

during any period in which the institution offering the program—

(A) Is the subject of an interim action by a recognized institutional accrediting agency potentially leading to the suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation or preaccreditation;

(B) Is the subject of an interim action by a State agency potentially leading to the suspension, revocation, or termination of the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education;

(C) Has been notified of a threatened loss of accreditation, and the due process procedures required by the action have not been completed;

(D) Has been notified of a threatened suspension, revocation, or termination by the State of the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education, and the due process procedures required by the action have not been completed;

(ii) In considering whether to grant initial accreditation or preaccreditation to a program, the agency takes into account actions by—

(A) Recognized institutional accrediting agencies that have denied accreditation or preaccreditation to the institution offering the program, placed the institution on public probationary status, or revoked the accreditation or preaccreditation of the institution; and

(B) A State agency that has suspended, revoked, or terminated the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education;

(iii) If the agency grants accreditation or preaccreditation to a program notwithstanding the actions described in paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section, the agency provides to the Secretary a thorough explanation, consistent with its accreditation standards, why the previous action by a recognized institutional accrediting agency or the State does not preclude the agency's grant of accreditation or preaccreditation; and

(iv) If a recognized institutional accrediting agency takes adverse action with respect to the institution offering the program or places the institution on public probationary status, the agency promptly reviews its accreditation or preaccreditation of the program

to determine if it should take adverse action against the program.

(3) The agency routinely shares with other appropriate recognized accrediting agencies and State agencies information about the accreditation or preaccreditation status of an institution or program and any adverse actions it has taken against an accredited or preaccredited institution or program.

(b) An accrediting agency is subject to the requirements contained in paragraph (a) of this section if the accrediting agency knew, or should have known, of the actions being taken by another recognized accrediting agency or State agency.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1099b)

PART 603—SECRETARY'S RECOGNITION PROCEDURES FOR STATE AGENCIES

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AUTHORITY: 20 U.S.C. 403(b), 1085(b), 1141(a), 1248(11); 42 U.S.C. 293a(b), 295f-3(b), 295h-4(1)(D), 298b(f); 38 U.S.C. 1775(a), unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A [Reserved]

Subpart B—Criteria for State Agencies

AUTHORITY: Sec. 438(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Pub. L. 89-329 as amended by Pub. L. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235, 264 (20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b)), unless otherwise noted.

SOURCE: 39 FR 30042, Aug. 20, 1974, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 45 FR 77369, Nov. 21, 1980.

§603.20 Scope.

(a) Pursuant to section 438(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended by Pub. L. 92-318, the Secretary is required to publish a list of State agencies which he determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of public

postsecondary vocational education in their respective States for the purpose of determining eligibility for Federal student assistance programs administered by the Department.

(b) Approval by a State agency included on the list will provide an alternative means of satisfying statutory standards as to the quality of public postsecondary vocational education to be undertaken by students receiving assistance under such programs.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b))

§ 603.21 Publication of list.

Periodically the Secretary will publish a list in the FEDERAL REGISTER of the State agencies which he determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of public postsecondary vocational education in their respective States.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b))

§ 603.22 Inclusion on list.

Any State agency which desires to be listed by the Secretary as meeting the criteria set forth in § 603.24 should apply in writing to the Director, Division of Eligibility and Agency Evaluation, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b))

[45 FR 86300, Dec. 30, 1980]

§ 603.23 Initial recognition, and re-evaluation.

For initial recognition and for renewal of recognition, the State agency will furnish information establishing its compliance with the criteria set forth in § 603.24. This information may be supplemented by personal interviews or by review of the agency's facilities, records, personnel qualifications, and administrative management. Each agency listed will be reevaluated by the Secretary at his discretion, but at least once every four years. No adverse decision will become final without affording an opportunity for a hearing.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b))

§ 603.24 Criteria for State agencies.

The following are the criteria which the Secretary will utilize in designating a State agency as a reliable authority to assess the quality of public postsecondary vocational education in its respective State.

(a) *Functional aspects.* The functional aspects of the State agency must be shown by:

(1) *Its scope of operations.* The agency:

(i) Is statewide in the scope of its operations and is legally authorized to approve public postsecondary vocational institutions or programs;

(ii) Clearly sets forth the scope of its objectives and activities, both as to kinds and levels of public postsecondary vocational institutions or programs covered, and the kinds of operations performed;

(iii) Delineates the process by which it differentiates among and approves programs of varying levels.

(2) *Its organization.* The State agency:

(i) Employs qualified personnel and uses sound procedures to carry out its operations in a timely and effective manner;

(ii) Receives adequate and timely financial support, as shown by its appropriations, to carry out its operations;

(iii) Selects competent and knowledgeable persons, qualified by experience and training, and selects such persons in accordance with nondiscriminatory practices, (A) to participate on visiting teams, (B) to engage in consultative services for the evaluation and approval process, and (C) to serve on decision-making bodies.

(3) *Its procedures.* The State agency:

(i) Maintains clear definitions of approval status and has developed written procedures for granting, reaffirming, revoking, denying, and reinstating approval status;

(ii) Requires, as an integral part of the approval and reapproval process, institutional or program self-analysis and onsite reviews by visiting teams, and provides written and consultative guidance to institutions or programs and visiting teams.

(A) Self-analysis shall be a qualitative assessment of the strengths and limitations of the instructional program, including the achievement of institutional or program objectives, and

should involve a representative portion of the institution's administrative staff, teaching faculty, students, governing body, and other appropriate constituencies.

(B) The visiting team, which includes qualified examiners other than agency staff, reviews instructional content, methods and resources, administrative management, student services, and facilities. It prepares written reports and recommendations for use by the State agency.

(iii) Reevaluates at reasonable and regularly scheduled intervals institutions or programs which it has approved.

(b) *Responsibility and reliability.* The responsibility and reliability of the State agency will be demonstrated by:

(1) Its responsiveness to the public interest. The State agency:

(i) Has an advisory body which provides for representation from public employment services and employers, employees, postsecondary vocational educators, students, and the general public, including minority groups. Among its functions, this structure provides counsel to the State agency relating to the development of standards, operating procedures and policy, and interprets the educational needs and manpower projections of the State's public postsecondary vocational education system;

(ii) Demonstrates that the advisory body makes a real and meaningful contribution to the approval process;

(iii) Provides advance public notice of proposed or revised standards or regulations through its regular channels of communications, supplemented, if necessary, with direct communication to inform interested members of the affected community. In addition, it provides such persons the opportunity to comment on the standards or regulations prior to their adoption;

(iv) Secures sufficient qualitative information regarding the applicant institution or program to enable the institution or program to demonstrate that it has an ongoing program of evaluation of outputs consistent with its educational goals;

(v) Encourages experimental and innovative programs to the extent that these are conceived and implemented

in a manner which ensures the quality and integrity of the institution or program;

(vi) Demonstrates that it approves only those institutions or programs which meet its published standards; that its standards, policies, and procedures are fairly applied; and that its evaluations are conducted and decisions are rendered under conditions that assure an impartial and objective judgment;

(vii) Regularly reviews its standards, policies and procedures in order that the evaluative process shall support constructive analysis, emphasize factors of critical importance, and reflect the educational and training needs of the student;

(viii) Performs no function that would be inconsistent with the formation of an independent judgment of the quality of an educational institution or program;

(ix) Has written procedures for the review of complaints pertaining to institutional or program quality as these relate to the agency's standards, and demonstrates that such procedures are adequate to provide timely treatment of such complaints in a manner fair and equitable to the complainant and to the institution or program;

(x) Annually makes available to the public (A) its policies for approval, (B) reports of its operations, and (C) list of institutions or programs which it has approved;

(xi) Requires each approved school or program to report on changes instituted to determine continued compliance with standards or regulations;

(xii) Confers regularly with counterpart agencies that have similar responsibilities in other and neighboring States about methods and techniques that may be used to meet those responsibilities.

(2) Its assurances that due process is accorded to institutions or programs seeking approval. The State agency:

(i) Provides for adequate discussion during the on-site visit between the visiting team and the faculty, administrative staff, students, and other appropriate persons;

(ii) Furnishes as a result of the evaluation visit, a written report to the institution or program commenting on

areas of strength, areas needing improvement, and, when appropriate, suggesting means of improvement and including specific areas, if any, where the institution or program may not be in compliance with the agency's standards;

(iii) Provides the chief executive officer of the institution or program with opportunity to comment upon the written report and to file supplemental materials pertinent to the facts and conclusions in the written report of the visiting team before the agency takes action on the report;

(iv) Provides the chief executive officer of the institution with a specific statement of reasons for any adverse action, and notice of the right to appeal such action before an appeal body designated for that purpose;

(v) Publishes rules of procedure regarding appeals;

(vi) Continues the approval status of the institution or program pending disposition of an appeal;

(vii) Furnishes the chief executive officer of the institution or program with a written decision of the appeal body, including a statement of its reasons therefor.

(c) *Capacity to foster ethical practices.* The State agency must demonstrate its capability and willingness to foster ethical practices by showing that it:

(i) Promotes a well-defined set of ethical standards governing institutional or programmatic practices, including recruitment, advertising, transcripts, fair and equitable student tuition refunds, and student placement services;

(ii) Maintains appropriate review in relation to the ethical practices of each approved institution or program.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1087-1(b))

PART 604—FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENTS

Subpart A—General

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 1203 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Pub. L. 96-374 (20 U.S.C. 1143), unless otherwise noted.

SOURCE: 45 FR 83221, Dec. 18, 1980, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§604.1 Federal-State relationship agreements.

(a) A State shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary if it wishes to participate in the following programs authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended: The Continuing Education Outreach program, title I-B, with the exception of sections 116 and 117 of the Act; the State Student Incentive Grant program, subpart 3 of title IV-A of the Act; and the Undergraduate Academic Facilities Grant program, title VII-A of the Act. The agreement must contain assurances relating to administration, financial management, treatment of applicants for subgrants and contracts, supplement, not supplant requirements, and planning. These assurances are listed in subpart B of this part. The means by which these assurances will be met must also be described.

(b) The provisions of the agreement replace comparable provisions in annual plans previously required by each applicable program.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1143)

§604.2 Regulations that apply to Federal-State relationship agreements.

The following regulations apply to Federal-State relationship agreements:

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR part 76 (State Administered Programs) and 34 CFR part 77 (Definitions).

(b) The regulations in this part 604.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1232(a))