

Policy on the Status of Probation

Probation is a public status signifying that the New England Commission of Higher Education has found that the institution fails to meet one or more *Standards for Accreditation* and that the Commission believes the problems can be remedied within a specified time period not to exceed two years.

An institution is placed on probation by action of the Commission. Prior to taking this action, having determined there is reason to believe that the institution may not meet one or more of the *Standards for Accreditation*, the Commission will provide an opportunity for the institution to show cause why it should not be placed on probation. Failing to show cause, the institution may appeal the Commission's action, in keeping with established procedures. In the show-cause opportunity and any appeal, the burden of proof shall rest with the institution. Until final action is taken on the appeal, the institution's status is unaffected. If the institution appeals and the appeal is denied, probation is effective from the date of the Commission action.

The Commission makes probation public when the decision is final (i.e., when the institution does not appeal or when the appeals process is completed and the decision is upheld). The Commission, at its discretion, may make probation public before the decision is final or the appeal is completed. In so doing, the Commission will provide information about the appeal process.

An institution on probation must take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with the Commission's Standards within a time period specified by the Commission. Institutions for which the longest degree program is at least two years will have a maximum period of two years to come into compliance with Commission Standards; institutions for which the longest degree program is at least one year but less than two years will have a maximum of eighteen months. In placing an institution on probation, the Commission may specify a shorter period of time during which the institution must demonstrate it has come into compliance with the Standards or face the loss of its accreditation. If the institution does not come into compliance within the specified time period, the Commission will withdraw accreditation unless the Commission, for good cause, extends the period for achieving compliance. Institutions that come into compliance within the time period specified will be removed from probation.

An institution holding probationary status is subject to close scrutiny by the Commission to assess its efforts in remedying those concerns which led to probation. Should the Commission find that conditions have deteriorated to the extent that the institution cannot

come into compliance within the specified period, it will take an action withdrawing accreditation unless the Commission, for good cause, extends the period for achieving compliance.

Probation is a public status indicated in any Commission publication or communication about the affected institution. Within 30 days of the final decision to place an institution on probation, the Commission will notify the U.S. Secretary of Education, appropriate state agencies, and appropriate accrediting agencies of this decision. The Commission will also provide on its website and in its relevant publications notice of the availability of a statement regarding the institution's probationary status as well as a plan to monitor the institution. This statement will be developed by the Commission in consultation with the institution. However, the Commission reserves the right to make final determination as to its nature and content.

An institution on probation is obliged to disclose its status as well as the availability of additional information on its probationary status to prospective students, those currently enrolled, and the public, on its website, in its catalog, and in all recruitment materials. The following statement is to be used:

_____ College/University is accredited on probation by the New England Commission of Higher Education, effective _____, because the Commission finds that the institution is in danger of losing its accreditation because it is not in compliance with the Standards for Accreditation. Of concern are accreditation standard(s) _____. A statement providing further information about the probationary status is available on the website of the New England Commission of Higher Education (<https://cihe.neasc.org>).

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