision
Determination made by the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council board, based on the 10 Standard Areas, the Self-Study Report, and the Peer Reviewer Report, marking the conclusion of an accreditation review. For more information see https://www.iheacouncil.org/

Accreditation Liaison
A staff member of the IHEAC designated to facilitate and assist programs through the accreditation review process including the Self-Study and site visit.

Accreditation Workgroup
An ad-hoc body of interested professionals, parents, and experts in inclusive higher education convened by the Think College National Coordinating Center to develop recommendations for the program accreditation agency (IHEAC) standards, processes, and practices. For more information about the workgroup see https://thinkcollege.net/projects/ncc/program-accreditation

Annual Report
A program's yearly update to the IHEAC regarding the context and work of relevant programs. The Annual Report addresses how the quality affirmed in the most recent accreditation decision is being maintained or enhanced and what steps programs are taking toward continuous improvement to address improvement opportunities identified in their Self-Study.

Board Members of the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC)
The decision-making body of the program accreditation agency, the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council. Determines the accreditation status of a program based on an accreditation review. For more information see https://www.iheacouncil.org/

Cohort
A group of college program directors (or representatives) who may decide to participate in a joint monthly check-in call to receive updates, ask questions, and, to the extent desired, provide mutual support and feedback during the accreditation process.

Commendation
Notation that the IHEAC Board may attach to an accreditation action (decision); a commendation is awarded when evidence shows outstanding performance on one or more aspects of a standard or the full standard.

Comment
Notation that the IHEAC Board may attach to an accreditation action (decision); a comment is an observation that gives useful feedback to the program on a finding that is noteworthy but not significant enough to be cited as a commendation or concern.

Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)

From the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705), for individuals with disabilities. (29 U.S.C. §3102 (11)):

The term "competitive integrated employment" has the meaning given the term in section 7 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705), for individuals with disabilities. (29 U.S.C. §3102 (11))

From the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: The term "competitive integrated employment" means work that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment)

(A) for which an individual

(i) is compensated at a rate that

(I)(aa) shall be not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 206(a)(1) of this title or the rate specified in the applicable State or local minimum wage law; and

(bb) is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; or

(II) in the case of an individual who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are self- employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and

(ii) is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees;

(B) that is at a location where the employee interacts with other persons who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing services to such

employee) to the same extent that individuals who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with other persons; and

(C) that, as appropriate, presents opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.

(29. U.S.C. §705 (5))

Completer

A college student candidate who has successfully finished a program.

Comprehensive Transition Postsecondary Program (CTP)

From the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA):

(1) Comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities

The term "comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities" means a degree, certificate, or nondegree program that meets each of the following:

(A) Is offered by an institution of higher education.

(B) Is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education in order to prepare for gainful employment.

(C) Includes an advising and curriculum structure.

(D) Requires students with intellectual disabilities to participate on not less than a half-time basis as determined by the institution, with such participation focusing on academic components, and occurring through 1 or more of the following activities:

(i) Regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution.

(ii) Auditing or participating in courses with nondisabled students offered by the institution for which the student does not receive regular academic credit.

(iii) Enrollment in noncredit-bearing, nondegree courses with nondisabled students.

(iv) Participation in internships or work-based training in settings with nondisabled individuals.

(E) Requires students with intellectual disabilities to be socially and academically integrated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent possible.(20 U.S.C. §1140 (1))

Concern
Notation that the IHEAC Board may attach to an accreditation action (decision); a concern is a shortcoming in relation to one or more aspects of a standard. Evidence regarding progress in addressing concerns must be presented in the program's Annual Report.

Continuous operation
The term "continuous operation" means that the principal educational activities of an institution, for which accreditation or reaccreditation is sought, have proceeded as scheduled without interruption. Exceptions may be recognized after the fact when the interruption is caused by forces of nature, civil disorder, or abrupt and unforeseeable change in law or regulation affecting the institution.

Full accreditation
Seven-year award granted by the Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC) affirming a program meets the standards.

Guidance manual
The guidelines and information that programs must use to prepare and apply for accreditation.

Higher Education Act (HEA) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA)
The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA; P.L. 89-329) was legislation signed into United States law on November 8, 1965, in order to provide funding to colleges and universities, financial aid to students, and to create a National Teacher Corp. It has been reauthorized eight times, most recently as the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. (HEOA; P.L. 110-315)

Inclusion
From the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act:

The term "inclusion", used with respect to individuals with developmental disabilities, means the acceptance and encouragement of the presence and participation of individuals with developmental disabilities, by individuals without disabilities, in social, educational, work, and community activities, that enables individuals with developmental disabilities to-

(A) have friendships and relationships with individuals and families of their own choice;

(B) live in homes close to community resources, with regular contact with individuals without disabilities in their communities;

(C) enjoy full access to and active participation in the same community activities and types of employment as individuals without disabilities; and

(D) take full advantage of their integration into the same community resources as individuals without disabilities, living, learning, working, and enjoying life in regular contact with individuals without disabilities. (42 U.S.C. §15002 (15))

Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council (IHEAC)

A program accreditation agency established in March 2023 as a nonprofit entity with the mission of increasing quality and accrediting programs for students with intellectual disability located at IHEs as defined above. For more information see https://www.iheacouncil.org/

Inclusive Program of Study

An "inclusive program of study" refers to the courses, expectations, and requirements needed for program completion. It must meet the HEA requirements for a Comprehensive Transition Program, including meeting the definition of a student with an intellectual disability. (See Student Services Standard 1.) An individual student's course of study within the program will be determined through a person-centered plan.

Institution of Higher Education (IHE)

From the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 :

§1001. General definition of institution of higher education (an) Institution of higher education

For purposes of this chapter, other than subchapter IV, the term "institution of higher education" means an educational institution in any State that-

(1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, or persons who meet the requirements of section 1091(d) of this title;

(2) is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;

(3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, or awards a degree that is acceptable for admission to a graduate or

professional degree program, subject to review and approval by the Secretary;

(4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; and

(5) is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time. (20 U.S.C. §1001(a))

(b) Additional institutions included

For purposes of this chapter, other than subchapter IV, the term "institution of higher education" also includes:

(1) any school that provides not less than a 1-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation and that meets the provision of paragraphs (1), (2), (4), and (5) of subsection (a) of this section; and

(2) a public or nonprofit private educational institution in any State that, in lieu of the requirement in subsection (a)(1), admits as regular students individuals-

(A) who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located; or (B) who will be dually or concurrently enrolled in the institution and a secondary school. (20 U.S.C. §1001(b))

Learning Modules

A set of online modules designed to help program staff and peer reviewers to develop their understanding of the 10 Program Accreditation Standard Areas and the 38 Program Standards.

Off-Site Review

A series of virtual meetings conducted by the Peer Review Team based on team members' individual reading of the program's Self-Study. The off-site review includes a list of clarifying questions for the program to address prior to or at the beginning of the site visit.

Peer Review

The peer review segment of the accreditation cycle includes off-site and on-site reviews and culminates in a Peer Reviewer Report submitted electronically to the IHEAC.

Peer Reviewer

A trained volunteer who serves as a peer reviewer on a Peer Review Team in off-site and on-site components of the accreditation review process. The reviewer has relevant experience (in a role such as a past or current program director or other as appropriate to the programs seeking accreditation) and familiarity with the program and its completers.

Peer Review Team

A group consisting of trained peer reviewers who conduct a review. Teams include reviewers who fill the role of a team lead and a local practitioner nominated by the program. The size of the team is based on the size and complexity of the program(s) under review. A typical team consists of 3–5 individuals.

Peer Review Team Report

Report authored by reviewers summarizing the team's findings during the site visit. The team shares a draft of the report with the program for factual review and correction; the final report is shared with both the program and the IHEAC Board.

Peer Reviewer-in-training

A prospective member of the Peer Review Team who observes a team's work throughout an accreditation review. Like any site visit observer, this individual participates only with the permission of the host program.

Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

Person-centered planning is used to develop and monitor the attainment of student goals based on the student's vision for their future. The student-focused plan is developed at the beginning of their educational experience and is updated throughout their postsecondary education.

Students control who participates in their planning activities and students' interests, preferences, desires, and short and long-term goals are evident in:

- Course selection

- Career development experiences

- Campus activities

- Social connections

- Housing

- Student planning involves family input when desired by the student.

A student-focused process is used (e.g., STAR, PATH, Lifecourse) and documented.

Pre-accreditation

Accreditation activities that are conducted by the program prior to officially applying to the IHEAC to become accredited.

Pre-accreditation Tools

Tools that programs complete as a self-assessment prior to applying to become accredited.

Provisional Accreditation

Three-year accreditation term granted by the IHEAC Board that affirms a program provisionally meets all 10 standard areas.

Program

A set of academic courses and experiences required by an accredited university or college that leads to a university-approved credential.

Program Specification Table

A standard format for reporting a program's specific enrollment and student completion information. This table is included in the Accreditation Proposal, Self-Study, Peer Review Report, Annual Report, and Accreditation Action Report. A template for the table is available on the IHEAC website along with sample entries.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Federal definition of SAP:

> *"A required measurement of a student's academic progress towards their academic goal. Progress must be measured by both grade-based (qualitative) and time/pace of completion (quantitative) standards. For programs lasting one year or less, SAP must be assessed at the end of each payment period. For programs lasting more than one year, SAP must be assessed annually (corresponding with the end of a payment period). SAP must be measured cumulatively. For the purposes of these standards, SAP must also address the qualitative and quantitative measurement of student progress in the areas of socialization, independent living, and career development." (34 CFR 668.34)*

Self-Study Report

Self-study document presenting evidence that a program meets the standards. The report includes an overview of the program's scope and context, evidence to support the claim that each of the 10 standard areas is met, and designated appendices.

Site visit liaison

An IHEAC staff member assigned to a particular review to support the Peer Review Team and program throughout the process. The site visit liaison observes the virtual off-site review meetings and the exit meeting (conducted at the end of the site visit) for consistency.

Site visit observer

An individual granted permission by a program to attend the on-site review.

Standards

A list of 10 Program Standard Areas (38 Program Standards) that programs use to demonstrate the quality of their program. The full list of the program standards along with the guidance and evidence required may be found in Section 3 of this guide.

Student with an intellectual disability

From HEOA:

> The term "student with an intellectual disability" means a student-
>
> (A) with a cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in-
>
> (i) intellectual and cognitive functioning; and
>
> (ii) adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and
>
> (B) who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.]. (20 U.S.C. §1140 (2))

Student with ID not identified in K–12

The HEOA regulations, under Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1088, 1099c, 1141) PART 668—STUDENT ASSISTANCE GENERAL PROVISIONS, §668.233 Student eligibility, describe the responsibility of the institution in determining if the student is, or was, eligible for special education and related services under IDEA, and **how to determine if the student has an intellectual disability if the student was not so identified under IDEA:**

In the discussion section of the regulations, further clarification is provided:

> *The institution obtains a record from a local educational agency that the student is or was eligible for special education and related services under the IDEA. If that record does not identify the student as having an intellectual disability, as described in paragraph (1) of the definition of a student with an intellectual disability in § 668.231, the institution must also obtain documentation establishing that the student has an intellectual disability, such as—*
>
> *(1) A documented comprehensive and individualized psycho-educational evaluation and diagnosis of an intellectual disability by a psychologist or other qualified professional; or*
>
> *(2) A record of the disability from a local or State educational agency, or government agency, such as the Social Security Administration or a vocational rehabilitation agency, that identifies the intellectual disability. (Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1845−NEW4) (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1091)*

In the discussion section of the regulations, further clarification is provided:

> *In the preamble to the NPRM, the Department stated that an institution, as the party responsible for determining students' eligibility for the Federal Pell, FSEOG, and FWS programs, would be allowed to accept the most recent documentation, even if it is more than a few years old. To further clarify, we do not believe it is appropriate to require in these regulations that the documentation submitted by the student have a minimum or maximum age, as long as the information used is the best available under the circumstances.*

Third-party comment
Feedback collected from the public and various stakeholders about a program 4−6 months prior to the site visit that becomes part of the program's accreditation review.

Training Modules
Online professional learning provided to prepare volunteers consistently for the Peer Reviewer role.

Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID)
From the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008:

> *An institution of higher education (or consortium) receiving a grant... shall use the grant funds to establish a model comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities (TPSID) that—*
>
> *(c) The institution obtains a record from a local educational agency that the student is or was eligible for special education and related services under the IDEA. If that record does not identify the student as having an intellectual disability, as described in paragraph (1) of the definition of a student with an intellectual disability in § 668.231, the institution must also obtain documentation establishing that the student has an intellectual disability, such as—*
>
> *(1) A documented comprehensive and individualized psycho-educational evaluation and diagnosis of an intellectual disability by a psychologist or other qualified professional; or (2) A record of the disability from a local or State educational agency, or government agency, such as the Social Security Administration or a vocational rehabilitation agency, that identifies the intellectual disability. (Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1845−NEW4) (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 109*

(d) (1) serves students with intellectual disabilities;

(2) provides individual supports and services for the academic and social inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in academic courses, extracurricular activities, and other aspects of the institution of higher education's regular postsecondary program;

(3) with respect to the students with intellectual disabilities participating in the model program, provides a focus on-

(A) academic enrichment;

(B) socialization;

(C) independent living skills, including self-advocacy skills; and

(D) integrated work experiences and career skills that lead to gainful employment;

(4) integrates person-centered planning in the development of the course of study for each student with an intellectual disability participating in the model program;

(5) participates with the coordinating center established under section 1140q(b) of this title in the evaluation of the model program;

(6) partners with one or more local educational agencies to support students with intellectual disabilities participating in the model program who are still eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.], including the use of funds available under part B of such Act [20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.] to support the participation of such students in the model program;

(7) plans for the sustainability of the model program after the end of the grant period; and

(8) creates and offers a meaningful credential for students with intellectual disabilities upon the completion of the model program.

(20 U.S.C. §1140g)

Acronym Key

Adapted with permission from National Coordinating Center Accreditation Workgroup Report (2021).

ABLE Act
Stephen Beck, Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience Act

ADA
Americans with Disabilities Act

CHEA
Council for Higher Education Accreditation

CIE
Competitive Integrated Employment

CTP
Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program (for students with intellectual disabilities)

ED
United States Department of Education

FERPA
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

FSA
Federal Student Aid

HEA
Higher Education Act of 1965 most recently amended in 2008

HEOA
Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008

ID
Intellectual Disability

IDEA
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP
Individualized Education Program

IHE
Institution of Higher Education

IHEAC
Inclusive Higher Education Accreditation Council

IHEC
Inclusive Higher Education Committee

IPSE
Inclusive Postsecondary Education

LEA
Local Education Agency

MOU
Memoranda of Understanding

NACIQI
National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity

NCC
National Coordinating Center

OMB
Office of Management and Budget

OPE
Office of Postsecondary Education in the US Department of Education

OSERS
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the US Department of Education

PCP
Person-Centered Plan

Pre-ETS
Pre-Employment Transition Services

RISE Act
Respond, Innovate, Succeed and Empower Act

RSA

Rehabilitation Services Administration

SAP

Satisfactory Academic Progress

SLO

Student Learning Outcomes

SPD

School Participation Division

TPSID

Transition and Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

UDL

Universal Design for Learning

VR

Vocational Rehabilitation

WIOA

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Tables

Table 1. Student Enrollment and Graduates
This table relates to multiple standards.

Please report a minimum of 3 academic years of students in the table below. An academic year is defined as the fall semester through the summer semester of the following calendar year. (e.g., September 2023 – August 2024)

Name of Credential granted by the institution of higher education. If the IHE grants more than 1 credential, create additional rows as needed.	Academic Year	Number of Enrolled Students	Number of Student Graduates

Physical Location of Program: _____
(if more than one campus, specify additional locations)

Instructional Modality (face-to-face, online, hybrid): _____

Table 2. Program Staffing
This table relates to multiple standards.

Name	Title	Start Date/Year	Program Responsibilities	Credentials	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

* The calculation of full-time equivalent (FTE) is an employee's scheduled hours divided by the employer's hours for a full-time work week. When an employer has a 40-hour work week, employees who are scheduled to work 40 hours per week are 1.0 FTEs. Employees scheduled to work 20 hours per week are 0.5 FTEs.

Table 3. Retention Rate

This table relates to multiple standards.

Academic Year	Number of Students Entering	Number of Students Graduating	Retention Rate

*Retention rate measures the percentage of first-time students who return to the same institution the following fall. Graduation rates measure the percentage of first-time students who complete their program at the same institution within an academic year, which is defined as fall semester through summer semester of the following year.

Table 4. Facilities Checklist
for Facilities, Equipment, and Supply Standard 1 (FES1)

Facility Name	Accessible to students in the program the same way it is accessible to students outside the program? Yes/No	Does this facility require all students to have a university issued Identification card (ID)? 1: Accesses facility using their own ID card, 2: Uses facilities through a peer mentor, 3: Uses faculty or staff access, 4: N/A- No ID card is required for accessing these facilities.	Do student in the program have limited access? If so, how? This means that the student in th program ha their own access and does not ha to access these facilities with peer mentor
Athletic Center(s)			
Classroom(s)			
Computer Lab(s)			
Printer(s)			
Dining Hall(s)			
Dorm(s)			
Gym(s)			
Health Center			
Interfaith Chapel			
Library			
Recreational Facilities			
Student Union			
Theater/ Auditorium			
Kitchen or Common Areas in Residence Halls			
Laundry Facilities			
Instructional Technology (IT) computer support			
Rental Books			
Campus Transportation			
Speech Clinic (or other related service clinics)			
Counseling Services			
Disability Support Services (or Accessibility Resources)			
Campus Police and Safety			

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Table 5. Faculty Professional Development
for Faculty and Staff Standard 1 (FS1)

Date of Training	Title of Training	Training Provided by	Number of Faculty Completed

Table 6. Program Management and Leadership
for Faculty and Staff Standard 4 (FS4)

Name	Program Management and Leadership Title	Number of Years in Role

Table 7. Training for Additional Individuals who Provide Supports to Students

Faculty and Staff Standard 5 (FS5)

Date of Training	Position (peer mentor, pre-professional, professional in training)	Topic	Who Provided the Training	Who is Responsible for Supervision of Individuals	Length of Training

Table 8. Training on Universal Design for Learning
for Faculty and Staff Standard 6 (FS6)

If the program provides UDL training and technical assistance, indicate how many faculty and staff are trained per year

Date of Training or Technical Assistance	Topic	Number of Faculty in Attendance	Number of Staff in Attendance	Length of Training

Table 9. Current Budget and Projected Budget
for Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 3 (AFC3)

Budget Category	Current Budget Year	Projected Budget Year
Income (e.g., tuition, grants, foundations, Medicaid)		
Expenses (e.g., personnel, fringe, technology, travel, materials)		
Reserves (e.g., endowment, other funding)		
Emergency Funds		
Other (does not fit in a category above)		
TOTAL		