

## COMPLETION AND PLACEMENT POLICY

**Standards:** Document 2, Sections VIII-C, D, and E

**Rationale:** ACCET accredited institutions ensure the value and effectiveness of their course(s) and program(s) by regularly assessing, documenting, and validating the quality of the training services provided through completion rates, sponsor and student/graduate satisfaction, and, for vocational institutions, job placement rates. Credible completion and placement rates serve the students' best interests and, in turn, enhance public confidence in accredited institutions and the accreditation process.

**Overview:** As established in this policy document, the requirements are to be considered the minimum for meeting the ACCET standards. ACCET encourages member institutions to incorporate progressive policies, procedures and practices that enhance the completion and, where applicable, job placement prospects of their students.

The ACCET membership has made a commitment to the use of measurable outcomes as objective criteria for addressing the Standards for Accreditation. Accordingly, ACCET will carefully review documented completion rates; feedback from sponsors/employers, students, and graduates; and training-related job placements for eligible graduates of vocational training programs. The completion and placement benchmarks give institutions a guideline by which to evaluate and improve the performance of the programs they offer. These benchmarks are 67% for completion and 70% for placement.

**Policy Requirements:** All accredited institutions and those seeking ACCET accreditation will document completion rates for their programs. All accredited institutions and those seeking ACCET accreditation offering vocational training will provide job placement assistance to all eligible graduates and document the results in order to demonstrate clear and positive outcomes from the training. Completion and placement records will be maintained in an orderly, comprehensive, and accurate manner for all students and must be verifiable. The completion and placement data will include sufficient information for regularly calculating the percentage for completion and training-related job placements in a prescribed format and time frame. (Vocational institutions will refer to Document 28.1 - Completion and Placement Statistics; avocational institutions will utilize internal means to compile completion data for review.)

All accredited institutions will conduct a final evaluation of each program to determine participant satisfaction and solicit feedback from sponsors/employers and graduates, as appropriate.

**Procedures:** In order for ACCET and institutions to clearly communicate the requirements, conditions, and results in terms of completion and/or placement rates, data must be collected, documented, and analyzed by institutions on a regular basis. Document 28.1 is the data collection instrument, with corresponding "Definitions and Explanations," to be used for all vocational programs covered by the policy. Data collection instruments utilized by avocational institutions for the purpose of documenting completion data will be internally developed and appropriate to the length of the program, terms of obligation, and graduation dates.

**Reporting Requirements:** Data collection instruments (Document 28.1 for vocational institutions) will be maintained at least every quarter, and should be utilized as management tools. **Document 28.1(s) must be submitted to the ACCET office no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year unless otherwise directed by staff, and no sooner than four months after the last graduating cohort of each program and,** in conjunction with ACCET Document 12.c - Annual Completion and Placement Statistics Reporting. Document 28.1 and internally developed documents for avocational institutions, will be made available at such other times upon request by ACCET. The supporting documentation utilized by the school in the preparation of these forms must be prescribed by written school policy to assure accuracy and completeness.

**Job Placement (Vocational Institutions only):** Document 28.1 for vocational institutions is premised on three concepts:

1. The number of starts, completions, and placements is tracked by the scheduled graduation date (month/year) as a cohort, not the start or placement date;
2. Compilation of this data is by individual program/course title; and
3. Students who have completed the training (see definitions and explanations), but are ineligible or unavailable for placement, may be designated as waivers according to ACCET policy.

Separate Document 28.1s must be submitted for each program as well as each program variation. Therefore, separate Document 28.1s must be provided for a full-time program and a part-time program, if the program lengths vary in weeks [e.g., the same 600-hour program being offered in a 24-week full-time (day) format and 30-week part-time (evening) format]. Separate Document 28.1s also must be submitted, if a program is delivered: (1) by interactive distance learning (IDL); (2) as a hybrid program, with a portion offered by IDL; and/or (3) as traditional classroom training. In addition, a separate set of Document 28.1s must be submitted for programs offered at each location (e.g. main campus, branch campus, auxiliary classroom, or classroom extension).

The minimum information required includes the following:

1. Name of student
2. Completion date
3. Program name
4. Employer information:
  - a. Employment start date
  - b. Job title and/or description of placement
  - c. Name of employer, mailing address, telephone number and email address
  - d. Employer contact person
5. Documentation of self-employment, as prescribed herein.
6. Documentation of waiver(s), if applicable

**Note:** Refer below to Criteria for Defining and Validating Placement (Pages 4 and 5) for various categories of placement and any additional documentation requirements.

**Certification:** When licensing, certification, registration, or examination requirements are within the stated purpose of a program, an institution must provide evidence of tracking the exam pass rates for its graduates and ascertain information for established norms. Pass rates must meet or exceed established state, national, or industry norms, which are obtained by the institution, as available.

**Completion/Placement Benchmarks:** The evaluation of the benchmarks applies to each program. Institutions with programs that fall below the stated benchmarks of 67% for completion and 70% for placement will be required, at minimum, to complete a narrative report with a detailed analysis and explanation of the reasons for the below-benchmark rates. This report should provide any mitigating circumstances that are pertinent to one or more of the programs offered which do not meet the benchmarks. The report must also include an operational plan for improving these rates within a designated time frame. In order to assist member institutions in achieving improvement in their completion and placement rates, the following chart represents the reporting required of institutions and/or the action to be taken by ACCET in reference to rates below the benchmarks in the area of completion and placement.

<b>Below Benchmark %</b>	<b>Reporting Required of Institution<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Action Taken by ACCET</b>
Placement: 56.1% - 69.9%  and/or  Completion: 53.1% - 66.9%	Narrative Report to include a management plan for definitive improvements with specific operational initiatives and time frames for reaching benchmarks.	Reporting Status
Placement: 56% and below  and/or  Completion: 53% and below	Narrative Report as above, as well as a detailed analysis of key functional/operational areas related to substandard outcomes including, but not limited to, admissions standards, curriculum objectives, instructional methodology and local market needs, with supporting documentation.	Show-Cause Directive

The completion and placement data and statistics, accordingly verified and documented, may be used by the institution and ACCET to inform the general public of the contributions made through quality-oriented, continuing education and training programs offered by ACCET accredited institutions. Information used for this purpose, relating to placement rates of an institution in a

<sup>1</sup> An explicit description, as appropriate, of specific mitigating circumstances and a detailed analysis of the associated impact on the completion and/or placement rates must be provided. In its evaluation of each vocational program offered by an ACCET accredited institution for which the benchmarks are not met, ACCET will take into account higher-than-benchmark placement rates in a given program to allow some degree of offset for below-benchmark completion rates in that program.

particular program/course, must provide the statistics for the prior year, in addition to any other longer-term depiction of placement outcomes in order to assure an accurate presentation of historical placement trends. No guarantee of employment may be stated or implied.

All such use of this information will be carefully monitored by institutions and ACCET to assure high ethical standards and the promotion of good will for the school and the accreditation process.

**Waivers:** Students who have completed training, but have waived placement assistance may be designated as waivers. ACCET has set a 15% maximum for the percentage allowed in the waiver column, all of which must be documented, including the student's signature and notification of a specific reason. Waivers that bring the percentage above 15% will be disallowed and will increase the number of eligible completions, thereby decreasing the placement percentage.

### **Criteria for Defining and Validating Placement:**

**Full-Time Employment as a Placement:** A graduate is considered placed upon the completion of one month of continuous full-time employment which is in a training-related field and meets all required state and federal requirements including licensure.

### **Self-Employment as a Placement:**

Students enrolling in a program for which self-employment is a common vocational objective must be so informed and acknowledge their understanding in writing, as follows:

1. At the time of enrollment, students must acknowledge their understanding in writing that self-employment is a common vocational objective of the program.
2. Upon graduation, graduates who seek self-employment related to the training must sign a statement acknowledging that they seek self-employment in a field related to the training and that such employment would fulfill their vocational and monetary objectives.
3. No sooner than 30 days following graduation, graduates must sign a statement acknowledging that:
  - They are making satisfactory progress toward building a client base/professional network in the field;
  - The pursuit of self-employment continues to fulfill their progress in the achievement of their vocational objectives; and
  - They are earning training related income.

Students in any program for which self-employment is not a common vocational objective and who at the conclusion of the program seeks self-employment related to the program must meet the above requirements noted in # 2 and # 3 above.

**Temporary Employment Through an Agency as a Placement:** Upon completion of a program and placement with an agency for temporary employment, the graduate must have worked a minimum of 30 days within three consecutive months. In addition, the graduate must acknowledge in writing that temporary employment fulfills his/her vocational and monetary objectives.

**Part-time Employment as a Placement:** Upon completion of a program and placement on a part-time basis, the graduate must have worked a minimum of 30 days within three consecutive months. In addition, the graduate must acknowledge in writing that part-time employment fulfills his/her vocational and monetary objectives.

**Self-Assessed Progress as a Placement Factor:** Validation of the quality of education and training services provided by institutions offering a vocational training program whereby the final outcome is delayed (e.g., commercial pilot license program which could be considered on the basis of certification standards established by a governmental agency such as the FAA, JAA, etc.) presents challenges to defining and validating placement. These results may serve as measurable performance criteria when evaluated in conjunction with a graduate's self-assessment of progress during the period when he or she must build a record of experience (e.g. flight time) to be considered viable candidates by future employers. These two factors could provide meaningful data comparable to conventional job placement verification and statistics. Under such circumstances, institutions will systematically develop and initiate policies, procedures, and notification/acknowledgement forms to ensure effective implementation, which must be provided to ACCET for prior approval. Students will be informed and acknowledge their understanding of this purpose and process at the time of enrollment and again, no sooner than 30 days following graduation and/or completing the certification exam, whichever is later. At this time, the graduate must sign a statement acknowledging the level of satisfaction in his/her progress in the pursuit of employment in the field related to the training and that such progress continues to fulfill his/her vocational and monetary objective.

**Continuing Employment/Upgrade as a Placement:** Upon completion of the program, after which a graduate communicates his/her intention to continue employment at the same company, institutions must verify that the graduate benefited from the training as evidenced by a promotion, increase in responsibility, and/or salary increase. No sooner than 30 days following graduation, the graduate must sign a statement acknowledging his/her level of satisfaction and indicate the result (e.g. promotion, increase in responsibility, salary increase, or had to have completed the training as a condition of continued employment, or can provide documentation of potential for advancement in a training-related field).