

GUIDELINES FOR THE UTILIZATION OF EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS IN THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The following guideline is provided to assist an institution undergoing the process of ACCET accreditation to understand the perspective of the Accrediting Commission regarding the utilization of external consultants in the accreditation process.

It is important to recognize that during the process of becoming accredited, an institution needs to demonstrate to the Accrediting Commission that it is capable of offering programs and services of quality to its students, and these capabilities are intrinsic characteristics of the organization and of its staff.

Accreditation is a self-evaluation process that aids the faculty and staff of an institution in analyzing and verifying that it is accomplishing its stated objectives according to the established policies and procedures of the institution, of federal and state agencies, and of the appropriate accrediting body. The process helps the faculty and staff develop the knowledge and skills which enable it to continuously monitor and maintain quality throughout its organization.

ACCET does not take a position of recommending that institutions either seek or not seek the outside assistance of an external consultant while undergoing any part of the accreditation process. Furthermore, ACCET does not recommend specific individuals or consulting firms to any institution seeking external assistance. All communications between an institution and ACCET must be with the primary contact person of the institution, and not with an external consultant.

It is recommended that external consultants not be present at the institution during any part of the on-site examination team visit. If the institution decides to have an external consultant present, the on-site examination team will expect to communicate with management and employees not employed solely for the purpose of accreditation.