

NWCCU POLICIES | TEMPORARY POLICY ON VIRTUAL ACCREDITATION EVALUATION VISITS

This Temporary Policy on Virtual Accreditation Evaluation Visits is in response to the global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus pandemic. This Temporary Policy implements the May 15, 2020 United States Department of Education (“USDE”) guidance (<https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/051520UPDATEDGuidanceInterruptStudyRelCOVID19May2020>) and June 26, 2020 Resolution passed by NWCCU and attached hereto.

Implementation

- NWCCU may use its discretion to limit virtual accreditation site visits to, for example, institutions that are in good standing or to institutions that are engaged in renewal of accreditation.
- NWCCU shall commence virtual accreditation site visits in September, 2020. The virtual accreditation site visits shall engage campus and other relevant stakeholders in an interactive video or teleconference format.
- Virtual accreditation site visits shall be followed by in-person campus visits within a reasonable time when public health conditions improve and are authorized by applicable law. Campus visit may be limited to focus on items identified in the evaluator report prepared during the virtual visit and may include fewer than all peer-review team members.
- Results of the virtual accreditation site visits and the follow-up campus visits shall be reported to NWCCU at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commissioners.
- NWCCU may exercise its discretion to extend the term of accreditation for a reasonable period of time if necessary due to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.
- NWCCU may exercise its discretion to provide good-cause extensions to institutions that are subject to a show-cause order, on probation, or subject to some other sanction so long as it is determined by NWCCU that such extension is deemed necessary due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Nothing in this Temporary Policy shall be construed to be inconsistent with the provisions of the USDE guidance cited above or the June 26, 2020 Resolution.

Review

This Temporary Policy will be reviewed by NWCCU every 30 days or sooner upon guidance from USDE. This Temporary Policy shall be suspended upon resolution of the COVID-19 virus pandemic or further guidance from USDE.