



*Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Colleges  
1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097*

## **DIFFERENTIATED REVIEW PROCESS**

### **Policy Statement**

All institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) are required to undergo a review for reaffirmation of accreditation every ten (10) years. After being granted initial accreditation, new member institutions are reviewed for reaffirmation of accreditation after five (5) years, then every ten (10) years thereafter. While maintaining the rigor associated with the reaffirmation of accreditation process, member institutions may participate in a Differentiated Review Process if they meet eligibility requirements. The reaffirmation review occurs in accordance with procedures outlined in pertinent SACSCOC documents including handbooks and other policies (see *the Principles of Accreditation* and *the “Handbook for Institutions Seeking Reaffirmation of Accreditation”*). The differentiated review process will include compiling and submitting a **modified** Compliance Certification, documenting compliance with the *Principles of Accreditation*, and submitting a Quality Enhancement Plan for review by evaluation committees. The Differentiated Review Process includes off-site and on-site reviews, and institutions document fewer *The Principles of Accreditation* standards during the initial process (institutions may need to address additional standards based on reports or supplemental information discovered). Institutions may **not** participate in the Differentiated Review process for two consecutive decennial reaffirmation of accreditation processes.

### **Procedures**

#### **Eligibility Process**

In accordance with the “Time Line for Institutional Responses to the Reports of Visiting Committees” section of the SACSCOC [\*Deadlines for Reports and Profiles\*](#) policy, institutions within the reaffirmation class (Tracks A & B) approaching the reaffirmation of accreditation process may apply to participate in the Differentiated Review Process. SACSCOC staff will identify member institutions that meet the initial eligibility criteria.

#### **Eligibility Criteria**

Institutions must demonstrate the following eligibility criteria to participate in the Differentiated Review Process:

- Has been accredited by SACSCOC for at least ten (10) years.
- Has not been placed on sanction (Warning or Probation) by SACSCOC within the last five (5) years.
- Has not submitted a SACSCOC Monitoring Report within the last five (5) years.

- Eligibility to participate in this process may be rescinded if the institution no longer meets the eligibility criteria.
- Has not had a significant number of substantive changes within the last five (5) years.
  - An example of “significant number of substantive changes” occurs if the number of new instructional sites exceeds the mean number of such new sites for the reaffirmation class and represents more than a 50% increase for the institution in the last five (5) years.

The eligibility committee may consider additional conditions that may prevent an institution from participating in a differentiated review to include, the institution:

- Has not experienced any of the following in the last five (5) years:
  - Constant change in institutional CEO position.
  - Significant (20% or more) increase/decrease in enrollment over the last five (5) years.
  - Has not demonstrated issues with board/administrative distinction.
- Has not been placed on sanction from a programmatic, professional or national athletic association or accreditor.
- Has not experienced monitoring for its institutional finances in the last five (5) years.

An eligibility review committee will consider the eligible institutions’ responses to the aforementioned eligibility criteria and recommend their participation to the Executive Council. The Executive Council will confirm an institution’s eligibility to participate in the Differentiated Review Process. Institutions will receive written notification of eligibility and must affirm their participation to the SACSCOC President, in writing. Institutions may not appeal the Executive Council’s decision.

### Modified Compliance Certification Document

All SACSCOC member institutions that meet the aforementioned eligibility criteria are approved to engage in the Differentiated Review Process. Participants must complete a *modified* compliance certification document consisting of 40 Core Requirements and Standards, as listed below:

Standard	Standard
CR 1.1* ( <i>Integrity</i> )	CR 9.1* ( <i>Program content</i> )
CR 2.1 ( <i>Institutional mission</i> )	CR 9.2* ( <i>Program length</i> )
CR 4.1 ( <i>Governing board characteristics</i> )	CR 9.3* ( <i>General educational requirements</i> )
Standard 4.2.d ( <i>Conflict of interest</i> )	Standard 10.2* ( <i>Public information</i> )
Standard 4.2.f ( <i>External influence</i> )	Standard 10.5* ( <i>Admissions policies and practices</i> )
Standard 4.2.g ( <i>Board self-evaluation</i> )	Standard 10.6* ( <i>Distance and correspondence education</i> )
Standard 4.3 ( <i>Multi-level governance</i> ) [if applicable]	Standard 10.7* ( <i>Policies for awarding credit</i> )
CR 5.1 ( <i>Chief executive officer</i> )	CR 11.1* ( <i>Library and learning/information resources</i> )
Standard 5.2.a ( <i>CEO control</i> )	CR 12.1* ( <i>Student support services</i> )
Standard 5.2.b ( <i>Control of intercollegiate athletics</i> )	Standard 12.4* ( <i>Student complaints</i> )
Standard 5.2.c ( <i>Control of fund-raising activities</i> )	Standard 12.6* ( <i>Student debt</i> )
Standard 5.4* ( <i>Qualified administrative/academic officers</i> )	CR 13.1* ( <i>Financial resources</i> )
CR 6.1* ( <i>Full-time faculty</i> )	CR 13.2 ( <i>Financial documents</i> )
Standard 6.2.a ( <i>Faculty qualifications</i> )	Standard 13.3 ( <i>Financial responsibility</i> )
Standard 6.2.b* ( <i>Program faculty</i> )	Standard 13.6* ( <i>Federal and state responsibilities</i> )
Standard 6.2.c* ( <i>Program coordination</i> )	Standard 13.7* ( <i>Physical resources</i> )
CR 7.1 ( <i>Institutional planning</i> )	Standard 14.1* ( <i>Publication of accreditation status</i> )
Standard 7.2 ( <i>Quality Enhancement Plan</i> )	Standard 14.3* ( <i>Comprehensive institutional reviews</i> )
CR 8.1* ( <i>Student achievement</i> )	Standard 14.4* ( <i>Representation to other agencies</i> )
Standard 8.2.a* ( <i>Student outcomes: educational programs</i> )	Standard 14.5 ( <i>Policy compliance</i> )

\*Denotes federal requirements that must be addressed.

**NOTE:** Institutions are expected to maintain compliance with all standards in *the Principles of Accreditation*. If an institution's response reveals noncompliance with other standards than those noted above, the SACSCOC Board of Trustees will request submission of a monitoring report until compliance is demonstrated. The maximum period for submitting monitoring reports is two years.

### **Future Reviews**

Institutions that meet the eligibility requirements and participate in the Differentiated Review Process may *not* participate in the Differentiated Review Process for the institution's next decennial reaffirmation of accreditation.

### **Document History**

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