

## **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS (Branch, Auxiliary Classroom, Classroom Extension, or Temporary/Seasonal Classrooms)**

The accreditation of a main campus may be expanded to include additional locations under the conditions and procedures prescribed in this document. Of primary concern to ACCET is the capability of the institution to demonstrate the planning, financial, and administrative resources necessary for ensuring continuing compliance with all ACCET standards and policies. An institution making application for an additional location must be prepared to administer all aspects of the operation as a fully accredited extension of the main campus effective the first day of approval. The failure of a branch, auxiliary classroom, or classroom extension to be in full compliance with ACCET standards and policies is a direct reflection on the main campus and will call into question its accredited status.

ACCET has established the policies and procedures outlined in this document to guide and monitor the process of establishing an additional location as an extension of a main campus. Specific restrictions have been established, which preclude an institution from making an application for an additional site, and are noted below:

1. Institutions accredited for a period of one year may not make application for any new branches or auxiliary classrooms.
2. Institutions receiving reinstatement of accreditation following a change of ownership/control may not make application for any new branches, auxiliary classrooms, or classroom extensions for 12 months following the change of ownership/control.
3. Institutions involved in the reaccreditation process may not make application for additional locations following the originally scheduled due date of the Analytic Self-Evaluation Report (ASER) and prior to a final Commission decision on the institution.
4. Following a grant of initial accreditation of three years or longer, institutions are restricted from making application for the first year. Thereafter, a maximum of one branch and two auxiliary classrooms in any given 12-month period may be submitted.
5. Following a grant of reaccreditation of three or more years, institutions may make application to establish a maximum of one branch and three auxiliary classrooms in any given 12-month period.
6. If an ACCET accredited institution seeks to add a branch or auxiliary classroom, as a result of a merger or purchase of an operational entity, it will be subject to all the requirements outlined in this policy document, except that no such branch or auxiliary classroom location will be granted approval until an on-site visit report and response is reviewed and accepted by the ACCET Accrediting Commission.

7. An accredited member institution may apply for approval of an additional location provided the institution is in good standing and not subject to any ACCET policy-related restrictions or pending adverse actions as defined in Document 48 – Policy On Adverse Action By Other Agencies.

An institution may request and may be granted a special consideration by the Accrediting Commission, if it can demonstrate a compelling rationale to waive any of these restrictions. Early conferral with and guidance from ACCET staff is recommended.

### **ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS CATEGORIZED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING DEFINITIONS:**

**Branch:** A full-service facility, geographically apart from, but under the direction of the main campus, at which complete continuing education and training programs are offered. A branch operates under the same ownership/authority and administrative policies and procedures as the accredited main campus, but has comprehensive on-site administrative and support services including its own faculty, administrative or supervisory organization, and its own budget.

**Auxiliary Classroom:** A classroom site, geographically apart from and operated and supervised by the main or branch campus, at which instruction in one or more training programs is offered. An auxiliary classroom operates under the same ownership/authority and administrative policies and procedures as the accredited main campus and may or may not have its own faculty; however, the number and duties of administrative personnel are limited, and may include a receptionist or site supervisor. Enrollment activities and student support services, such as counseling, placement, or financial aid processing, are provided at the main or branch campus.

**Classroom Extension:** A classroom site, geographically apart from, yet in close enough proximity for adequate oversight (usually not more than five miles) by the main or branch campus, at which instruction in one or more training programs is offered. A classroom extension operates under the same ownership/authority and administrative policies and procedures as the accredited main/branch campus and may or may not have its own faculty; however, the number and duties of administrative personnel are very limited, but may include a site supervisor. Enrollment activities and student support services, such as counseling, placement, or financial aid processing, are provided at the main or branch campus. Classroom extensions are generally used no more than 12 months in order to allow an institution time to accommodate an overflow of students at the main or branch campus or to meet unique facility requirements for a specific program of study.

**Temporary/Seasonal Classroom:** An avocational classroom site, geographically apart from, yet close enough in proximity for adequate oversight by the main or branch campus, at which instruction in one or more English as a second language programs is offered. A temporary/seasonal classroom operates under the same ownership/authority and administrative policies and procedures as the accredited main/branch campus and may or may not have its own faculty; however, the number and duties of administrative personnel are very limited, but may include a site supervisor.

Enrollment activities and student support services are provided at the main or branch campus. Temporary/seasonal classrooms are used only for a seasonal period (a maximum of 120 days) to accommodate seasonal programs of study. If a classroom is to be used for more than 120 days, the institution must seek approval for a classroom extension.

### **ADDITIONAL LOCATION APPLICATION PROCESS**

Described below is the process for seeking and obtaining prior approval from ACCET for each of the following types of additional locations:

- A. Branches
- B. Auxiliary Classrooms
- C. Classroom Extensions
- D. Temporary/Seasonal Classrooms

*If applicable, the U.S. Department of Education and the state in which the new site is located will be notified by ACCET, at the time of the interim approval, of the inclusion of the site in the main campus' grant of accreditation. If the institution participates in Title IV funding, it must follow the policies and procedures established by the U.S. Department of Education for notifying the Department of the new site. The letter from ACCET serves to advise the Department of the institution's approval by the accrediting agency and does not take the place of any formal notification that must be submitted by the institution.*

#### **A. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR BRANCHES**

##### **Step I: Application**

An accredited member institution may apply for approval of an additional location provided the institution is in good standing and not subject to any ACCET policy-related restrictions or pending adverse actions as defined in Document 48 – Policy on Adverse Action by Other Agencies. Eligible institutions seeking approval to establish new branches must provide the following documentation:

- **Branch Campus:** Cover letter, fees (see ACCET Document 10 - Fee Schedule), and Document 26.1- Application for Branch Approval with supplemental information and documentation.

An institution should allow a maximum of 30 days for processing from the date a complete application for a branch is received in the ACCET office. Incomplete applications or inadequate documentation will delay the process. Final processing will not be completed without the proper state license or, if the institution is not required to be licensed by the state, a letter from the state documenting the exemption. Consideration should be given to the processing time for state approval, in addition to ACCET's processing time, when developing the timelines for the opening of the institution's new site. If necessary to expedite the process, an institution's application may be submitted prior to the receipt of the state approval letter; however, final processing of the application can not occur until the state approval is received.

If the programs of study/courses to be offered are different from those offered at the main campus, the procedures outlined in Document 25 – Policy for Approval of New or Revised Curriculum must be followed. Approval for new or revised programs of study/courses must be obtained from ACCET prior to beginning instruction. Requests for approval to offer new/revised programs/courses must come through the main campus; approval is granted on an institutional basis. In certain cases, approval to offer a program may be granted with the stipulation that the program of study/course is to be offered only at a specific location.

### **Step II: Preliminary On-Site Visit**

After the application for a new site has been reviewed by ACCET staff and determined to be complete, the institution will be required to submit Document 8 – Request for On-Site Visit and the applicable fee (see Document 10 – Fee Schedule), and a preliminary on-site visit will be conducted by an ACCET Commission Representative, or designee, prior to the opening of the location.

Specific guidelines relative to this on-site visit will be provided at the time the visit is scheduled. The focus of the visit will be to establish that the facility, equipment, supplies, administrative support, and faculty are appropriate and adequate for the institution's projection of program offerings and enrollments. A written report of the preliminary visit will be completed by the Commission Representative and submitted for review by the Branching Review Committee.

### **Step III: Interim Approval Process**

Once the institution's application is complete and the preliminary on-site visit has been conducted, the ACCET Branching Review Committee will make a determination as to whether permission to establish a new site should be granted. Following a review of the application and supporting documentation, interim approval, deferral, or denial of the application will be issued. The institution is prohibited from advertising, enrolling or teaching classes at a prospective branch prior to receipt of ACCET interim approval.

A letter of interim approval will include information and timelines relative to: (1) the submission of the Branch Analytic Self-Evaluation Review (BASER), (2) the scheduling of the full on-site visit, and (3) the review cycle in which the branch will be considered for final approval by the Accrediting Commission. Additionally, the institution may be notified that a representative of the institution will be required to attend the next available Accreditation Workshop. Final consideration of the institution's application for a branch campus by ACCET will take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Accrediting Commission following a full on-site examination of the site. Such an on-site review must be conducted within six months after the site begins operation, for Title IV institutions.

### **Step IV: Submission of BASER**

The institution will be required to submit a BASER within two to three months after the start of classes at the new site.

## **Step V: Full Team On-Site Visit**

A full on-site visit will be conducted within six months of the institution starting classes. The institution and the ACCET Accrediting Commission will receive a copy of the team report and the institution will have an opportunity to respond to the report.

## **Step VI: Final Approval Process**

The Accrediting Commission will review the team report and the institution's response to the team report of the full on-site visit at its next regularly scheduled meeting and make a final decision regarding the approval of the new site.

## **B. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR AUXILIARY CLASSROOMS**

### **Step I: Application**

An accredited member institution may apply for approval of an additional location provided the institution is in good standing and not subject to any ACCET policy-related restrictions or pending adverse actions as defined in Document 48 – Policy on Adverse Action by Other Agencies. Eligible institutions seeking approval to establish new auxiliary classrooms must provide the following documentation:

- **Auxiliary Classroom:** Cover letter, fees (see ACCET Document 10) and Document 26.2 - Application for Auxiliary Classroom Approval with supplemental information and documentation.

An institution should allow a maximum of 30 days for processing from the date a complete application for an auxiliary classroom is received in the ACCET office. Incomplete applications or inadequate documentation will delay the process. Final processing will not be completed without the proper state license or, if the institution is not required to be licensed by the state, a letter from the state documenting the exemption. Consideration should be given to the processing time for state approval, in addition to ACCET's processing time, when developing the timelines for the opening of the institution's new site. If necessary to expedite the process, an institution's application may be submitted prior to the receipt of the state approval letter; however, final processing of the application can not occur until the state approval is received.

If the programs of study/courses to be offered are different from those offered at the main campus, the procedures outlined in Document 25 – Policy for Approval of New or Revised Curriculum must be followed. Approval for new or revised programs of study/courses must be obtained from ACCET prior to beginning instruction. Requests for approval to offer new/revised programs/courses must come through the main campus; approval is granted on an institutional basis. In certain cases, approval to offer a program may be granted with the stipulation that the program of study/course is to be offered only at a specific location.

## **Step II: Preliminary On-Site Visit (Only Applicable to Vocational Institutions)**

Auxiliary classroom sites of vocational institutions are required to have a preliminary visit before ACCET approval is granted. All other auxiliary classroom sites will receive final approval following review of the completed application and relevant supporting documentation by the ACCET Branching Review Committee.

After the application for a new site has been reviewed by ACCET staff and determined to be complete, a vocational institution will be required to submit Document 8 – Request for On-Site Visit and the applicable fee (see Document 10 – Fee Schedule), and a preliminary on-site visit will be conducted by an ACCET Commission Representative, or designee, prior to the opening of the location.

Specific guidelines relative to this on-site visit will be provided at the time the visit is scheduled. The focus of the visit will be to establish that the facility, equipment, supplies, administrative support, and faculty are appropriate and adequate for the institution's projection of program offerings and enrollments. A written report of the preliminary visit will be completed by the Commission Representative and submitted for review by the Branching Review Committee.

## **Step III: Final Approval Process**

Once the institution's application is complete and, if applicable, the preliminary on-site visit has been conducted, the ACCET Branching Review Committee will make a determination as to whether permission to establish a new site should be granted. Following a review of the application and supporting documentation, final approval, deferral, or denial of the application will be issued. The institution is prohibited from advertising, enrolling or teaching classes at a prospective auxiliary classroom prior to receipt of ACCET approval.

**Note:** If a vocational institution seeks and obtains special permission to enroll students at an auxiliary classroom site, the institution will be granted interim approval instead of final approval to operate the additional site. In addition, the institution will be required to submit a BASER and host a full-team visit. The letter of interim approval will include information and timelines relative to the submission of the BASER, the scheduling of the full on-site visit, and the review cycle in which the auxiliary classroom will be considered for final approval by the Accrediting Commission. The BASER will be due within two months of the start date and a full-team visit will occur within six months of the first class start.

## **C. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS**

### **Step I: Application**

An accredited member institution may apply for approval of an additional location provided the institution is in good standing and not subject to any ACCET policy-related restrictions or pending adverse actions as defined in Document 48 – Policy on Adverse Action by Other

Agencies. Eligible institutions eligible seeking approval to establish new classroom extensions must provide the following documentation:

- **Classroom Extension:** Cover letter, fees (see ACCET Document 10) and Document 26.3 – Application for Classroom Extension Approval with supplemental information and documentation.

Every attempt will be made to process applications for classroom extensions on an expedited basis. Incomplete applications or inadequate documentation will delay the process. Final processing will not be completed without the proper state license or, if the institution is not required to be licensed by the state, a letter from the state documenting the exemption. Consideration should be given to the processing time for state approval, in addition to ACCET's processing time, when developing the timelines for the opening of the institution's new site. If necessary to expedite the process, an institution's application may be submitted prior to the receipt of the state approval letter; however, final processing of the application can not occur until the state approval is received.

If the programs of study/courses to be offered are different from those offered at the main campus, the procedures outlined in Document 25 – Policy for Approval of New or Revised Curriculum must be followed. Approval for new or revised programs of study/courses must be obtained from ACCET prior to beginning instruction. Requests for approval to offer new/revised programs/courses must come through the main campus; approval is granted on an institutional basis. In certain cases, approval to offer a program may be granted with the stipulation that the program of study/course is to be offered only at a specific location.

### **Step III: Final Approval Process**

Once the institution's application is complete, the ACCET Branching Review Committee will make a determination as to whether permission to establish a new site should be granted. Following a review of the application and supporting documentation, final approval, deferral, or denial of the application will be issued. The institution is prohibited from advertising, enrolling or teaching classes at a prospective classroom extension prior to receipt of ACCET approval.

## **D. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR TEMPORARY/SEASONAL CLASSROOMS FOR INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAMS**

### **Step I: Application**

An accredited member institution may apply for approval of an additional location provided the institution is in good standing and not subject to any ACCET policy-related restrictions or pending adverse action as defined in Document 48 – Policy on Adverse Action by Other Agencies. Eligible institutions seeking approval to establish a temporary/seasonal classroom must provide the following documentation:

- Temporary/seasonal classroom: Cover letter, fees (See ACCET Document 10) and Document 26.5 – Application for Approval of Temporary/Seasonal Classroom for Intensive English Programs (IEPs) with supplemental information and documentation.

Every attempt will be made to process applications for temporary/seasonal classrooms on an expedited basis. Incomplete applications or inadequate documentation will delay the process.

If the programs of study/courses to be offered are different from those offered at the main campus, the procedures outlined in Document 25 – Policy for Approval of a New or Revised Program must be followed. Approval for new or revised programs/courses must be obtained from ACCET prior to beginning instruction. Requests for approval to offer new/revised program/courses must come through the main campus; approval is granted on an institutional basis. In certain cases, approval to offer a program may be granted with the stipulation that the program of study/course is to be offered only at a specific location.

### **STEP III: FINAL APPROVAL PROCESS**

Once the institution's application is complete, the ACCET Branching Review Committee will make a determination as to whether permission to establish a new site should be granted. Following a review of the application and supporting documentation, final approval, deferral, or denial of the application will be issued.