



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE UNDER SECRETARY

August 19, 2022

Dear Colleague,

Today, the Deputy Secretary affirmed the Senior Department Official's earlier decision to terminate the recognition of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) by the U.S. Department of Education. You can find a link to more information about the Deputy Secretary's decision at www.ed.gov/acics.

Institutions that have been using ACICS accreditation to establish eligibility for Title IV (federal student financial aid) programs, are advised that the Secretary will continue their eligibility, with conditions, to participate in the programs for a period not to exceed 18 months from the date of the loss of recognition. By statute, as a result of ACICS's loss of recognition, all affected institutions will be placed on provisional certification until such time as they gain accreditation by another nationally recognized accrediting agency, or the expiration of the 18-month period. Institutions that fail to meet the statutory deadline will lose Title IV eligibility. Even for institutions that are in the process of obtaining accreditation from another nationally recognized agency, the Department reserves the right to end an institution's Title IV participation, or to impose additional conditions, based on institution-specific characteristics, including financial responsibility and administrative capability.

The Department recognizes that obtaining new accreditation is a time-consuming process for an institution. In the coming days, the office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) will send all ACICS-accredited institutions a provisional program participation agreement (PPA) along with an Addendum of additional conditions for continued Title IV eligibility. These conditions serve to protect students and taxpayers in the absence of a nationally recognized accrediting agency. Institutions will be required to return the executed provisional PPA within 10 calendar days of receiving it to continue participating in Title IV. Please note that institutions must comply with some conditions within 30 calendar days of the Deputy Secretary's decision. You are strongly encouraged to view the summary of conditions that apply to all ACICS-accredited institutions seeking continued Title IV participation, available at www.ed.gov/acics and provided as an attachment to this letter.

The longer an institution operates without oversight from a nationally recognized accrediting agency, the greater the risk that institution presents to students and taxpayers. As such, as outlined in the conditions referenced above, FSA will track your institution's progress toward securing accreditation from a nationally recognized agency. Your provisional PPA will prevent you from establishing new programs or locations until you have been accredited by another nationally recognized accrediting agency. You will also not be permitted to enroll any new students who will be unable to complete the program by the end of the 18-month provisional period until you are accredited by a new agency.

If you have any questions regarding your institution's Title IV participation, or if you have

started the process of seeking accreditation from another nationally recognized accrediting agency and have not yet notified FSA of your intent, please contact your regional FSA representative. Institutions must notify FSA within 5 business days of submitting a letter of interest or intent, or a pre-workshop application, to another nationally recognized agency.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Kvaal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and last name "Kvaal" clearly distinguishable.

James Kvaal
Under Secretary

Attachments