

**DEAC BUSINESS EVALUATOR’S   
COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT FORM**

## Instructions

The Distance Education Accrediting Commission requires all institutions to complete a Self-Evaluation Report when seeking accreditation. The process of self-evaluation serves two main purposes: (1) It provides an institution an opportunity to critically reflect on its operations, processes, and procedures at regular intervals and (2) it provides the on-site team with a comprehensive review of the institution, its mission, and its processes that are integral to delivering quality distance education.

The Self-Evaluation Report tells a story about the institution, beginning with its history and mission and then focusing on its evolution and future. Institutions have the opportunity to present their passion for serving students and providing educational options that will shape future generations. Institutions craft their story using the Self-Evaluation Report template as a guide while demonstrating how their policies and procedures meet DEAC accreditation standards.

The questions on this Compliance Assessment Form are designed to assist on-site team evaluators in determining whether institutions meet the intent of DEAC’s accreditation standards. 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.

DEAC evaluators decide whether institutions meet, partially meet, or do not meet accreditation standards. For any ratings of “partially meets” or “does not meet”, the evaluator must provide a “required action” that instructs the institution on what it needs to provide in order to demonstrate 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 in the suggestions section.

Findings guidelines:

* **Meets Standard:** The institution demonstrates compliance with the intent of the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Partially Meets Standard:** The institution was able to demonstrate compliance with some, but not all, of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.
* **Does Not Meet Standard:** The institution was unable to demonstrate compliance with a majority of the elements contained in the accreditation standard or core component.

The business evaluator is responsible for reviewing institutions against accreditation standards II, III.B., XI.A., XI D-G, XIII C-D, XIII F-H, XIV, and XV A-D.

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

## DEAC Business Evaluator’s Compliance Assessment Form

Initial  Renewal  Special Visit

Institution Name: Insert institution name

Date of Visit: Date of on-site visit

Name of Evaluator: Evaluator name

Position on Team: Position on team

On-site Team Chair: Name of on-site team chair

Date Report Due to Chair: Date report is due

# Accreditation Standards

Standard II: Governance

1. **Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, and Administrators**

The institution’s owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions. The owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators are knowledgeable and experienced in one or more aspects of education administration, finance, and the design and delivery of academic programs and related student services within a distance learning model. The institution’s policies clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators. Individuals in leadership and managerial positions are qualified by education and experience appropriate to their position and have the ability to oversee institutional operations consistent with the institution’s mission and program offerings.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Are the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators knowledgeable and experienced in educational administration? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators sufficiently knowledgeable and experienced to ensure quality that financial practices are in place to ensure institutional stability? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators sufficiently knowledgeable and experienced to ensure quality design and delivery of academic programs and student services? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators sufficiently knowledgeable and experienced to ensure quality educational offerings delivered via distance education? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have processes and policies that clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of the owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution verify that all individuals in leadership and managerial positions are qualified by education and experience, as appropriate to their respective positions? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators remain current within the disciplines offered by the institution and its educational community? |  |  |  |
| **Standard II.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Reputation of Institution, Owners, Governing Board Members, Administrators, and Other Officials**

The institution and its owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators possess sound reputations, a record of integrity, and ethical conduct in their professional activities, business operations, and relations. The institution’s name is free from any association with activity that could damage the reputation of the DEAC accrediting process, such as illegal actions, fraud, unethical conduct, or mistreatment of consumers. The institution’s owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators shall comply with the institution’s policies and procedures governing conflicts of interest and other applicable rules of conduct.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators possess sound reputations and records of integrity? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators practice ethical conduct in their professional activities, business operations, and business relations? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, and top institution administrators comply with the institution’s policies and procedures governing conflicts of interest and other applicable rules of conduct? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s name free from any association with activity that could damage the reputation of the DEAC accrediting process, such as illegal actions, fraud, unethical conduct, or mistreatment of consumers? |  |  |  |
| Were any owner(s), governing board members, chief executive officer, or top institution administrators debarred by federal or state authorities from participating in any funding programs? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution affirm that it will promptly notify DEAC of any investigative, enforcement, legal, or prosecutorial actions which may be initiated against the institution, its owners, governing board members, officials, and administrators and that such notification shall include an explanation of the circumstances giving rise to such actions and the institution’s response to the same, as well as its explanation of why such actions should not be deemed a concern with respect to the integrity of the named persons or institutions? |  |  |  |
| **Standard II.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Succession Plan**

The institution has a written plan that describes the process that it follows to sustain operations in the event a leadership succession is necessary. The plan identifies specific people, committees, or boards responsible for carrying out the operation of the institution during the transition period. The plan includes a business continuity structure that the institution can implement immediately. The institution reviews the plan on an annual basis and revises as needed.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution’s succession plan identify events that would initiate a succession of leadership? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution identify the leadership, administrators, staff, committees, or boards responsible for carrying out its operations during the transition period? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution’s business continuity structure ensure that students’ education and services will not be disrupted during the transition period? |  |  |  |
| Are the business continuity procedures structured for immediate implementation, if necessary? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s succession plan reviewed and revised, as necessary, on an annual basis, as evidenced by meeting minutes or similar mechanism? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution involve appropriate individuals in reviewing and revising the succession plan? |  |  |  |
| **Standard II.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Maintaining Eligibility for Accreditation**

The institution maintains its eligibility for accreditation and is properly licensed, authorized, exempted, or approved by all applicable state education institutional authorizations (or their equivalent for non-U.S. institutions). Exemptions from state law are supported by state-issued documentation or by statutory language for that jurisdiction.

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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 provide the state-issued documentation or statutory language used to determine its exemption? |  |  |  |
| **Standard II.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Standard III: Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

1. **Strategic Planning**

The institution implements a strategic plan utilizing a systematic process for the achievement of goals that support its mission. The institution’s planning processes involve all areas of the institution’s operations in developing strategic initiatives and goals by evaluating external and internal trends. Data is used to identify areas of weakness and opportunities for improvement, development, and growth. The plan helps institutions set priorities, manage resources, and set goals for future performance.

The strategic plan addresses, at a minimum, finances, academics, technology, admissions, marketing, personnel, and institutional sustainability and includes measurable action plans that lead to mission achievement. The plan identifies the individuals responsible, timelines for completion, and the financial resources required. The institution reviews the strategic plan at least annually and reports achievement of progress to its stakeholders.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution describe how its strategic planning efforts guide its pursuit of achieving its goals in support of its mission? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution provide a copy of its strategic plan? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution provide evidence of how it seeks input from internal and external stakeholders as a means of enhancing its strategic planning process? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution describe how the input received from internal and external stakeholders is used in its strategic planning process? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution identify areas for improvement via a SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) or other means of evaluation?  [Note: A SWOT analysis is not specifically required, provided that the institution appropriately identified areas of weakness and opportunities for improvement through other evaluative processes or means.] |  |  |  |
| Does the institution’s strategic plan adequately identify proactive initiatives to address its identified areas for improvement and opportunity? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution’s strategic plan address the following: financial stability; development of educational offerings; integration of technology to enhance educational offerings; effective and accurate admissions and marketing activities to promote institutional sustainability; and professional development of leadership, faculty, and staff? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution describe the metrics that guide and measure the achievement of its strategic planning goals and objectives? |  |  |  |
| For each strategic initiative, did the institution identify the individual(s) responsible and timeline(s) for completion as well as the financial resources required to pursue its achievement? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution describe its annual strategic plan review process and how it reports achievement of progress to relevant stakeholders? |  |  |  |
| **Standard III.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Standard XI: Recruitment and Enrollment

1. **Student Recruitment**

The institution demonstrates that ethical processes and procedures are followed throughout the recruitment of prospective students. The qualifications and experience of the institution’s recruitment personnel are aligned to identified roles and responsibilities. Recruitment personnel are trained in the tasks and expectations of their positions. Authorized recruitment personnel are provided with appropriate materials to perform their tasks and are routinely monitored to ensure compliance with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates, the DEAC Code of Ethics, and institutional policy. The institution takes full responsibility for the actions of its recruitment personnel, whether internal or third party.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution follow effective processes and procedures for enrolling prospective students? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow ethical processes and procedures when enrolling prospective students? |  |  |  |
| Are the qualification and experience requirements for the institution’s recruitment personnel adequate for their identified roles and responsibilities? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution appropriately train student recruitment personnel in institution policies, processes, and expectations? |  |  |  |
| Are the materials provided to recruitment personnel adequate to ensure that tasks are performed ethically, consistently, and in compliance with applicable laws, DEAC standards, and institutional policies? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have an adequate process in place to verify that recruitment materials comply with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which it operates and DEAC recruitment practice requirements? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution provide evidence that all student recruitment personnel sign the DEAC Code of Ethics? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution adequately supervise and monitor both internal and third-party student recruitment personnel? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate processes and criteria in place to evaluate both internal and third-party student recruitment personnel? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Enrollment Agreements**

The institution’s enrollment agreements/documents are in the language of instruction and clearly identify the educational offering and the credential awarded. The agreements inform applicants of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution prior to applicant signature. The institution complies with the DEAC Enrollment Agreements Disclosures Checklist.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Are the institution’s enrollment agreements/documents in the language of instruction? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s enrollment agreements/documents clearly identify the education offering and the credential awarded upon program completion? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s enrollment agreements/documents verify that each applicant is fully informed of the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both the student and the institution prior to the applicant’s signature? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution comply with the DEAC enrollment agreement disclosures checklist? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow an adequate process for accepting and processing enrollment agreements? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution appropriately incorporate any payment contract into the enrollment agreement/documents, or is any payment contract provided in conjunction with the enrollment agreement completion process? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Financial Disclosures**

All costs relative to the education provided by the institution are disclosed to the prospective student in an enrollment agreement or similar contractual document before enrollment. Costs must include tuition, educational services, textbooks, and instructional materials; any specific fees associated with enrollment, such as application and registration fees; and fees for required services such as student authentication, proctoring, technology access, and library services.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution adequately disclose to prospective students prior to enrollment all costs associated with the education provided? |  |  |  |
| Do all costs associated with the education provided include tuition, educational services, textbooks, and instructional materials, as well as application, registration, authentication, proctoring (if applicable), technology access, and library or any other required service fees? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.E. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Scholarships**

Scholarships are awarded either for merit or based on need. Merit-based scholarships must be based on definable achievement at the time of enrollment or within the program of study. Merit-based scholarships are evaluated by qualified individuals using an institution- approved rubric. Need-based scholarships must be based on a discernable and consistent economic standard. Scholarships must indicate the actual reduction in the costs that would otherwise be charged by the institution.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution offer any scholarships that are internally awarded/administered? |  |  |  |
| Do any merit-based scholarships offered include clearly defined achievement application criteria? |  |  |  |
| Are merit-based scholarship applications evaluated by qualified individuals using an institution-approved rubric? |  |  |  |
| Are merit-based scholarship rubrics appropriately defined to guide consistent and fair award decision making? |  |  |  |
| Do any need-based scholarships offered include clearly defined and consistent economic application criteria? |  |  |  |
| Do scholarship materials document the actual reduction in program costs that would otherwise be charged by the institution? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.F. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Discounts**

Tuition reductions other than scholarships are considered discounts. Discounts are permitted for well-defined groups, for specific and bona fide purposes, or for a specified period. Discounts must indicate the actual reduction in the costs that would otherwise be charged by the institution.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution offer discounts? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution identify well-defined groups that receive discounts? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution provide adequate reasoning for offering well-defined groups a discount? |  |  |  |
| If the institution offers discounts for a specific time period, did it adequately describe such discounts and verify that students are also enrolled in non-discounted courses or programs for a reasonably substantial period of time during each calendar year? |  |  |  |
| Is information on discounts published in the institution’s advertising and marketing materials, including the catalog and website? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XI.G. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Standard XIII: Fair Practices

1. **Cancellations and Withdrawals**

Institutions maintain, publish, and consistently apply fair and equitable cancellation and withdrawal policies that meet or exceed the requirements of state and federal regulators, DEAC, and such other industry regulators as may have jurisdiction over one or more of the institution’s programs. Students may notify the institution of cancellation or withdrawal in any manner the institution deems appropriate so long as the method or methods available are reasonable and in compliance with applicable state and federal requirements. Policies pursuant to when an institution may administratively withdraw a student or cancel their enrollment are published and readily accessible for review by the student.

1. A student shall have no less than five calendar days following their executing the enrollment agreement or other contractual document in which to cancel the agreement and/or contract and receive a full refund of any monies paid to the institution.
2. Students are notified promptly if they are administratively withdrawn for non- compliance with attendance or other administrative policy.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution describe its cancellation and withdrawal policies? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution describe any state, federal, and industry regulatory requirements to which the institution’s cancellation and withdrawal policies are subject, and do the institution’s policies meet or exceed these requirements? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution describe how students are required to convey their cancellation or withdrawal to the institution? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution identify the individual, office, or offices to whom students may submit their notification? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s required method of cancellation/withdrawal notification in compliance with applicable regulatory requirements? |  |  |  |
| Can the institution’s required method of cancellation/withdrawal notification be reasonably satisfied by students? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution identify appropriate circumstances under which it administratively withdraws a student or cancels their enrollment? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution allow students a minimum of five (5) calendar days after signing an enrollment agreement or similar contractual document to cancel enrollment and receive a full refund of all monies paid to the institution? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution promptly inform applicants they have been administratively withdrawn and the reasons for withdrawal? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIII.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Refunds**

Institutions must implement fair and equitable refund policies that meet or exceed the requirements of their government regulators, including consumer rights and protection policies. In the absence of such requirements, the institution follows DEAC’s refund policy requirements in Appendix XIV. Refund policies include procedures for students who enroll but do not start coursework and students failing to persist or make satisfactory academic progress. Refund policies must be clearly stated and transparently disclosed, including the use of sample calculations. Any money due to a student must be refunded within 30 days of the student’s notice of cancellation or withdrawal; refunds due to funding agencies must be returned in compliance with their respective requirements.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution’s refund policy include sample refund calculations? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s refund policy published on its website? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution implement a fair and equitable refund policy that meets or exceeds applicable government regulations, including consumer rights and protection policies, or, in the absence of such requirements, in accordance with DEAC’s refund policy requirements in DEAC Handbook, Part 4, Appendix XIV? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow adequate and appropriate procedures for refunding students’ tuition if they enroll but do not start coursework? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow adequate and appropriate procedures for refunding students’ tuition if they fail to persist or fail to make satisfactory academic progress? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution refund any money due to a student within 30 days of the student’s notice of cancellation or withdrawal? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution return any refunds due to funding agencies in compliance with their respective requirements? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution properly process refunds requested in the last 12 months, based on its published refund policy? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIII.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Advertising and Promotion**

The institution conforms to ethical practices in all advertising and promotion to prospective students. The institution’s processes and procedures ensure that all advertisements, website content, and other marketing collateral is truthful, accurate, and clearly stated. The institution complies with DEAC’s Catalog Disclosures Checklist and DEAC’s Website Disclosures Checklist.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Did the institution describe its approach to advertising and promotion of its programs? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution identify who is responsible for the institution’s marketing and advertising decisions? |  |  |  |
| Is the individual responsible for the institution’s marketing appropriately qualified by education or experience for this role? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate processes and procedures in place to verify that all advertisements, website content, and marketing collateral are truthful, accurate, clear? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution comply with the DEAC Catalog Disclosures Checklist? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution comply with the DEAC Website Disclosures Checklist? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIII.F. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Institution and Course Accredited-Status Recognition**

The institution accurately discloses its accredited status and uses the official DEAC accreditation logo and/or statement of accreditation when publishing its accreditation status in advertisements and promotional materials on its website and in social media. DEAC’s name, address, telephone number, and web address are published in the institution’s catalog. Institutions publish a statement of accreditation only as follows:

* Accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission
* DEAC Accredited

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| **For Institutions seeking Initial Accreditation:** Is the institution prepared to accurately disclose its accredited status, in compliance with the content requirements disclosed by DEAC Standard XIII.G.? |  |  |  |
| **For Institutions seeking Renewal of Accreditation:** Does the institution accurately disclose its accredited status, in compliance with the content requirements disclosed by DEAC Standard XIII.G.? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIII.G. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Truth in Lending**

The institution complies with all applicable Truth in Lending Act (TILA) requirements, including those under Regulation Z, and state requirements for retail installment agreements.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Is the institution in compliance with applicable Truth in Lending Act (TILA) requirements, including those under Regulation Z, and state requirements for retail installment agreements? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution employ an individual responsible for verifying compliance with all Truth in Lending Act (TILA) requirements? |  |  |  |
| Does the identified individual participate in adequate activities to remain up to date on Truth in Lending Act (TILA) requirements? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution publish all required state and Truth in Lending Act (TILA) disclosures on the enrollment agreement? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIII.H. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Standard XIV: Finance[[1]](#footnote-1)

* 1. **Financial Practices**

The institution provides on an annual basis complete, comparative financial statements covering its two most recent fiscal years’ financial statements that are audited and prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) in the United States of America or the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). In the event the operations of the institution are supported in whole or in part by a parent company or a third party, the Commission may require audited financial statements from the parent or third party to demonstrate that the entity possesses sufficient financial resources to provide the institution continued financial sustainability. If the institution’s financial performance is included within the parent corporation’s statements, a supplemental schedule for the individual institution is appended to the parent statement, and inter-company transactions are clearly identified and defined. 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.

**[Note:** Throughout this Standard,compliance assessment questions refer only to audited comparative financial statements to align with the Standard as written. See the footnote for Standard XIV, regarding continued allowable submission of reviewed comparative financial statements through mid-2026 and adjust findings feedback accordingly].

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do the institution’s audited 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? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution submit its most recent fiscal year end audited comparative financial statements, opinion letter, and letter of financial statement validation? |  |  |  |
| Are the institution’s financial statements prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) in the United States of America or the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)? |  |  |  |
| 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 supported by a parent company or third party? |  |  |  |
| If the institution is supported by a parent company or third party, does the supporting entity possess sufficient financial resources to provide the institution with continued financial sustainability? |  |  |  |
| Is the parent company or third party’s stated commitment to supporting the institution sufficient? |  |  |  |
| Is the supporting entity’s level of administrative and financial involvement adequate to promote the institution’s continued financial sustainability? |  |  |  |
| If the institution’s financial performance is included within the parent corporation or third party’s financial statements, did the institution provide adequate supplemental schedules disclosing its individual financial status? |  |  |  |
| If the institution’s financial performance is included within the parent corporation or third party’s financial statements, did the institution provide adequate supplemental schedules which clearly identify and defines inter-company transactions? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIV.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. **Financial Management**

Individuals overseeing the fiscal and budgeting processes are qualified by education and experience. The institution maintains adequate administrative staff and other resources to operate effectively within fiscal and budgeting constraints, consistent with its representations of the scope and quality of its educational offerings as guided by its mission statement and strategic plan. Any risk that exists is adequately monitored, manageable, and insured. The institution has adequate administrative resources for effective operations, and at least one person is qualified and able to prepare accurate financial reports in a timely manner. Documentation protocols and controls are in place to assure that finances are properly managed, monitored, and protected.

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| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Are the individuals responsible for preparing the institution’s financial reports and budgets qualified by education and experience? |  |  |  |
| Are financial reports and budgets regularly prepared? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution employ an individual, internally or a third party, who is responsible for reviewing and approving financial reports and budgets? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution maintain adequate administrative resources to operate effectively within fiscal and budgeting constraints? |  |  |  |
| Are risks appropriately monitored, managed, and insured? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution maintain adequate insurance coverage? |  |  |  |
| Has the institution filed any significant insurance claims in the past five years? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate protocols and controls in place to verify that finances are properly managed, monitored, and protected? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s accounts payable (numbers, amounts, and age) reflect sound financial responsibility and management? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIV.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. **Financial Stability and Sustainability**

Financial statements must reflect that the institution has sufficient resources to meet the institution’s financial obligations to provide quality instruction and service to its students for the full period of each student’s enrollment, consistent with the institution’s program representations.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Do the institution’s financial statements reflect sufficient resources to meet its financial obligations to provide quality instruction and service to its students for the full period of students’ enrollment, as represented to the public? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution profitable? For nonprofits, does the institution have an excess of revenues over costs? |  |  |  |
| If the institution is not profitable, has the institution implemented strategic initiatives 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? |  |  |  |
| 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 XIV.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. **Financial Reporting**

Annual financial statements are prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America, often referred to as “GAAP”, including the accrual method of accounting. An independent certified public accountant (CPA) audit report accompanies these statements. At its discretion, the Commission may require additional financial reporting from the institution.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Are the institution’s financial statements prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) in the United States of America or the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution use the accrual method of accounting? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s independent auditing firm qualified and experienced? |  |  |  |
| Did the independent auditor identify any deviations while conducting the institution’s audit? |  |  |  |
| If applicable, did the institution identify how it plans to address and resolve any identified challenges, anomalies, or threats? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have procedures that enable it to continue operations if it received a going concern or liquidity footnote opinion from the independent auditing firm? |  |  |  |
| If a going concern or liquidity uncertainty was resolved through continued shareholder support, did the institution explain why the independent auditing firm did not accept the support as sufficient to avoid the going concern opinion or liquidity note? |  |  |  |
| Did the institution certify that it understands that the Commission may, in its discretion, require that the institution deliver additional financial reporting as deemed necessary when circumstances raise questions as to the institution’s financial soundness and stability? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIV.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

* 1. **Collections**

Collection procedures used by the institution or third parties reflect sound and ethical business practices.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution carry out collection procedures (both internal and contracted with third parties)? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s collection procedures (both internal and contracted with third parties) reflect sound and ethical business practices? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XIV.E. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

Standard XV: Facilities and Records Maintenance

1. **Records Protection**

The institution’s financial and administrative records, as well as students’ financial, educational, and personal information, are securely and confidentially maintained in accordance with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates and with professional requirements.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution have adequate procedures for maintaining financial and administrative records, as well as students’ financial, educational, and personal information? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution follow proactive steps to safeguard the security and confidentiality of financial and administrative records, as well as students’ financial, educational, and personal information? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s record maintenance and protection procedures comply with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates, as well as with professional requirements? |  |  |  |
| Are physical records adequately secured on site? |  |  |  |
| Are digital records adequately secured and backed up to minimize data loss? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XV.A. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Record Retention**

The institution’s financial, administrative, and student educational records are retained in accordance with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates. The institution implements a comprehensive document retention policy. Transcripts are readily accessible and are maintained permanently in either print or digital form.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Does the institution follow adequate processes for retaining financial, administrative, and student records in accordance with the laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates? |  |  |  |
| 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 those 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? |  |  |  |
| Is transcript information readily accessible and permanently maintained in order for the institution to produce an official transcript in a timely manner? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XV.B. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies**

The institution’s primary facility is located in a professional, institution-branded space authorized by local authorities for mixed use or commercial use. The institution maintains a written facilities plan and budget allocations to maintain facilities, equipment, and supplies to support its educational offerings, student support services, and administrative operations on a sustainable basis. Buildings, workspaces, and equipment comply with local fire, building, health, and safety regulations.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Is the institution’s primary facility located in a professional, institution-branded space which is authorized by local authorities for mixed use or commercial use? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies support its educational offerings, student support services, and administrative operations on a sustainable basis? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies support its educational offerings, student support services, and administrative operations on a sustainable basis? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s technical infrastructure adequate to support its educational offerings, student support services, and administrative operations on a sustainable basis? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have a sufficient plan for maintenance that includes upgrades of its facilities, equipment, and supplies? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have adequate financial resources and budgets to maintain and upgrade its facilities and equipment? |  |  |  |
| Do the institution’s building, workspace, and equipment comply with local fire, building, health, and safety regulations? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XV.C. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. **Protection of Physical Sites and Virtual Infrastructure**

The institution’s physical location(s) and virtual infrastructure are adequate to secure financial, administrative, and student educational records; are reasonably accessible; and are adequately protected in accordance with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates. An adequate disaster response and recovery plan is in place that includes mitigation of risks, i.e., at a minimum, the ability to sustain and support continuing academic operations, the protection of student information consistent with applicable law, and the mitigation of other risks presented by physical, environmental, cybersecurity, force majeure, and other reasonably foreseeable threats.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions** | **Yes** | **No** | **N/A** |
| Is the institution’s physical location adequate to secure physical financial, administrative, and student educational records, while ensuring that they are reasonably accessible for use? |  |  |  |
| Is the institution’s virtual infrastructure adequate to secure digital financial, administrative, and student educational records, while ensuring that they are reasonably accessible for use? |  |  |  |
| Are institutional records adequately protected in accordance with laws applicable to the jurisdiction(s) in which the institution operates and in response to foreseeable physical or cybersecurity risks? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution have appropriate disaster response and recovery procedures for its physical and environmental location(s)? |  |  |  |
| Does the institution’s disaster response and recovery plan include contingencies to sustain and support continued academic operations and protect student information, consistent with applicable law? |  |  |  |
| **Standard XV.D. – Meets, Partially Meets, Does Not Meet, 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 demonstrate 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 meet minimum accreditation standards but are provided to the institution as an opportunity for growth and improvement.

1. The implementation and submission timeframe of Standard XIV.A.’s requirement that institutions provide audited comparative financial statements (reviewed comparative financial statements will no longer be accepted) is as follows: For institutions with fiscal years ending between January 1, 2025, and June 30, 2025, audited financial statements are due by December 31, 2025. For institutions with fiscal years ending between July 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025, audited financial statements are due by June 30, 2026. In both cases, the Commission is waiving the requirement for comparative statements and accepting audits of one fiscal year. Future submissions of audited statements (submitted after June 30, 2026) must be prepared on a comparative basis. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)