

**CHANGE in LOCATION COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT FORM**

**Follow On-Site Visit to Virtual Site Visit**

# Instructions

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission requires all institutions seeking a change of location (however close to the original site) to obtain prior approval from the Commission and undergo an on-site visit. Prior approval serves two main purposes: (1) It provides institutions an opportunity to critically reflect on its operations, processes, and procedures prior to changing locations and (2) it provides the on-site team with a comprehensive overview of the institution, its mission, and its processes that are integral to delivering quality distance education.

The U.S. Department of Education issued guidance to accreditors on March 5, 2020 and on December 31, 2020 with respect to 34 Code of Federal Regulations §602.17(c) related to site visits. According to this guidance, beginning on March 13, 2020, for the duration of the national emergency declaration and 180 days following the date on which the COVID-19 national emergency declaration is rescinded, the Secretary is waiving the provisions of § 602.17(c) and requiring accreditors to perform a limited in-person site visit as soon as practicable following the end of the state of emergency. DEAC staff will therefore schedule and conduct a limited in-person site visit guided by Standards XI.A. and XII as allowed by these guidelines or subsequent direction issued by the U.S. Department of Education.

The questions on this Compliance Assessment Form are provided to assist on-site team evaluators in determining whether institutions are continuing to comply with DEAC’s Accreditation Standards XI and XII when changing locations. The questions provided match the questions used to affirm compliance with DEAC standards during the COVID-19 national emergency. The evaluator should use these questions to determine whether sufficient evidence is in place to document that the institution continues to comply with DEAC Standards. They should not be used to reevaluate the institution’s compliance with DEAC Standards as a whole. Evaluators are not limited to the questions on this rating form. This rating form is for the evaluator’s use only. Evaluators do not need to send this rating form to DEAC.

With respect to Standards XI.A. and XII, DEAC evaluators decide whether institutions provided evidence of compliance. Within the context of an on-site evaluation that is following up on a change of location approval by the DEAC Commission, the evaluators are reporting whether the evidence presented during on-site evaluation “verifies”, “partially verifies”, or was “unable to verify” compliance with applicable Standards. For any rating of “partially verifies” or “unable to verify,” the evaluator must provide a “required action” that instructs the institution on what evidence the institution needs to provide in order to demonstrate that its records affirm compliance with the identified standard. Evaluators should be careful to review institutions based only on the accreditation standards. Any recommendations beyond the scope of the accreditation standards should be provided under suggestions.

Evaluators should refer to the *DEAC Accreditation Handbook and Guide for Self-Evaluation* for any further clarification on institutional requirements.

# Institution Information

Institution Name: Insert institution name

Date of Original Virtual Visit: Date of on-site visit

Accreditation Decision by the Commission: Summarize the decision made such as “accepted change of location”.

Date of the Commission Decision: Select the meeting.

Date of Follow Up Visit: Date of on-site visit

Name of Evaluator: Evaluator name

Date of Report: Date of Report

# Accreditation Standards

## Standard XI: Financial Responsibility

1. **Financial Practices:** The institution shows it is financially responsible by providing complete, comparative financial statements covering its two most recent fiscal years and by demonstrating that it has sufficient resources to meet its financial obligations to provide quality instruction and service to its students. Financial statements are audited or reviewed and prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America or International Financial Reporting Standards. The institution’s budgeting processes demonstrate that current and future budgeted operating results are sufficient to allow the institution to accomplish its mission and goals.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do the institution’s audited comparative or reviewed comparative financial statements demonstrate financial responsibility? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution maintain sufficient resources to meet its financial obligations and provide quality educational offerings and service to students? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s financial statements regularly audited or reviewed? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s financial statements prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America or International Financial Reporting Standards? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s budgeting processes adequate, and do they conform to accepted best practices? |  |  |  |
| Are the individuals responsible for creating and monitoring the institution’s budget qualified by education and experience? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution’s budgeting process document and verify that current and future operating results are sufficient to allow it to accomplish its mission and goals? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution profitable? For nonprofits, does the institution have an excess of revenues over costs? |  |  |  |
| If the institution is not profitable, did the institution develop strategic initiatives designed to achieve a positive operating result sufficient to fund future operations? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have the resources necessary to fulfill all obligations to students in the event that a teach-out is required? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s current assets sufficient to meet current liabilities? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution use cost control and analysis systems to verify that it maintains sufficient current assets to fund a teach-out of students? |  |  |  |
| Have the institution’s owner(s) or governing board members ever declared bankruptcy? |  |  |  |
| If the institution is a sole proprietorship or partnership, have the owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, or top institution administrators have ever declared bankruptcy? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution maintain reserves for honoring future service obligations, bad debts, and refunds? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.A. – Verified, Partially Verified, Unable to Verify, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. | | |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

## Standard XII: Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, Record Protection and Retention

1. **Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies:** The institution maintains sufficient facilities, equipment, and supplies to achieve its mission and values and support its educational offerings and future operations. A written plan outlines the maintenance and upgrade of facilities, equipment, and supplies, and includes a disaster response and recovery plan. The plan states the resources that are budgeted to support its goals. Buildings, workspace, and equipment comply with local fire, building, health, and safety regulations and are appropriately equipped to handle the educational program(s) of the institution.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies promote the achievement of its mission and values? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies support its educational offerings and future operations? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have a sufficient plan for maintenance that includes upgrades of its facilities, equipment, and supplies? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate disaster response and recovery procedures based on its geographical location? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate financial resources and budgets to maintain and upgrade its facilities and equipment? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s technical infrastructure adequate to provide timely delivery of distance education and support services to accommodate future student enrollment growth? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s building, workspace, and equipment comply with local fire, building, health, and safety regulations? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate professional liability, property, and general liability insurance? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XII.A. – Verified, Partially Verified, Unable to Verify, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. | | |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Record Protection:** The institution’s financial, administrative, and student educational records are maintained in a reasonably accessible place and are adequately protected in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution have adequate procedures for maintaining financial, administrative, and student records? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow proactive steps to protect financial, administrative, and student information from unauthorized access or threats? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s record maintenance and protection procedures comply with applicable federal and state laws? |  |  |  |
| Are physical records adequately secured on site? |  |  |  |
| Are digital records adequately secured and backed up to minimize data loss? |  |  |  |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. If maintaining documents electronically, the institution provides audit records to verify that the images were properly created and validated.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution follow adequate procedures for properly creating and validating digital records? |  |  |  |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. If an institution accepts digitally signed transcripts or electronically transferred verified data from an outside source, the institution documents the outside source using a system that provides registration and verification of participants, protocols for securely sending and receiving files, logging of file transmissions, and electronic notification. The outside source complies with all applicable laws and regulations governing the activities and services provided, including FERPA and other laws concerning the privacy and confidentiality of information and records.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution have an adequate process in place for accepting digital signatures on electronically processed documents (e.g., official transcripts, enrollment agreements)? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow adequate procedures to ensure students that all transmitted information is adequately protected and in compliance with FERPA and other laws concerning privacy and confidentiality of student data? |  |  |  |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

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| **Standard XII.C. – Verified, Partially Verified, Unable to Verify, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. |

1. **Record Retention:** The institution’s financial, administrative, and student educational records are retained in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. The institution implements a comprehensive document retention policy.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution follow adequate procedures for retaining financial, administrative, and student records in accordance with applicable federal and state laws? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution state how long financial records are maintained? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution state how long administrative records are maintained? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution state how long student records are maintained? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution implement an adequate comprehensive document retention policy? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution identify who is responsible for ensuring the proper retention of financial, administrative, and student records? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution conduct regular internal audits for compliance with all applicable federal and state laws? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XII.D. – Verified, Partially Verified, Unable to Verify, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. | | |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **State Authorization:**
   1. The institution is properly licensed, authorized, exempted, or approved by all applicable state education institutional authorizations (or their equivalent for non-U.S. institutions).
   2. Exemptions from state law are supported by state-issued documentation or in statutory language for that state.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution describe how it is properly licensed, authorized, exempted, or approved by all applicable state education institutional authorizations (or their non-U.S. institutional equivalent)? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution provide its DEAC State Authorization Form and documentation of its state licensures and authorizations? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution describe any exemptions from state law that it has determined, and did it describe the state-issued documentation or statutory language used to determine its exemption? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XII.D. – Verified, Partially Verified, Unable to Verify, or Not Applicable** | Choose a finding. | | |

**Comments:** Provide comments to support the finding based on the institution’s responses and evidence provided prior to and during the on-site visit.

**Required Actions:** Provide the required actions necessary for the institution to verify compliance with the accreditation standards. Each required action must correspond to an accreditation standard or a core component.

**Suggestions:** Suggestions are those recommendations that are not required to verify minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.