

THECB Guidelines regarding Accreditor Sanctions and other Negative or Adverse Actions

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) administrative Rule 7.7 requires institutions to notify the Coordinating Board and provide documentation if its THECB-recognized accreditor has imposed a sanction or taken other negative or adverse actions against the institution.

Defining a sanction

THECB administrative rule 7.3(36) defines a sanction as: An action taken by an accrediting agency indicating that an institution is out of compliance with its accrediting agency's standards or criteria and may lose such accreditation if the institution does not take action to comply within a certain period of time. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, warnings, notations, probation, or loss of accreditation and equate to a violation of [Chapter 7 of the administrative code].

THECB-recognized accreditors define sanctions differently. In order to assist institutions understand their reporting responsibilities, information is provided as general examples and guidance. For THECB purposes, if an accreditor calls an action a “sanction,” or the accreditor requires public disclosure of an otherwise negative or adverse action, **THECB will consider it a sanction.**

THECB actions

If a THECB-recognized accreditor publishes a sanction, THECB will publish the sanction on its website. THECB publishes current sanctions on its website as part of the list of private postsecondary institutions operating in Texas.

In addition to public disclosure, a sanction will result in restrictions placed upon the institution’s Certificate of Authorization. Restrictions may include, but are not limited to:

- Restrictions on adding degree programs to its authorization;
- An increase in the amount of financial reserves, lines of credit or surety instrument required to maintain a Certificate of Authorization; and
- Review every six months, including unannounced site visits.

Required institutional actions

- If an institution or location in Texas is currently subject to a negative or adverse action by its THECB-recognized accreditor **which has not resulted in a sanction**, the institution must:
 - Provide documentation to the Coordinating Board explaining the reasons for the negative or adverse action. The documentation should include correspondence from the accreditor; and

- Provide an explanation of any actions taken by the institution to reverse the negative or adverse action.
- If an institution or location in Texas is currently **subject to a sanction** by its THECB-recognized accreditor, the institution must:
 - Provide documentation to the Coordinating Board explaining the reasons for the sanction. The documentation should include correspondence from the accreditor; and
 - Provide an explanation of any actions taken by the institution to comply with the accreditor's standards or criteria; and
 - Provide a timeline for returning to compliance in order to maintain accreditation.

THECB-recognized regional accreditors

Examples are given for each of the THECB-recognized regional accreditors to assist institutions in determining when an action will result in public notice on both the accreditor's and THECB's website.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC):

Results in public notice:

- Warnings or probation which are publicly announced, posted, or published by SACSCOC.

Does not result in public notice:

- Requirement of monitoring reports; or
- Advisement that if progress or compliance is insufficient, the institution could be placed on sanction or removed from membership; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

SACSCOC reference:

- [SACSCOC Sanction Policy](#)

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC-WASC):

Results in public notice:

- Public disclosure notices of Probation or Show Cause status; or
- Public disclosure of Commission final actions to terminate, deny or accept withdrawal of accreditation or candidacy.

Does not result in public notice:

- Reaffirm accreditation with requirement for a follow-up report; or
- Issue Warning; or
- Defer action; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ACCJC-WASC references:

- [ACCJC Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions](#)

- [ACCJC Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process](#)

Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC-SCUC):

Results in public notice:

- Formal notice of concern; or
- Sanctions, including Warning, Probation, or Show Cause; or
- Withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Defer action; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

WASC-SCUC references:

- [WASC-SCUC Forms of Possible Commission Action](#)
- [WASC-SCUC Public Disclosure of Accreditation Documents and Commission Actions Policy](#)

Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (CHE-MSACS):

Results in public notice:

- Non-compliance actions, including Warning, Probation, and Show Cause; or
- Adverse actions, including denial of candidate status or accreditation, withdrawal of candidate status or accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Procedural actions, such as rejection of a report, deferring or postponing a decision, noting a voluntary lapse of accreditation; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

CHE-MSACS references:

- [CHE-MSACS Accreditation Actions](#)
- [CHE-MSACS Notification of Accreditation Decisions](#)

Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (CIHE-NEASC):

Results in public notice:

- Show cause; or
- Deferral; or
- Final adverse actions, such as withdrawal of candidacy or accreditation, and probation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Non-final adverse actions; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

CIHE-NEASC reference:

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- [CIHE-NEASC Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions](#)

Higher Learning Commission (HLC):

Results in public notice:

- All actions which are made public, including Notice, Probation, and Show Cause; or
- Denial or Withdrawal of Accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Accredited to Candidate Status; or
- Special notice to institution prior to placing institution on probation, withdrawing accreditation, or denying initial candidacy or initial accreditation; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

HLC reference:

- [HLC Policy: Chapter E: Sanctions, Adverse Actions and Appeals](#)

Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities (NWCCU):

Results in public notice:

- Warning; or
- Adverse action, such as denial or termination of candidacy or accreditation; or
- Show cause or probation; or
- Termination of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Notice of concern; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

NWCCU reference:

- [NWCCU Accreditation Handbook](#)

THECB-recognized national accreditors

Examples are given for each of the THECB-recognized national accreditors to assist institutions in determining when an action will result in public notice on both the accreditor's and THECB's website.

Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES):

Results in public notice:

- Warnings; or
- Final decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, accreditation of institution or program.

Does not result in public notice:

- Deferral; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ABHES reference:

- [ABHES Accreditation Manual](#)

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Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC):

Results in public notice:

- Warning; or
- Probation; or
- Deny or withdraw accreditation; or
- Other public disclosures deemed appropriate.

Does not result in public notice:

- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ACCSC references:

- [ACCSC Public Notice of Commission Actions](#)
- [ACCSC Commission Action Factsheet](#)

Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS):

Results in public notice:

- Show-Cause Directive when institution does not materially operate in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria; or
- Denials of accreditation affecting overall accreditation; or
- Withdrawal of accreditation, including revocation or suspension of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Compliance warning when not in compliance with Accreditation Criteria; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ACICS references:

- [ACICS Accreditation Criteria](#)
- [ACICS Appendix G-Guidelines on Disclosure and Notification](#)

Accrediting Council for Continuing Education & Training (ACCET):

Results in public notice:

- Deny or withdraw accreditation; or
- Show cause/probation; or
- Final decision to deny or withdraw accreditation, and show cause; or
- Debarment.

Does not result in public notice:

- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ACCET reference:

- [ACCET Policies and Practices of the Accrediting Commission](#)

Association of Advanced Rabbinical and Talmudic Schools Accreditation Commission (AARTS):

Results in public notice:

- Any final adverse action which results in public notices in accordance with federal regulations of accrediting agencies.

Does not result in public notice:

- Any negative action that does not result in publication to the public. (Accreditor does not maintain a website.)

AARTS reference:

- AARTS Accreditation Manual (Contact accreditor for latest version).

Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE):

Results in public notice:

- Final action regarding warning or probation; or
- Show cause; or
- Adverse action, such as denial, withdrawal, suspension, revocation, or termination of candidate or accredited status.

Does not result in public notice:

- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ABHE reference:

- [ABHE Commission on Accreditation Manual](#)

Commission of Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS):

Results in public notice:

- Notations; or
- Probation; or
- Show cause; or
- Final adverse actions such as withdrawal or denial of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Required reports; or
- Letter of concern; or
- Discretionary private show cause; or
- Non-final adverse actions; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ATS reference:

- [ATS Procedures, Policies, and Bylaws](#)

Council on Occupational Education (COE):

Results in public notice:

- Notification of apparent deficiency or violation status; or
- Probation; or
- Warning; or
- Show cause; or
- Adverse action, such as withdrawal, suspension, revocation, or termination of candidacy or accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

COE reference:

- [COE Handbook of Accreditation](#)

Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC):**Results in public notice:**

- Show Cause; or
- Denial or withdrawal of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Deferral; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

DEAC reference:

- [DEAC Accreditation Handbook](#)

Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS):**Results in public notice:**

- Any action by the Commission which involves non-compliance with standards; or
- Adverse action, such as denial, probation, show cause, and termination/withdrawal/suspension, or revocation of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Warning; or
- Monitoring; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

TRACS reference:

- [TRACS Policies & Procedures Manual](#)

THECB-recognized professional and specialized accreditors

Examples are given for each of the THECB-recognized professional and specialized accreditors to assist institutions in determining when an action will result in public notice on both the accreditor's and THECB's website.

Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM):

Results in public notice:

- Final decisions on sanctions, including warning, probation, show cause, sanctions for unethical behavior; or
- Final decisions on adverse actions, such as denial, withdrawal, suspension, revocation, or termination of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Deferral; or
- Notice of concern; or
- Monitoring; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ACAOM reference:

- [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#)

American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE):

Results in public notice:

- Negative actions, such as probation, show cause, denial, withdrawal, suspension, revocation or termination of accreditation.

Does not result in public notice:

- Warning; or
- Deferment; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

ABFSE reference:

- [ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual](#)

National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST):

Results in public notice include:

- Probation; or
- Automatic suspension; or
- Revocation of membership.

Does not result in public notice:

- Administrative warning; or
- Accreditation warning; or
- Any negative action that does not result in publication on accreditor's website.

NAST reference:

- [NAST Handbook](#)