



THE COMPLETE Regional Accreditation Readiness Toolkit

SACSCOC | HLC | MSCHE | WSCUC | NECHE | NWCCU

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Part 1: How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is designed specifically for institutions pursuing regional accreditation from one of the six USDE-recognized regional (institutional) accreditors: SACSCOC, HLC, MSCHE, WSCUC, NECHE, or NWCCU. Whether you are a startup institution exploring your first accreditation, an established school preparing for reaffirmation, or an institution transitioning from national to regional accreditation, this toolkit provides the decision frameworks, checklists, self-assessment instruments, and planning tools you need.

What's Inside:

- Decision Tree — A step-by-step framework to determine which of the six regional accreditors is the best fit based on your location, institution type, degree levels, and strategic goals.
- Universal Self-Assessment — A scored questionnaire covering 10 foundational areas that every regional accreditor evaluates.
- Universal Document Checklist — 80+ items organized by category with status tracking.
- Accreditor-Specific Questionnaires — Targeted self-assessments for each of the six regional accreditors addressing unique standards, eligibility thresholds, and documentation.
- Timeline Planner — Milestone-based planning template adaptable to any regional accreditor's process.
- Cost Estimation Worksheet — Budget for accreditation fees, consulting, documentation, and site visits.
- 10 Most Common Mistakes — Learn from failures across 115+ engagements.

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Part 2: Regional Accreditation Decision Tree

Choosing the right regional accreditor is a foundational decision. Unlike national accreditors (which are chosen by institutional type), regional accreditors are traditionally chosen by geographic location — though following the DOE’s 2020 reclassification, all six now accept institutions nationwide. Use this step-by-step decision tree to identify your best fit.

Step 1: Where Is Your Institution Located?

Geography is still the strongest default factor. Each regional accreditor has a traditional home territory where it is best known, most deeply networked, and most readily recognized by state agencies:

Accreditor	Traditional Territory
SACSCOC	AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, VA (11 SE states) + Latin America
HLC	AZ, AR, CO, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, NM, ND, OH, OK, SD, WV, WI, WY (19 states)
MSCHE	NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands (Mid-Atlantic)
WSCUC	CA, HI, Guam, American Samoa, Micronesia, Palau, Marshall Islands (Pacific)
NECHE	CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT (6 New England states)
NWCCU	AK, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA (7 NW states)

If your institution is located within a traditional territory, that accreditor should be your default starting point.

If your institution is outside all traditional territories, or you have strategic reasons to look beyond your home region, proceed to Step 2.



Part 2: Regional Accreditation Decision Tree

Step 2: What Degree Levels Does Your Institution Offer?

Not all regional accreditors cover the same degree levels:

Associate degrees and above: SACSCOC, HLC, MSCHE, NECHE, and NWCCU all accredit institutions offering associate through doctoral degrees.

Baccalaureate and above ONLY: WSCUC accredits only senior institutions whose primary offerings are baccalaureate degrees and above. If your institution's highest credential is an associate degree, WSCUC is not eligible for you.



Step 3: Does Your Institution Have a Special Profile?

Certain institutional profiles align better with specific accreditors:

- Fully online / distance education institution: All six regional accreditors accept distance education, but if you have no physical campus in any accreditor's traditional territory, HLC and SACSCOC have the most experience with out-of-region and fully online applicants.
- Faith-based institution: All regional accreditors accept faith-based schools. SACSCOC and HLC have the largest portfolios of faith-based members. NECHE historically accredits several prominent religious institutions.
- International institution seeking U.S. recognition: SACSCOC (Latin America), WSCUC (Pacific Rim), and MSCHE (Caribbean) have the strongest international portfolios.
- Transitioning from national to regional accreditation: All six accept transition applicants, but HLC and SACSCOC have the most documented transition pathways.



Part 2: Regional Accreditation Decision Tree

Step 4: Quick Elimination Checklist

Confirm that none of these disqualifying factors apply to your institution:

Disqualifying Factor	SACSCOC	HLC	MSCHE	WSCUC	NECHE	NWCCU
Not degree-granting (cert/diploma only)	X	X	X	X	X	X
No enrolled students / not operational	X	X	X	X	X	X
Highest credential is associate degree	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
K-12 school (not postsecondary)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Trade/vocational only (no degrees)	X	X	X	X	X	X
No governing board in place	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unresolved adverse action from another accretor	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*	X*

Decision Tree Summary

START HERE:

Q1: Is your institution located in one of the six traditional regional territories?

YES → Start with your home-region accretor. Confirm eligibility below.

NO → Proceed to Q2.

Q2: Is your institution primarily online with no physical campus in a traditional territory?

YES → Consider HLC or SACSCOC (strongest out-of-region track records).

NO → Proceed to Q3.

Q3: Is your institution's highest credential an associate degree?

YES → Eliminate WSCUC (baccalaureate+ only). Choose from the remaining five.

NO → All six accretors remain eligible.

Q4: Does your institution have an international or faith-based profile?

International (Latin America) → SACSCOC

International (Pacific Rim) → WSCUC

International (Caribbean) → MSCHE

NO special profile → Default to your home-region accretor.



Part 3: Regional Accreditor Quick-Reference Comparison

This table compares the six USDE-recognized regional (institutional) accreditors across key criteria.

Criterion	SACSCOC	HLC	MSCHE	WSCUC	NECHE	NWCCU
Founded	1895	1895	1919	1962	1885	1917
Headquarters	Decatur, GA	Chicago, IL	Philadelphia, PA	Alameda, CA	Burlington, MA	Redmond, WA
Territory	11 SE states	19 central states	Mid-Atlantic + PR/USVI	CA, HI, Pacific	6 New England states	7 NW states
# Members	~750	1,000+	~500	200+	200+	160+
Degree Levels	Assoc – Doctoral	Assoc – Doctoral	Assoc – Doctoral	Bachelor’s – Doctoral	Assoc – Doctoral	Assoc – Doctoral
Title IV	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CHEA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Standards	14 sections + QEP	4 Criteria	7 Standards	4 Stds + 30+ CFRs	9 Standards	2 Standards
Reaffirm. Cycle	10 years	10 years	8 years	10 years	10 years	7 years
Interim Report	5th-Year	4th-Year	Midpoint	Varies	5th-Year	PRFR + EIE (Yr 3 & 6)
Unique Feature	QEP required	Open/Standard Pathways	Self-Study Design	CFR-based review	Self-study + Standards	2-standard framework
Initial Timeline	3–5+ years	2–4 years	5–8 years	3–5 years	3–5 years	2–4 years



Part 4: Universal Readiness Self-Assessment

This scored self-assessment covers the 10 foundational areas that every regional 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.

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 degree-granting postsecondary institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your governing board has at least 5 independent 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"/>
Board members have no undue conflicts of interest and a conflict-of-interest policy is enforced.	<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 appropriate to higher education.	<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 regularly with input from leadership, faculty, staff, and stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning processes are integrated across academic, administrative, and financial functions.	<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 disciplinary 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 hour calculations are documented and comply with federal definitions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education requirements meet the breadth and depth expected by your target accreditor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A formal curriculum review process exists and is documented with faculty governance records.	<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 appropriate to the courses they teach (typically master's minimum for undergraduate).	<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, academic freedom, and professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are evaluated regularly 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"/>
Sufficient full-time faculty are employed to ensure quality (not over-reliant on adjuncts).	<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"/>
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"/>
A culture of continuous improvement is documented with evidence of data-driven changes.	<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"/>
Library and learning resources are adequate for all programs and delivery modes.	<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 accreditation liaison officer 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: _____ / 162

Add up all marked numbers across the 10 areas. Most institutions score in the 60–90 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
109–162: Ready to Apply	Begin the application process. Use the checklists in Part 5 to organize your documentation.
55–108: Needs Focused Prep	Targeted gaps exist. Prioritize the lowest-scoring areas before applying. EEC can help close gaps in 3–6 months.
54 or Below: Build Foundations	Significant infrastructure is needed. Focus on governance, state licensure, degree-program development, and core policy development before pursuing accreditation.



Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

Every regional accreditor requires a Compliance Certification, Self-Study, or Assurance Argument supported by documentary evidence. While terminology differs, the underlying documents are remarkably consistent.

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"/>
Board conflict-of-interest policy and signed disclosure forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CEO/President job description and annual evaluation records	<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 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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"/>
Integrated planning documentation linking academic, financial, and operational plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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 hour calculation documentation per federal definitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education requirements and distribution 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 (cyclical program review documentation)	<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"/>
Academic freedom policies and faculty governance records	<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 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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, academic freedom, conduct)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty evaluation records (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, provost, program directors, deans)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty workload policies and adjunct-to-full-time ratios	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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"/>
Grading policies and grading scale	<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"/>
Transfer credit evaluation policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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)	<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"/>
Endowment reports (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

G. Marketing, Advertising & Recruitment

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Sample advertising and promotional materials	<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"/>
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 5: Universal Document & Exhibit Checklist

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"/>
Library / learning resources inventory and usage data	<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"/>
Technology strategic plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 6: SACSCOC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified SACSCOC as your target accreditor. These questions address SACSCOC’s unique eligibility requirements, 14 sections of the Principles of Accreditation (2024 Edition), and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

SACSCOC Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is a degree-granting institution (associate level or above).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are located in (or primarily serve students in) the southeastern United States, or you have a strategic reason for seeking SACSCOC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have enrolled students in degree programs and are operationally active.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution’s leadership has attended (or plans to attend) the Pre-Applicant Workshop and Institutional Effectiveness Workshop.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can document compliance with Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 6: SACSCOC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

SACSCOC Standards Readiness

Integrity, Mission & Governance (Sections 1-5)

Question	1	2	3
Your institution operates with integrity, honesty in communications, and ethical practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your mission is clear, published, and appropriate to higher education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have degree-granting authority, continuous operation, and enrolled students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your governing board has 5+ members, fiduciary oversight, independence, and a conflict-of-interest policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A qualified CEO and administrative structure are in place with clear reporting lines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 6: SACSCOC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

SACSCOC Standards Readiness

Faculty, Planning & Student Achievement (Sections 6–8)

Question	1	2	3
Sufficient full-time faculty are employed with appropriate credentials for all programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty evaluation, academic freedom, and development policies are documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrated planning processes link assessment, budgeting, and continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) concept has been identified or is under development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student learning outcomes are defined and assessed at course, program, and institutional levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education assessment demonstrates breadth and depth of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 6: SACSCOC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

SACSCOC Standards Readiness

Programs, Policies & Resources (Sections 9-14)

Question	1	2	3
Academic programs are coherent, with appropriate credit-hour calculations and general education breadth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Published academic policies cover admissions, transfer credit, grading, and catalog requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library, technology, and learning resources are adequate for all programs and delivery modes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support services include advising, financial aid, career services, and retention programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial stability is demonstrated through GAAP-audited statements with adequate reserves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal compliance requirements (Title IV, credit hours, complaints, verification) are met.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 6: SACSCOC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

SACSCOC-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Pre-Applicant Workshop attendance confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Effectiveness Workshop attendance confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application for Membership documenting Core Requirements and select Standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) — max 75 pages narrative + 25 pages support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compliance Certification documenting all Core Requirements, Standards, and Federal Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board conflict-of-interest policy with signed disclosure forms for all trustees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CEO/President annual evaluation records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education assessment data demonstrating breadth across required domains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fifth-Year Interim Report template (for reaffirmation planning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substantive Change prospectus materials (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 7: HLC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified HLC as your target accreditor. These questions address HLC's unique eligibility requirements, 4 Criteria for Accreditation (revised September 1, 2025), and the Assurance Argument format.

HLC Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is a degree-granting postsecondary institution with a substantial U.S. presence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are located in (or have a substantial presence in) one of HLC's 19 states, or you have a strategic reason for seeking HLC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have been legally authorized and operational for a sufficient period.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a functioning governing board providing independent oversight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can demonstrate compliance with HLC's Eligibility Requirements and Federal Compliance requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 7: HLC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

HLC Criteria Readiness

Criterion 1: Mission

Question	1	2	3
Your mission is clear, publicly articulated, and guides institutional planning and decision-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mission fulfillment is assessed through defined metrics and reviewed regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The mission is appropriate to higher education and reflects commitment to student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Criterion 2: Integrity — Ethical and Responsible Conduct

Question	1	2	3
Your institution operates with integrity in all activities: financial, academic, and administrative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies ensure ethical behavior, academic honesty, and responsible governance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public disclosures are accurate, complete, and timely.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaint processes are accessible and documented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 7: HLC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

HLC Criteria Readiness

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning for Student Success

Question	1	2	3
Educational programs are rigorous, coherent, and aligned with the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are qualified, supported, and evaluated systematically.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student learning outcomes are defined, assessed, and used for improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education provides breadth and develops essential competencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support services promote retention, completion, and success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment of student learning is systematic and results inform improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 7: HLC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

HLC Criteria Readiness

Criterion 4: Sustainability — Institutional Effectiveness, Resources, and Planning

Question	1	2	3
Financial resources are sufficient to sustain operations and support the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning processes are integrated, evidence-based, and linked to budgeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human, physical, and technological resources are adequate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance structures ensure effective leadership and accountability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution demonstrates capacity for ongoing improvement and adaptation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 7: HLC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

HLC-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Eligibility Filing with documentation of all Eligibility Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assurance Argument narrative for all 4 Criteria with embedded evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence File organized by Criterion (supporting documents, data, policies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal Compliance documentation (Title IV, credit hours, transfer credit, complaints)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student identity verification procedures for distance education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Data Update (submitted annually)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multi-campus/additional location documentation (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assumed Practices documentation (financial, governance, academic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 4 Assurance Review preparation materials (for accredited institutions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open Pathway or Standard Pathway designation documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 8: MSCHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified MSCHE as your target accreditor. These questions address MSCHE’s unique eligibility requirements, 7 Standards for Accreditation, and the Self-Study design process.

MSCHE Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is a degree-granting institution (associate level or above).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are located in (or have a substantial presence in) the Mid-Atlantic region, PR, USVI, or have a strategic reason for seeking MSCHE.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have been operational with enrolled students for a sufficient period.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has a functioning, independent governing board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can document compliance with all Requirements of Affiliation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 8: MSCHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

MSCHE Standards Readiness

Standard I: Mission and Goals

Question	1	2	3
Your mission clearly defines institutional purpose and is approved by the governing body.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goals are realistic, aligned with the mission, and guide resource allocation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The mission is periodically evaluated with input from institutional constituents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Question	1	2	3
Your institution operates honestly, with respect for intellectual freedom and diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitments to students and stakeholders are honored consistently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grievance policies are published, accessible, and followed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publications and communications are accurate and transparent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 8: MSCHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

MSCHE Standards Readiness

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Question	1	2	3
Programs are rigorous, coherent, and designed to achieve learning goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education is sufficient in scope, content, and breadth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are qualified, sufficient in number, and supported by the institution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic programs undergo regular review with documented outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Question	1	2	3
Admissions practices align with institutional mission and student readiness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support services promote retention, completion, and success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial aid programs comply with federal and state regulations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientation, advising, and career services are accessible to all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 8: MSCHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

MSCHE Standards Readiness

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Question	1	2	3
Institutional assessment processes evaluate student learning outcomes systematically.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment results are used for continuous improvement (closing the loop).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment of student learning is linked to institutional planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of educational effectiveness is publicly available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standards VI & VII: Planning, Resources, and Governance

Question	1	2	3
Institutional planning is integrated, evidence-based, and linked to budgeting and assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial, human, and technological resources are adequate to support the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance structure is transparent, with clear roles for the board, administration, and faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The governing body ensures fiduciary oversight and institutional autonomy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shared governance processes include faculty and staff in academic decision-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 8: MSCHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

MSCHE-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Requirements of Affiliation compliance documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Design document (approved by MSCHE staff liaison)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Report addressing all 7 Standards with evidence citations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verification of Compliance documentation (federal and MSCHE-specific requirements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence inventory organized by Standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Institute attendance documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Profile submitted through MSCHE portal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offsite Review preparation materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accreditation Visit logistics and team room documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midpoint Peer Review preparation materials (for reaffirmation planning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 9: WSCUC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified WSCUC as your target accreditor. These questions address WSCUC’s unique eligibility requirements, 4 Standards of Accreditation, 30+ Criteria for Review (CFRs), and the Institutional Report format (2023 Handbook, revised September 2025).

WSCUC Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution offers baccalaureate degrees or above as its primary credentials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are located in California, Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, or have a strategic reason for seeking WSCUC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has been operational with enrolled students for a sufficient period.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a functioning, independent governing board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can document compliance with WSCUC’s Eligibility Criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 9: WSCUC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

WSCUC Standards Readiness

Standard 1: Defining Institutional Mission and Acting with Integrity

Question	1	2	3
Your mission is formally adopted, published, and periodically reviewed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional operations demonstrate integrity, transparency, and autonomy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic freedom policies are clearly defined and enforced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complaint and grievance procedures are accessible and effective.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives and Student Success

Question	1	2	3
Degree programs have clearly defined learning outcomes aligned with the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Systematic assessment of student learning occurs across all programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education provides breadth, depth, and integration of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student support services (advising, tutoring, career) are effective and evaluated regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retention, graduation, and post-graduation outcomes are tracked and disclosed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 9: WSCUC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

WSCUC Standards Readiness

Standard 3: Assuring Resources and Organizational Structures

Question	1	2	3
Financial resources are sufficient and sustainable to support the mission long-term.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty and staff are sufficient in number, qualifications, and diversity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance structures are clear, effective, and include appropriate faculty roles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology, library, and physical resources are adequate for all programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution demonstrates long-term financial planning and viability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 9: WSCUC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

WSCUC Standards Readiness

Standard 4: Creating an Institution Committed to Quality and Improvement

Question	1	2	3
A culture of evidence-based inquiry and continuous improvement is demonstrated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional research capacity supports planning, assessment, and decision-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution regularly reviews and improves its processes and programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment findings are widely shared and used to drive improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic planning is integrated with assessment, budgeting, and academic planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 9: WSCUC-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

WSCUC-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Eligibility Application documenting all WSCUC Eligibility Criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Report (self-study) addressing all 4 Standards and selected CFRs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compliance with WSCUC Federal Requirements checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional Data Exhibits (enrollment, graduation, financial, faculty)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators (IEEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offsite Review (OSR) preparation materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accreditation Visit (AV) preparation and team room setup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interim Report preparation materials (for accredited institutions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thematic pathway or standard pathway designation documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evidence of CFR-by-CFR compliance organized by Standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 10: NECHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified NECHE as your target accreditor. These questions address NECHE’s unique eligibility requirements and 9 Standards for Accreditation.

NECHE Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is a degree-granting institution (associate level or above).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are located in or have a strong connection to the New England region, or have a strategic reason for seeking NECHE.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has been operational with enrolled students for a sufficient period.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a functioning, independent governing board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can document compliance with NECHE’s Eligibility and Candidacy requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 10: NECHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NECHE Standards Readiness

Standards 1–3: Mission, Planning & Governance

Question	1	2	3
Your mission and purposes are clearly defined and guide institutional activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and evaluation processes are systematic, evidence-based, and inclusive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance structure is clear, with an active board that exercises fiduciary oversight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organization and governance support institutional effectiveness and integrity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Standards 4–6: Academics, Students & Teaching

Question	1	2	3
Academic programs are coherent, rigorously designed, and subject to regular review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education ensures breadth across the arts, sciences, and humanities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student services support recruitment, retention, completion, and career readiness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching, learning, and scholarship are supported through faculty development and academic freedom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are qualified, evaluated regularly, and sufficient in number.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 10: NECHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NECHE Standards Readiness

Standards 7–9: Resources, Effectiveness & Integrity

Question	1	2	3
Financial, human, and physical resources are sufficient to support the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library and information resources are adequate for all programs and delivery modes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational effectiveness is assessed systematically with evidence of improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution demonstrates integrity, transparency, and public disclosure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publications, advertising, and communications are accurate and non-deceptive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 10: NECHE-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NECHE-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Application for Candidacy documenting all Eligibility Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Study Report addressing all 9 Standards with evidence citations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data First Forms (institutional data submitted to NECHE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E-Series Forms (enrollment, finance, faculty data)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal Compliance reports (Title IV, credit hours, complaints, transfer credit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team visit preparation and evidence room documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fifth-Year Interim Report preparation materials (for accredited institutions)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substantive Change documentation (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student identity verification procedures for online programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General education assessment plan and results documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 11: NWCCU-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

Complete this questionnaire only if you have identified NWCCU as your target accreditor. These questions address NWCCU's unique eligibility requirements and streamlined 2-Standard framework within a 7-year accreditation cycle.

NWCCU Eligibility Pre-Check

Eligibility Requirements

Question	1	2	3
Your institution is a degree-granting institution (associate level or above).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are based in the Northwest U.S. (AK, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA) or have a strategic reason for seeking NWCCU.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your institution has been operational with enrolled students for a sufficient period.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a functioning governing board, qualified CEO, and degree-level programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can document compliance with NWCCU's Eligibility Requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 11: NWCCU-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NWCCU Standards Readiness

Standard 1: Student Success, Institutional Mission, and Effectiveness

Question	1	2	3
Your mission is widely published, regularly reviewed, and guides all institutional planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student learning outcomes are clearly defined for all programs and general education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment of student learning is systematic, ongoing, and results are used for improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institutional effectiveness measures (retention, completion, placement) are tracked and reported.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning is integrated, evidence-based, and involves broad participation from institutional constituencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution demonstrates a culture of continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 11: NWCCU-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NWCCU Standards Readiness

Standard 2: Governance, Resources, and Capacity

Question	1	2	3
Governance structures are clearly defined with an independent board providing fiduciary oversight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CEO provides effective leadership and is evaluated regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial resources are sufficient and sustainable to support the mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty are qualified, sufficient in number, and supported through development opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student services support recruitment, retention, and completion across all delivery modes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library, technology, and physical resources are adequate for all programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies on academic integrity, admissions, grading, and complaints are published and enforced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The institution complies with all federal requirements (Title IV, credit hours, complaints).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 11: NWCCU-Specific Readiness Questionnaire

NWCCU-Specific Document Checklist

Document	Have	In Progress	Missing	N/A
Eligibility Application documenting all NWCCU Eligibility Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Evaluation Report addressing both Standards 1 and 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (PRFR) documentation (Year 3 of cycle)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness (EIE) documentation (Year 6 of cycle)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mission Fulfillment report with key indicators and benchmarks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual reports and data submissions to NWCCU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) designation documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ad Hoc report materials (if required between evaluations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student identity verification procedures for distance education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Federal compliance documentation (Title IV, credit hours, complaints, transfer credit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Part 12: Accreditation Timeline Planner

Every regional accreditor follows a phased process. While specific steps and timelines differ, the high-level structure is universal. Use this template to map your milestones. Regional accreditation typically takes longer than national accreditation — plan for 2–8 years depending on the accreditor and your institutional readiness.

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	Attend required workshops / orientation sessions	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Submit eligibility filing or pre-application	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Submit formal application with fee	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Candidacy/applicant committee visit	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 2	Board/Commission action on candidacy	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Conduct institutional self-study	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Draft Self-Study / Compliance Certification / Assurance Argument	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Develop QEP (SACSCOC) or equivalent	__/__/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started



Part 12: Accreditation Timeline Planner

Phase 3	Compile and organize all exhibits / evidence	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Internal review of self-study + evidence	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 3	Submit self-study and evidence to accreditor	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	Off-site / virtual peer review (if applicable)	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	Prepare for on-site visit (mock interviews, room setup)	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	On-site peer evaluation visit	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 4	Draft response to evaluator findings	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 5	Board/Commission decision meeting	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started
Phase 5	Post-decision compliance (annual reports, interim reviews)	___/___/___ -		<input type="checkbox"/> Not Started



Part 13: Cost Estimation Worksheet

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

Cost Category	Estimated Range	Your Estimate	Notes
Application / pre-application fee	\$2,000 – \$15,000	\$_____	Varies by accreditor
Workshop / orientation registration	\$250 – \$2,000/person	\$_____	Travel not included
Candidacy / eligibility review fee	\$3,000 – \$7,500	\$_____	
Self-study / compliance cert. fee	\$3,500 – \$10,000	\$_____	
On-site evaluation committee expenses	\$5,000 – \$25,000+	\$_____	Actual expenses; varies by team size
Annual membership dues (Year 1)	\$5,000 – \$50,000+	\$_____	Formula-based on enrollment/expenditures
Interim review fees (5th-year, midpoint)	\$3,500 – \$7,500	\$_____	
Subtotal: Accreditor Fees		\$_____	
Accreditation consulting services	\$50,000 – \$250,000+	\$_____	Scope-dependent; regional is more intensive
Curriculum development / revision	\$10,000 – \$75,000+	\$_____	If new degree programs needed
Financial audit preparation (GAAP)	\$5,000 – \$25,000	\$_____	Per year
LMS / technology infrastructure	\$5,000 – \$50,000+	\$_____	If new system needed
Catalog / policy writing or revision	\$5,000 – \$25,000	\$_____	
Faculty credentialing / hiring	\$0 – \$100,000+	\$_____	If significant gaps exist
QEP development (SACSCOC only)	\$10,000 – \$50,000	\$_____	Staff time + consulting
Institutional research / data systems	\$5,000 – \$30,000	\$_____	Assessment infrastructure
Site visit preparation (mock, room)	\$2,000 – \$10,000	\$_____	
Travel (workshops, conferences)	\$2,000 – \$10,000	\$_____	
Subtotal: Preparation Costs		\$_____	
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET		\$_____	



Part 14: The 10 Most Common Regional Accreditation Mistakes

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

Mistake #1: Choosing the Wrong Regional Accrerator

Applying to an accreditor outside your natural territory without a clear strategic rationale wastes time and raises evaluator suspicion. While all six now accept institutions nationally, your default should be your home-region accreditor unless a compelling reason exists otherwise. An associate-degree-only college applying to WSCUC will face immediate disqualification.

Mistake #2: Underestimating the Timeline

Regional accreditation takes significantly longer than national accreditation. SACSCOC initial accreditation runs 3–5+ years. MSCHE can take 5–8 years. Institutions that begin with unrealistic timelines face rushed self-studies, incomplete evidence, and predictable deferrals. Build your plan around realistic milestones.

Mistake #3: Treating the Self-Study as a Writing Exercise

The Self-Study (or Compliance Certification or Assurance Argument) is an evidence-based compliance document, not a marketing brochure. Every claim must be supported by specific exhibits and data. Institutions that write narrative without citing evidence consistently receive findings

Mistake #4: Ignoring the QEP Until the Last Minute (SACSCOC)

SACSCOC's Quality Enhancement Plan is not an afterthought — it's a signature component of reaffirmation. The QEP must be data-driven, broadly supported, and focused on a specific area of student learning or success. Institutions that develop it in the final months before the visit produce weak plans that evaluators quickly identify.

Mistake #5: Weak Assessment and Closing the Loop

This is the number one finding across all regional accreditors. Collecting data is not enough. You must demonstrate that assessment results drive decisions and improvements. Document the full cycle: (1) data collected, (2) analysis performed, (3) changes implemented, (4) results measured.

Mistake #6: Insufficient Full-Time Faculty

Regional accreditors expect a sufficient core of full-time faculty to ensure program quality, student mentorship, and shared governance. Over-reliance on adjuncts without clear justification and documentation is a consistent finding, particularly at newer institutions.



Part 14: The 10 Most Common Regional Accreditation Mistakes

Mistake #7: Governance Deficiencies

Regional accreditors place enormous emphasis on board independence, fiduciary oversight, and appropriate governance structures. Boards that lack independence, have conflicts of interest, micromanage administration, or fail to evaluate the CEO regularly generate multiple findings.

Mistake #8: Incomplete Financial Documentation

Audited financial statements that are late, qualified, or missing management letters are red flags. Regional accreditors require clear evidence of financial sustainability — not just solvency. Budget 6–8 months for audit preparation if you have never undergone a GAAP audit.

Mistake #9: Neglecting General Education Assessment

Regional accreditors require robust general education programs with documented breadth across multiple domains. Institutions that treat general education as filler rather than a coherent, assessed program consistently receive findings, particularly from SACSCOC (Section 8) and HLC (Criterion 3).

Mistake #10: Trying to Do It Alone

Regional accreditation is the most complex and demanding form of U.S. accreditation. Institutions that engage experienced consultants consistently achieve accreditation faster, with fewer findings, and at lower total cost. The consulting investment typically pays for itself many times over in avoided delays, rework, and lost Title IV revenue.



Your Next Step

You now have the decision framework, self-assessments, checklists, timelines, budgets, and strategic insight you need to evaluate your regional 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 self-study 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.

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.





THE COMPLETE

Regional Accreditation Readiness Toolkit

SACSCOC | HLC | MSCHE | WSCUC | NECHE | NWCCU



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