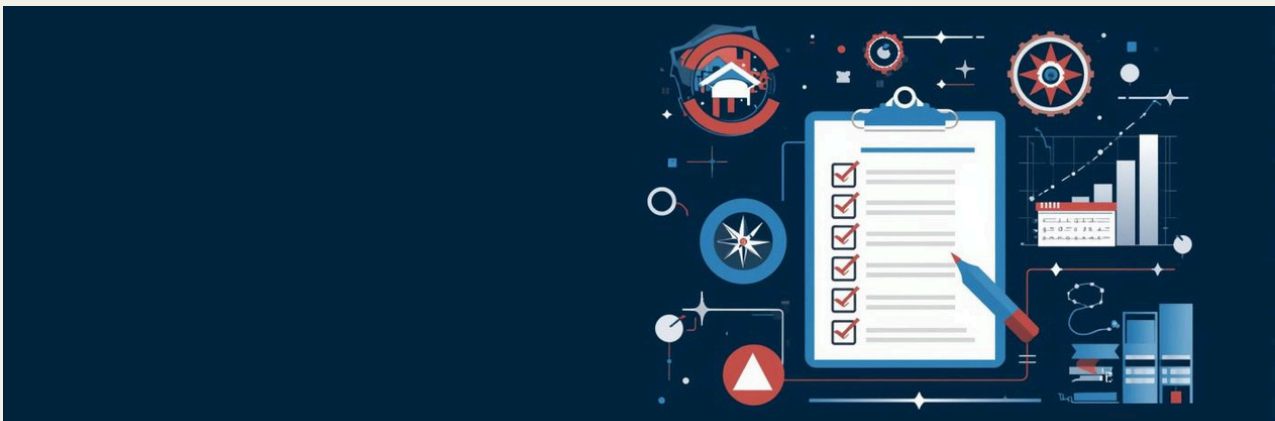


MARCH 2026



National Accreditation Readiness Toolkit

DEAC | COE | ACCSC | TRACS



Presented to
Institutional Leaders

Presented by
Expert Education Consultants

Part 1: How to Use This Toolkit



This toolkit is designed specifically for institutions pursuing national accreditation from one of the four USDE-recognized national institutional accreditors: DEAC, COE, ACCSC, or TRACS. Whether you are a startup institution exploring your first accreditation, or an established school preparing for reaffirmation, this toolkit gives you the decision frameworks, checklists, self-assessment instruments, and planning tools you need to walk into the process informed and prepared.

What's Inside:

- **Decision Tree** — A step-by-step framework to determine which of the four national accreditors is the best fit for your institution's mission, programs, delivery mode, and goals.
- **Universal Self-Assessment** — A scored questionnaire covering 10 foundational areas that every national accreditor evaluates. Know exactly where you stand before you begin.
- **Universal Document Checklist** — 75+ items organized by category. Track what you have, what's in progress, and what's missing.
- **Accreditor-Specific Questionnaires** — Targeted self-assessments for DEAC, COE, ACCSC, and TRACS that address each accreditor's unique standards, eligibility thresholds, and documentation requirements.
- **Timeline Planner** — Milestone-based planning template adaptable to any national accreditor's process.
- **Cost Estimation Worksheet** — Budget for accreditation fees, consulting, documentation, and site visits.
- **10 Most Common Mistakes** — Learn from the failures we've seen in 115+ engagements so you can avoid them.

This toolkit is your starting point — not a substitute for expert guidance. Every institution's accreditation journey is unique. After completing the self-assessment, book a free strategy call with EEC to review your results and build a customized action plan. Visit bppe.consulting/contact-us or call +1 (925) 208-9037.

Part 2: National Accreditation Decision Tree



Choosing the right national accreditor is one of the most consequential decisions you will make. The wrong choice can cost you years of effort and tens of thousands of dollars. Use this step-by-step decision tree to narrow your options.

Step 1: Is Your Institution Primarily Distance Education?

If 51% or more of your instruction is delivered via distance education (online, correspondence, or hybrid-majority), DEAC is your strongest candidate. **DEAC** is the only national accreditor built exclusively for distance education institutions.

- DEAC accredits from high school diplomas through professional doctoral degrees.
- Requires 12 months of continuous student enrollment before applying.
- Commission meets in January and June.

If your instruction is primarily campus-based (50%+ in person), proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Is Your Institution Faith-Based?

If your institution identifies with the evangelical Protestant tradition and integrates Christian faith into its educational mission, **TRACS** is purpose-built for you. TRACS is the only national accreditor designed specifically for Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries.

- TRACS accredits certificates through doctoral degrees.
- Requires a board-approved Faith Statement aligned with evangelical Protestant Christianity.
- 10-year accreditation cycle (the longest among national accreditors).
- Both campus-based and distance education institutions are eligible.

If your institution is secular or does not identify with evangelical Protestantism, proceed to Step 3.

Part 2: National Accreditation Decision Tree

Step 3: What Degree Levels Do You Offer?

Both COE and ACCSC accredit career and technical education institutions, but they differ significantly in degree level scope:

Criterion	COE vs. ACCSC
Maximum Degree Level	COE: Applied Associate ACCSC: Master's
Minimum Program Length	COE: No minimum specified ACCSC: 300 clock hours
Campus Requirement	COE: 25% FTE in-person ACCSC: Physical main campus required
Minimum Enrollment	COE: 10 FTE students ACCSC: Not specified (must be operational 1 year)
Reaffirmation Cycle	COE: 6 years ACCSC: 5 years

Choose COE if: Your institution offers certificates, diplomas, or applied associate degrees in occupational fields; you are a public technical college, military training program, or Job Corps center; and your programs cap at the associate level.

Choose ACCSC if: Your institution offers career and technical programs up through the master's level; you are a private career school, trade college, or technical academy; and you want national accreditation with broad degree-level flexibility.

Part 2: National Accreditation Decision Tree

Step 4: Quick Elimination Checklist

Before finalizing your choice, confirm that none of these disqualifying factors apply:

Disqualifying Factor	DEAC	COE	ACCSC	TRACS
No physical campus	✓	✗	✗	✓
Fully online (51%+ DE)	✓	✗	✗*	✓
Offers bachelor's degrees or higher	✓	✗	✓	✓
Non-Christian / secular institution	✓	✓	✓	✗
Programs are not career/occupational	✓	✗	✗	✓
Fewer than 10 FTE students	✗	✗	—	—
Less than 12 months of enrollment	✗	✗	✗	—
Denied by another recognized accreditor	—	✗	—	—

✓ = Eligible | ✗ = Not Eligible | — = Not Specified | * ACCSC allows DE but requires physical main campus

Part 2: National Accreditation Decision Tree

Decision Tree Summary



START HERE:

Q1: Is 51%+ of your instruction delivered via distance education?

- YES → DEAC is your primary candidate.
- NO → Proceed to **Q2**.

Q2: Does your institution identify with the evangelical Protestant Christian tradition?

- YES → TRACS is your primary candidate.
- NO → Proceed to **Q3**.

Q3: Do you offer (or plan to offer) degrees above the applied associate level?

- YES → ACCSC is your primary candidate (accredits through master's).
- NO → Proceed to **Q4**.

Q4: Is your institution a career/occupational school offering certificates, diplomas, or applied associate degrees?

- YES → COE or ACCSC. Compare both using the table above.
- NO → A national accreditor may not be the right fit. Consider regional accreditation (SACSCOC, HLC, WSCUC, etc.).

EEC PRO TIP

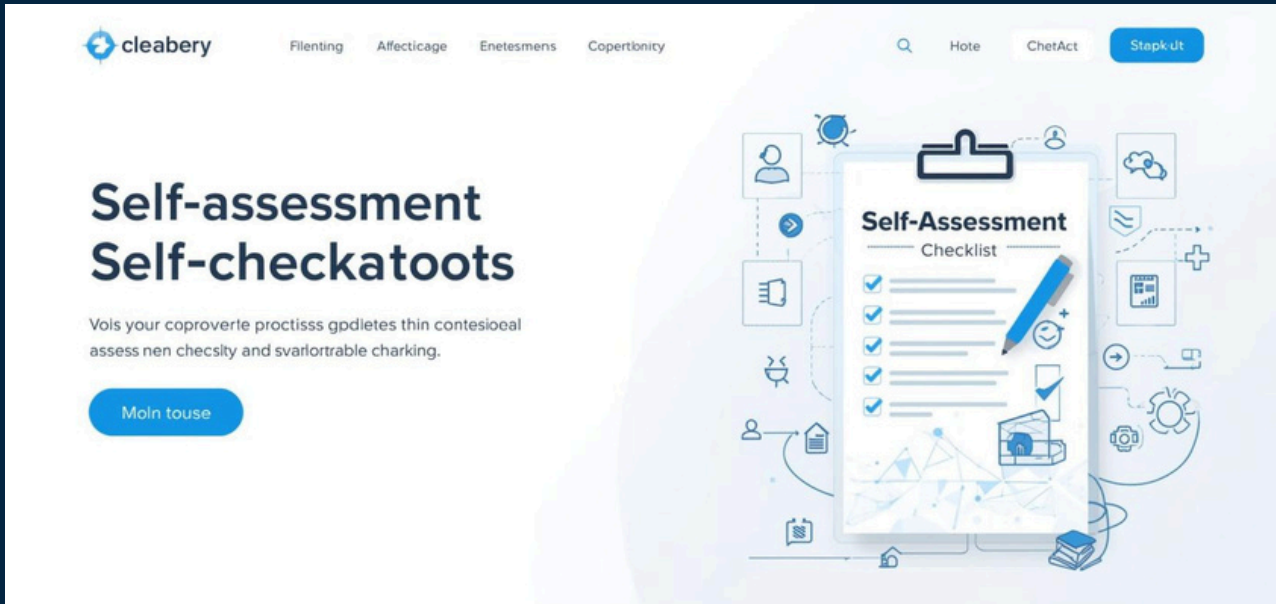
Not sure which accreditor is right for you? Your choice depends on institution type, program focus, degree levels, delivery mode, religious affiliation, and long-term goals. EEC has guided 115+ institutions through this decision. Book a free strategy call at bppe.consulting/contact-us and we will help you evaluate your options.

Part 3: National Accreditor Quick-Reference Comparison

This table compares the four USDE-recognized national institutional accreditors across key criteria.

Criterion	DEAC	COE	ACCSC	TRACS
Founded	1926	1971	1965	1979
Headquarters	Washington, D.C.	Atlanta, GA	Arlington, VA	Forest, VA
Best For	Online / distance ed	Career & technical (occupational)	Career schools & trade colleges	Faith-based Christian institutions
Degree Levels	HS diploma – Professional Doctoral	Cert – Applied Associate	Cert – Master’s	Cert – Doctoral
Title IV	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CHEA Recognized	Yes	No	No	Yes
Delivery Mode	51%+ distance ed required	25%+ in-person required	Physical campus required	Campus or distance ed
Accred. Cycle	3 yr (initial) / 5 yr (renewal)	6 years	5 years	10 years
Typical Timeline	18–36 months	18–36 months	18–30 months	3–6 years
# of Standards	15	10	9 sections	17
Min. Enrollment	12 mo. continuous enrollment	10 FTE students	1 yr. operation	Not specified
Est. Accreditor Fees	\$15K–\$50K+	\$5K–\$10K+	\$15K–\$30K+	\$15K–\$30K+

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment



This scored self-assessment covers the 10 foundational areas that every national accrediting body evaluates. Answer each question honestly. Your total score will tell you whether you're ready to apply, need focused preparation, or should build foundational capacity first.

Scoring: For each question, mark the number that best describes your current status. 1 = Not in place / No evidence. 2 = Partially in place / Some documentation. 3 = Fully in place / Well-documented.

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 1: Legal Standing & Governance

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is legally incorporated and in good standing with the state.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You hold a current, valid state license or authorization to operate as a postsecondary institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your governing board has at least 3–5 members with documented qualifications and regular meeting minutes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An organizational chart exists showing clear reporting lines from the board through administration to faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bylaws or articles of incorporation are current, board-approved, and on file.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 2: Mission, Objectives & Strategic Planning

Question	1	2	3
Your mission statement is published, board-approved, and clearly communicates institutional purpose.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional objectives are measurable and aligned to the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a board-approved strategic plan with short-term (1–2 year) and long-term (3–5 year) goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key performance indicators (KPIs) are defined to measure mission achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The mission is reviewed at least annually with input from leadership, faculty, staff, and advisory groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 3: Academic Programs & Curriculum

Question	1	2	3
Each program has defined learning outcomes aligned to industry or professional standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum maps show how courses build toward program-level outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit/clock hour calculations are documented and comply with federal definitions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program advisory committees with external stakeholders meet at least annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A formal curriculum review process exists and is documented with meeting minutes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comparable programs at peer institutions have been identified and analyzed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 4: Faculty Qualifications & Development

Question	1	2	3
All faculty have credentials at least one level above the highest credential they teach.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty resumes, transcripts, and background checks are on file for all instructors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A faculty handbook exists with policies on hiring, evaluation, workload, and professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are evaluated at least annually with documented results and improvement plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A professional development plan and budget exist for faculty training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 5: Student Services & Support

Question	1	2	3
Academic advising is available to all enrolled students (including online students).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career services, tutoring, and disability accommodations are documented and accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A formal student orientation process exists for all new enrollees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student satisfaction surveys are administered regularly with results documented and acted upon.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A published grievance/complaint policy is accessible, and a 5-year complaint log is maintained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 6: Institutional Assessment & Effectiveness

Question	1	2	3
An institutional assessment plan identifies outcomes at institutional, program, and course levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduation/completion rates are tracked and reported by program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job placement rates (or equivalent outcomes) are tracked for career-oriented programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment data is used in decision-making (documented evidence of closing the loop).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student achievement data is disclosed publicly (where required by your accreditor).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 7: Financial Stability

Question	1	2	3
At least two years of independently audited financial statements (GAAP) are available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution demonstrates financial stability with adequate reserves or positive trends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual operating budgets are board-approved and on file.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuition refund policies comply with state and federal requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial aid policies (if applicable) are documented and compliant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 8: Policies & Publications

Question	1	2	3
An up-to-date institutional catalog is published with all required disclosures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enrollment agreements include all legally required terms and disclosures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies on academic integrity, satisfactory academic progress (SAP), grading, and attendance are published.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student privacy/FERPA policies are documented and accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All advertising and marketing materials are truthful, non-deceptive, and on file.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 9: Technology & Facilities

Question	1	2	3
Physical facilities (if applicable) are safe, code-compliant, and adequate for programs offered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Learning Management System (LMS) is in place for online/hybrid programs with student identity verification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology requirements for students are published and accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency procedures, evacuation plans, and drill records are documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A facilities maintenance plan exists detailing current needs and future improvements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Area 10: Regulatory Compliance & Record-Keeping

Question	1	2	3
State authorization is current for every state where students are enrolled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student records are securely maintained with appropriate retention policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution has a designated compliance officer or administrator responsible for regulatory oversight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A record retention policy defines how long academic, financial, and personnel records are kept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution has no unresolved adverse actions from state agencies, accreditors, or federal regulators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

Score Your Results

Your Score: _____ / 153

Add up all marked numbers across the 10 areas. Most institutions score in the 50–80 range on their first attempt. A low score does not mean accreditation is out of reach — it means you have a clear roadmap of what to build.

Score Range	Recommended Action
101–153: Ready to Apply	Begin the application process. Use the checklists in Part 5 to organize your documentation.
51–100: Needs Focused Prep	Targeted gaps exist. Prioritize the lowest-scoring areas before applying. EEC can help close gaps in 3–6 months.
50 or Below: Build Foundations	Significant infrastructure is needed. Focus on governance, state licensure, and core policy development before pursuing accreditation.

Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist



Every national accrediting body requires you to submit a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) or Self-Study supported by documentary exhibits. While exhibit numbers and naming conventions vary, the underlying documents are remarkably consistent. Use this checklist to track your preparation status.

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

A. Legal Standing & Governance

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Articles of Incorporation / Formation Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current state business license / good standing certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State postsecondary education license (all states of operation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SARA/NC-SARA membership documentation (if distance ed)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bylaws (current, board-approved)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organizational chart with clear reporting lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board of Directors/Trustees roster with bios and qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board meeting minutes (most recent 2–3 years)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proof of legal name and any DBA registrations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other accreditation certificates or candidacy letters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

B. Mission, Strategy & Effectiveness

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Published mission statement (catalog, website, handbooks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional objectives with measurable KPIs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board-approved strategic plan (short-term and long-term)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional effectiveness plan / assessment plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of mission review (meeting minutes, surveys)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SWOT analysis or environmental scan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enrollment projections (3–5 year)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

C. Academic Programs & Curriculum

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Program descriptions with learning outcomes per program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course syllabi for all courses (every active program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum maps linking courses to program outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit/clock hour calculation documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program comparison analysis (peer/competitor programs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advisory committee rosters, bios, and meeting minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Program review reports (if programs have been offered 2+ years)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum development manual / process documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content developer and instructional designer qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third-party educational delivery contracts (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

D. Faculty & Staff

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Faculty resumes/CVs for all instructional staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Official transcripts for all faculty on file	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty qualifications matrix (credentials vs. courses taught)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty handbook (hiring, evaluation, workload, conduct)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty evaluation records (annual, with improvement plans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional development plan and training records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sample faculty contracts or employment agreements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic leadership resumes (CAO, program directors, deans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

E. Student Services, Policies & Publications

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Current institutional catalog (print and/or online)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enrollment agreements (sample, with all required disclosures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance / participation policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic integrity / honesty policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student privacy / FERPA policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grievance / complaint policy and 5-year complaint log	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuition refund / cancellation policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student orientation materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Career services / advising documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student satisfaction survey instruments and results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graduate / alumni survey instruments and results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sample student records (redacted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sample transcripts and diplomas/certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

F. Financial Records

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Audited financial statements (GAAP) – 2 most recent years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management letters from auditor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board-approved annual operating budgets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial composite score worksheet (if required by accreditor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proof of insurance (general liability, E&O, D&O)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuition revenue reports and enrollment projections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

G. Marketing, Advertising & Recruitment

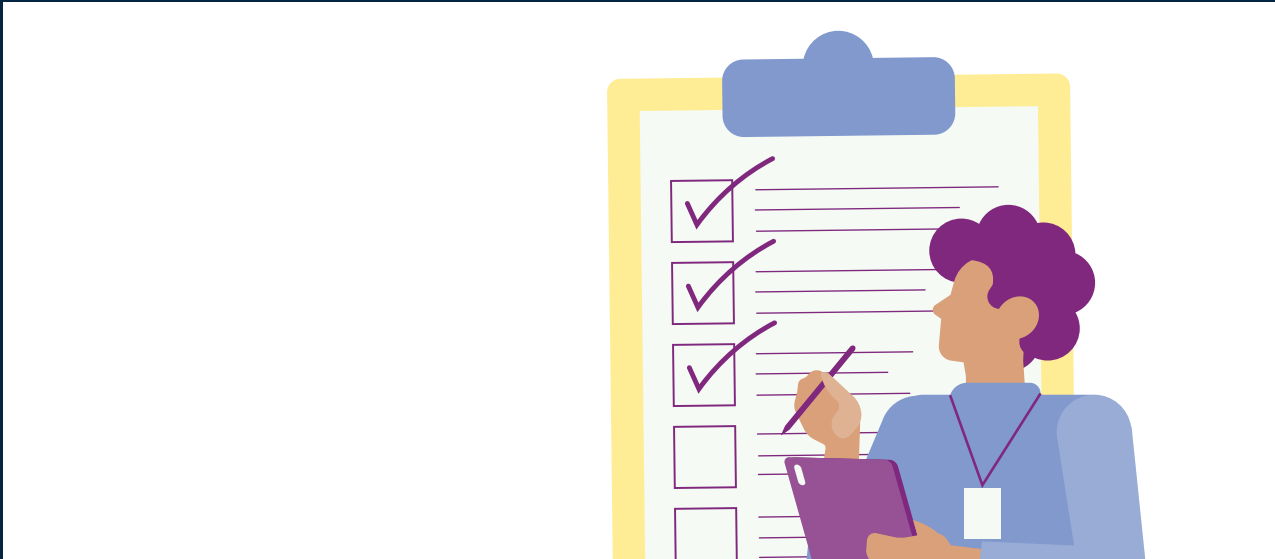
Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Sample advertising and promotional materials (print, digital, social)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website screenshots demonstrating required disclosures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signed student testimonial consent forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student recruitment personnel job descriptions and training records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recruiter code of conduct (if required by accreditor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catalog disclosures checklist (mapped to accreditor requirements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website disclosures checklist (mapped to accreditor requirements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

H. Facilities, Technology & Safety

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Facility inventory (square footage, room assignments, capacity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building inspection / occupancy certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency procedures and evacuation plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire / safety drill records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IT infrastructure documentation and student tech requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LMS documentation (platform, features, uptime, student verification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities maintenance plan and budget	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ADA / accessibility compliance documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire



Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified DEAC as your target accreditor. These questions address DEAC's unique eligibility requirements, 15 accreditation standards, and documentation expectations.

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution delivers 51% or more of its instruction via distance education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have been enrolling students in current programs for at least 12 consecutive months.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your designated compliance officer has completed (or will complete) DEAC's Preparing for Accreditation Tutorial.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You hold state licensure or authorization in every state where enrolled students reside.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution can demonstrate financial stability with GAAP-audited statements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC Standards Readiness (Standards I–XV)

Mission, Governance & Planning (Stds I–III)

Question	1	2	3
Your mission statement explicitly references quality distance education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your governing board has qualified members with defined roles, bylaws, and meeting records.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a documented strategic plan with measurable goals and evidence of data-driven decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An institutional effectiveness plan shows evidence of continuous improvement (plan-do-check-act).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC Standards Readiness (Standards I–XV)

Academic Quality (Stds IV–X)

Question	1	2	3
Student learning outcomes are systematically assessed and benchmarked against peers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs meet DEAC credit-hour minimums (60 for associate, 120 for bachelor's).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum is faculty-driven with up-to-date technology and academic integrity safeguards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty hold master's degrees minimum for undergraduate instruction and terminal degrees for graduate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Published policies cover admissions, transfer credit, academic honesty, and satisfactory progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50% of courses per degree program are ready for DEAC subject specialist review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC Standards Readiness (Standards I–XV)

Ethical & Legal Operations (Stds XI–XIII)

Question	1	2	3
Recruitment practices are ethical with truthful advertising and compliant enrollment agreements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support services include advising, tutoring, technical support, and disability accommodations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refund policies are clearly published and FERPA-compliant privacy protections are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written grievance procedures include timelines, appeals process, and are accessible to all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC Standards Readiness (Standards I–XV)

Business & Infrastructure (Stds XIV–XV)

Question	1	2	3
Two years of GAAP-audited financial statements demonstrate adequate resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical and virtual infrastructure is secure with reliable technology platforms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student and administrative records are protected with documented retention policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6: DEAC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

DEAC-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Enrollment data worksheet (completions, modalities, program levels) per DEAC format	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit hour conversion documentation (clock-to-credit tables for all programs)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course materials ready for curricular review (50% of courses per degree program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcomes assessment plan with methods, frequency, and action plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic integrity policy with student acknowledgment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State authorization documentation for every state where students reside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Preparing for Accreditation Tutorial completion certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student identity verification procedures for online delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional effectiveness plan with plan-do-check-act documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Evaluation Report narrative addressing all 15 standards with exhibit references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire



Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified COE as your target accreditor. These questions address COE's unique eligibility requirements, 10 accreditation standards, and documentation expectations.

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution offers postsecondary career and technical education exclusively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your programs award credentials no higher than an applied associate degree.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have been licensed and in continuous operation for at least one year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have at least 10 FTE students enrolled.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least 25% of your FTE comes from traditional (campus-based) instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has not been denied, dropped, or placed on adverse status by another USDE-recognized agency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Standards Readiness (Standards 1–10)

Institutional Mission & Strategic Planning (Stds 1, 4)

Question	1	2	3
Your mission explicitly focuses on career and technical education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An Institutional Advisory Committee (minimum 3 external members) meets at least annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A documented strategic plan spans at least 3 years with measurable objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stakeholders (faculty, staff, administration, advisory committees) participate in plan review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Standards Readiness (Standards 1–10)

Educational Programs & Outcomes (Stds 2, 3)

Question	1	2	3
Every program has Occupational Advisory Committee input on curriculum and labor-market relevance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completion rates, job placement rates, and licensure pass rates meet or exceed COE benchmarks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employer and graduate satisfaction surveys are administered and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A written follow-up plan describes data collection and improvement processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate degree programs meet COE requirements for length and general education content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Standards Readiness (Standards 1–10)

Resources, Infrastructure & Finance (Stds 5, 6, 7)

Question	1	2	3
Libraries, media, technology, and labs directly support program objectives with designated staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities are safe, well-maintained, with a written maintenance and operations plan reviewed annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A health and safety plan covers emergency procedures, incident reporting, and IT security.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audited financial statements show sufficient funds to operate and complete education for enrolled students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compliance with refund policies and Title IV rules is documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Standards Readiness (Standards 1–10)

Human Resources & Organization (Stds 8, 9)

Question	1	2	3
Written job descriptions, grievance procedures, and faculty evaluation processes exist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are qualified by education and experience with documented professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A legally constituted governing board, designated chief executive, and accreditation liaison are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Necessary legal documents (charter, state license) are current.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE Standards Readiness (Standards 1–10)

Student Services (Std 10)

Question	1	2	3
Academic advising, career guidance, financial aid counseling, and orientation are documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job placement assistance and graduate/employer follow-up surveys are active.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retention programs and grievance resolution procedures are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student records are securely maintained with appropriate retention policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 7: COE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

COE-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Institutional Advisory Committee agendas, attendance logs, and meeting minutes (annual)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupational Advisory Committee minutes for each program area with industry representatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COE check sheets completed for each standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student achievement data formatted to COE benchmarks (completion, placement, licensure)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic plan (3-year minimum) with annual updates and stakeholder review evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and safety plan with emergency procedures and incident reporting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities maintenance and operations plan (reviewed annually)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candidate Academy attendance documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDvera application materials and candidacy submission	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Report (SSR) narrative for all 10 standards with exhibit cross-references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire



Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified ACCSC as your target accreditor. These questions address ACCSC's unique eligibility requirements, 9 standards sections, and documentation expectations (Standards effective July 1, 2025).

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution offers postsecondary career, trade, or technical programs with occupational objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You offer at least one program of 300 clock hours or longer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are state-licensed and have been operating for at least one year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has a physical main campus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your programs are not primarily liberal arts, general education, or avocational (hobby-based).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Standards Readiness (Sections I–IX)

Management & Administration (Section I)

Question	1	2	3
Qualified leadership is in place with sound finances, adequate facilities, and clear policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A culture of institutional planning and continuous improvement is documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An Institutional Assessment and Improvement Plan (IAIP) demonstrates genuine continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethical operations are documented with codes of conduct and compliance procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Standards Readiness (Sections I–IX)

Programs, Faculty & Educational Admin (Sections II–III)

Question	1	2	3
Programs are systematically designed with outcomes-based curricula aligned to occupational objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear learning objectives, proper credit/clock-hour calculations, and advisory committee input exist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An experienced Director of Education and qualified program heads are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty hold degrees at least one level above the credential offered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Documented professional development plans and records exist for all instructional staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Standards Readiness (Sections I–IX)

Recruitment, Admissions & Student Services (Sections IV–VI)

Question	1	2	3
Recruitment is ethical and truthful with no guaranteed job placement claims.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catalogs and enrollment agreements include all required disclosures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions criteria are objective, fair, and consistently applied with 5-year record retention.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student services include advising, tutoring, career services, technical support, and disability accommodations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular student satisfaction surveys are administered and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Standards Readiness (Sections I–IX)

Student Achievement & Outcomes (Section VII)

Question	1	2	3
Completion rates, placement rates, and licensure pass rates are tracked and reported annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defined learning outcomes with systematic assessment are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory academic progress policies are published and enforced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student achievement data is publicly disclosed as required.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC Standards Readiness (Sections I–IX)

Branch Campuses & Distance Education (Sections VIII–IX)

Question	1	2	3
Branch campuses (if any) have equivalent administration, faculty, resources, and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distance education programs (if any) have a designated DE administrator.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online programs provide equivalent resources and student identity verification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcomes for DE programs are comparable to on-campus programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 8: ACCSC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

ACCSC-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Pre-Workshop Application with eligibility documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accreditation Workshop attendance confirmation (Arlington, VA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application Part I with institutional info, financials, program chart, and licenses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning assessment plans with outcomes matrices and assessment schedules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Assessment and Improvement Plan (IAIP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student achievement data (graduation, placement, licensure rates) per ACCSC reporting format	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientation visit response materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revised SER addressing all 9 standards sections with exhibit labels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing and recruitment materials audit documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distance education compliance documentation (Section IX, if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire



Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified TRACS as your target accreditor. These questions address TRACS's unique eligibility requirements, 17 accreditation standards, and documentation expectations (Accreditation Manual, October 2024).

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution identifies with the evangelical Protestant tradition in higher education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a board-approved Faith Statement compatible with TRACS's doctrinal framework.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your governing board has at least 5 members providing independent oversight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a full-time CEO and a full-time Chief Academic Officer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You hold state licensure for your main campus and all branch locations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your programs are in recognized academic fields with proper credit-hour documentation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Standards Readiness (Standards 1–17)

Faith, Mission & Integrity (Stds 1–4)

Question	1	2	3
A board-approved Faith Statement aligned with evangelical Protestant Christianity is published.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your mission is appropriate for Christian higher education and guides planning and assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional objectives are measurable, tied to mission and faith statement, and board-approved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publications are truthful, substantive changes are approved before implementation, and TRACS is notified promptly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Standards Readiness (Standards 1–17)

Governance & Operations (Stds 5–7)

Question	1	2	3
State licenses for main campus and branches are current; SARA authorization is active for distance ed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board of at least 5 members with bylaws, org chart, written job descriptions, and board self-evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current catalog, faculty and student handbooks, grievance/due-process policies, and policy compendium exist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Standards Readiness (Standards 1–17)

Academic Programs & Faculty (Stds 8–9)

Question	1	2	3
Programs are in recognized fields with proper credit hours (60 for associate, 120 for bachelor's, 30 for master's).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education requirements are met for degree programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty-driven curriculum review processes are documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty credentials match teaching assignments; 25% of major courses taught by terminally degreed faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty evaluation and development plans are fair and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Standards Readiness (Standards 1–17) Student Services, Finance & Assessment (Stds 10–13)

Question	1	2	3
Advising, career counseling, financial aid, orientation, and retention programs are accessible to all delivery modes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grievance records are maintained for a minimum of 5 years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual independent financial audit is completed; proprietary schools limit owner distributions to 25%.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board-approved assessment plan measures outcomes at course, program, and institutional levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An integrated strategic plan with 1–2 year and 3–5 year goals is board-approved and updated annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS Standards Readiness (Standards 1–17)

Library, Facilities & Federal Compliance (Stds 14–17)

Question	1	2	3
Library has adequate print/digital resources with qualified staff (MLS for director).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library resources are accessible to all students including distance learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities are safe, code-compliant, with a maintenance plan and adequate IT infrastructure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency procedures (fire, weather, active shooter) are documented with drill records.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit hour policy meets federal definition; program length and cost are appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student complaint records and resolution processes meet federal requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 9: TRACS-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

TRACS-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Board-approved Faith Statement (evangelical Protestant tradition)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Profile Form and Application Compliance Checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Proposal (SSP) for TRACS approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board self-evaluation records and trustee bios/qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty credential files with evidence of 25% terminally-degreed teaching loads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment plan with course, program, and institutional outcome measurements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-year student complaint/grievance log	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library inventory with qualified director (MLS) credentials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency procedures documentation (fire, weather, active shooter) with drill records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit hour policy documentation meeting federal definitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Candidacy progress reports (required during candidacy period)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Evaluation Report (SER) narrative for all 17 standards with exhibit references	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 10: Accreditation Timeline Planner



Every national accreditor follows a phased process. While specific steps and timelines differ, the high-level structure is universal. Use this template to map your own milestones. Adapt the phase descriptions to match your chosen accreditor's specific requirements.

Part 10: Accreditation Timeline Planner

Phase	Milestone	Target Date	Owner	Status
Phase 1	Identify target accreditor and confirm eligibility	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 1	Obtain/renew state license or authorization	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 1	Engage accreditation consultant (if applicable)	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 1	Complete readiness self-assessment (this toolkit)	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Submit initial inquiry or pre-application to accreditor	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Attend required orientation, workshop, or academy	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Submit formal application with fee	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Conduct institutional self-study	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Draft Self-Evaluation Report (SER)	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Compile and organize all exhibits	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Internal review of SER + exhibits	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Submit SER and exhibits to accreditor	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	Prepare for site visit (mock interviews, room setup)	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	On-site evaluation visit	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	Draft response to evaluator findings	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 5	Commission/Board decision meeting	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 5	Post-decision compliance (annual reports, monitoring)	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started

Part 11: Cost Estimation Worksheet



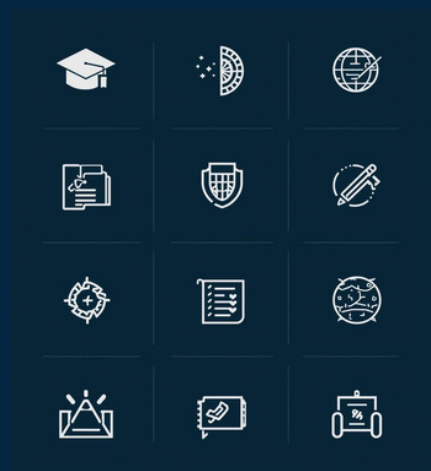
National accreditation costs include fees paid directly to the accreditor, consulting fees, document preparation, and operational costs. Use this worksheet to build a realistic budget.

Part 11: Cost Estimation Worksheet

Cost Category	Estimated Range	Your Estimate	Notes
Application / pre-application fee	\$1,500 – \$7,000	\$_____	Varies by accreditor
Workshop / orientation / academy	\$500 – \$2,000	\$_____	Travel not included
Self-study / SER submission fee	\$2,000 – \$8,000	\$_____	
On-site evaluation fee	\$5,000 – \$20,000+	\$_____	Covers evaluator costs
Curricular review fees (DEAC)	\$1,350 – \$2,050/program	\$_____	DEAC only
Annual sustaining dues (Year 1)	\$900 – \$15,000+	\$_____	Enrollment-based
Subtotal: Accreditor Fees		\$_____	
Accreditation consulting services	\$25,000 – \$150,000+	\$_____	Scope-dependent
Curriculum development / revision	\$5,000 – \$50,000+	\$_____	If new programs needed
Financial audit preparation (GAAP)	\$5,000 – \$25,000	\$_____	Per year
LMS / technology infrastructure	\$2,000 – \$30,000+	\$_____	If new system needed
Catalog / policy writing or revision	\$2,000 – \$15,000	\$_____	
Faculty credentialing / hiring	\$0 – \$50,000+	\$_____	If gaps exist
Site visit preparation (mock, room)	\$1,000 – \$5,000	\$_____	
Travel (workshops, conferences)	\$1,000 – \$5,000	\$_____	
Subtotal: Preparation Costs		\$_____	
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET		\$_____	

Part 12: The 10 Most Common National Accreditation Mistakes

After guiding 115+ institutions through accreditation, EEC has cataloged the most frequent and costly errors. Avoid these and you will be ahead of 90% of first-time applicants.



Part 12: The 10 Most Common National Accreditation Mistakes

Mistake #1: Applying Before State Licensure Is Secure

Every national accreditor requires a valid state license before accepting your application. If your license is provisional, expired, or under review, your accreditation timeline is dead in the water. DEAC additionally requires state authorization in every state where students are enrolled. Secure full state authorization first.

Mistake #2: Choosing the Wrong Accreditor

Applying to an accreditor that doesn't match your institution's mission, delivery mode, or degree levels wastes months or years. A career school applying to DEAC, a secular school applying to TRACS, or an online-only school applying to COE will all face rejection. Use the decision tree in Part 2 before you begin.

Mistake #3: Writing a Mission Statement That Cannot Be Measured

Accreditors require you to demonstrate mission achievement with data. If your mission includes aspirational language like "profound understanding" or "transforming lives" without defining what that means in measurable terms, evaluators will flag it. Write a mission that generates trackable KPIs.

Mistake #4: Underestimating the Self-Evaluation Report

The SER is not a narrative essay. It is an evidence-based compliance document that must cite specific exhibits, data points, and policies for every standard. Institutions that treat it as a writing exercise instead of a compliance argument consistently receive findings.

Mistake #5: Missing or Disorganized Exhibits

Evaluators review 30–50+ exhibits in a team room. If exhibits are missing, mislabeled, outdated, or disorganized, it signals institutional disorganization. Build your exhibit system 6+ months before the site visit.

Mistake #6: Faculty Credential Gaps

Every national accreditor requires faculty to hold credentials at least one level above the highest credential they teach. TRACS additionally requires 25% of major courses to be taught by terminally-degreed faculty. Audit faculty credentials early and document justifications for any exceptions.

Mistake #7: No Evidence of Closing the Loop

Collecting data is not enough. Accreditors want evidence that assessment data drives decisions and improvements. You need documented examples of: (1) data collected, (2) analysis performed, (3) changes implemented, and (4) results measured.

Part 12: The 10 Most Common National Accreditation Mistakes

Mistake #8: Incomplete Financial Documentation

Audited financial statements that are late, qualified, or missing management letters are red flags. Budget 6–8 months for audit preparation if you have never undergone a GAAP audit. Most national accreditors require 2 consecutive years.

Mistake #9: Neglecting the Catalog and Enrollment Agreements

Your catalog is the single most-reviewed document in accreditation. Missing disclosures, outdated policies, inconsistencies between the catalog and website, or enrollment agreements that omit required terms will generate findings in every evaluation.

Mistake #10: Trying to Do It Alone

Accreditation is a specialized, high-stakes regulatory process. Institutions that engage experienced consultants consistently achieve accreditation faster, with fewer findings, and at lower total cost than those who navigate the process alone. The consulting investment typically pays for itself in avoided delays and rework.



Your Next Step

You now have the decision framework, self-assessments, checklists, timelines, budgets, and strategic insight you need to evaluate your national accreditation readiness. The question is: what do you do with it?

Option 1: Self-Guided Preparation

Use this toolkit to organize your documentation, close gaps, and build your SER on your own. This path works best for institutions with experienced compliance staff and ample time.

Option 2: Expert-Guided Accreditation (Recommended)

Partner with Expert Education Consultants for end-to-end accreditation support. Our team of 35+ specialists has launched 115+ institutions across all 50 states. We compress timelines, eliminate costly missteps, and manage the entire process from readiness assessment through grant of accreditation.



**EXPERT
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CONSULTANTS**

LET'S REVIEW YOUR READINESS TOGETHER

Share your self-assessment results with our team and get a personalized action plan – no obligation, no pressure. Just clarity on your next steps.

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