



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
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Greater Transparency of Accrediting Agency Recognition

As gatekeepers to \$112 billion in annual federal student aid, federally recognized accrediting agencies serve a vital role in ensuring quality for students and families and in protecting students and taxpayers. The U.S. Department of Education (Department) has the critical function of overseeing the accrediting agency recognition process, which determines whether agencies are reliable authorities on educational quality.

Historically, the Department has released only the final staff reports of the accrediting agencies for which it had conducted a review. These reports did not provide details about the type of information the Department reviewed or how the accrediting agency demonstrated compliance. The Department believes that making additional information publicly available is important to ensure that the public has confidence in the current accreditation system and in the Department's ongoing oversight and review of accrediting agencies. That is why, today, the Department of Education begins its new process of releasing the final analyses and recommendations for the five federally recognized accrediting agencies currently under review. This information comes ahead of the upcoming National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) meeting on February 23-24, 2022, where members of the public will have the opportunity to provide oral comment for each of the five agencies.

The final staff analyses posted today include each accrediting agency's narrative and a list of exhibits reviewed demonstrating how the agency meets each of the recognition criteria stipulated under the Department's regulations and the Department's initial determination of whether the accrediting agency meets each requirement. In cases where the Department staff find that the accrediting agency did not meet a regulatory requirement, the analyses include the Department's concerns, the agency's response, a list of additional documentation, and the Department's final determination of whether the agency demonstrates compliance with the criteria.

This release affirms the Biden administration's commitment to greater transparency and serves to honor that commitment and ensure confidence in the Department's review process. We believe this approach – requested by members of the public, advocates, and members of NACIQI - will allow for greater public participation and discussion and lead to a more robust and informed discussion at NACIQI public meetings.

We encourage members of the public to provide comments on any of the agencies under review or NACIQI's work at the forthcoming [NACIQI meeting](#) and hope the information provided today helps members of the public to do so.