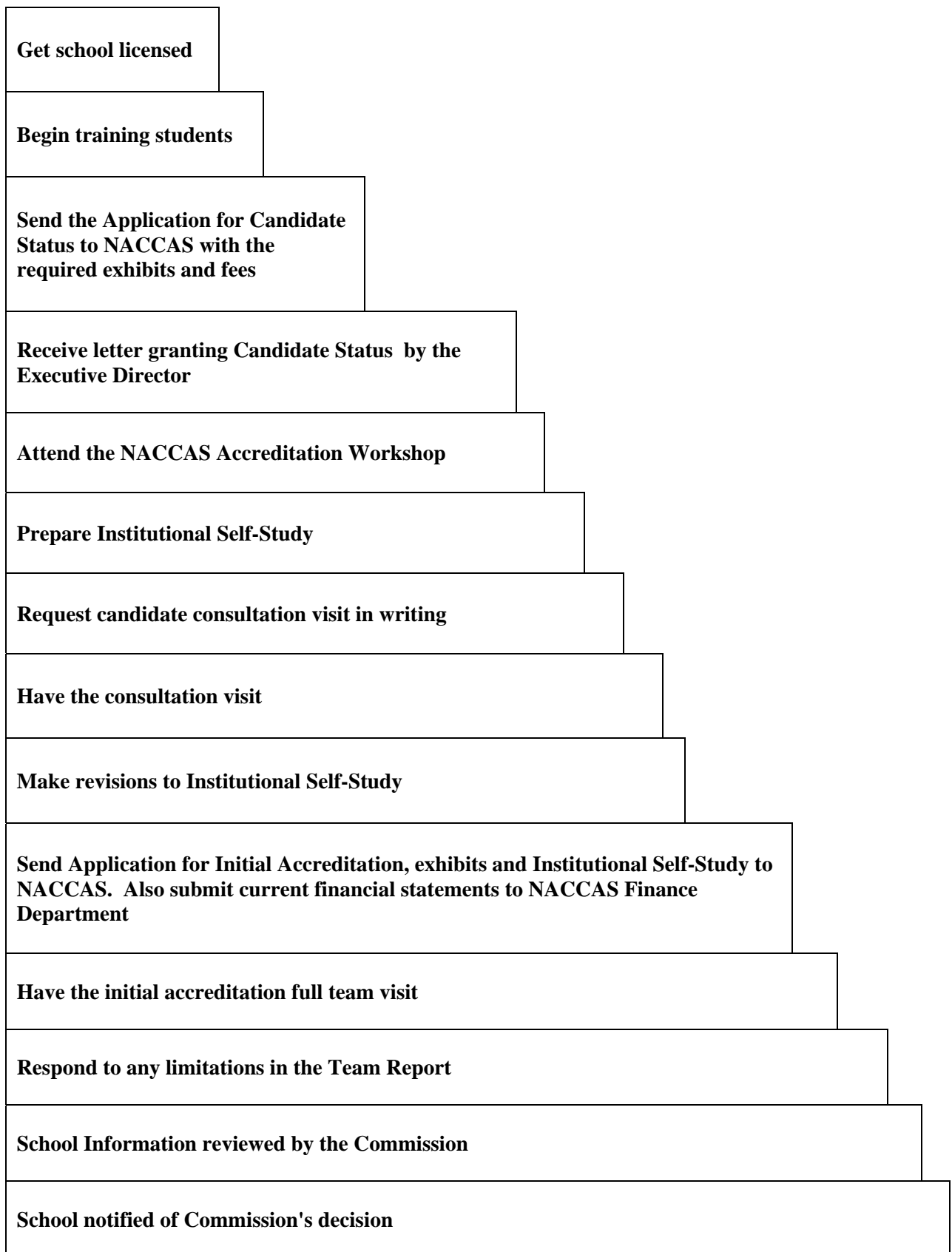


Steps to NACCAS Accreditation



Procedures for First-time Accreditation

(A two-part process)

09/2011

*Institutions interested in applying for accreditation for the first time must obtain **candidate status** before applying for accreditation. The only exceptions are: a.) unless the owner currently owns an institution accredited by NACCAS or b.) has owned an institution accredited and in good standing with a recognized accrediting agency within the most recent past 24-month period. In either of these cases the school may skip the Candidate process. The following is a step-by-step description of the complete accreditation process.*

I. CANDIDATE STATUS:

- 1. Get your school licensed.**

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 2. Begin training post-secondary students in field within NACCAS' Scope of Accreditation as outlined in Appendix 1 of the Handbook.**

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 3. Complete the Application for Candidate Status (Application Form #1) and send it to the NACCAS office with the required exhibits and fees (the fees are listed on NACCAS' website "Schedule of Fees") *Please note that if the application is incomplete, or if the fees (including the sustaining fees) or any of the required exhibits are missing, the application may be returned.***

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 4. Candidate Status granted by the Executive Director.**

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 5. Attend a NACCAS Accreditation Workshop.**

Workshop registration fees for two persons from the school are included in the candidate application fee. You must attend all three days. The workshop provides information about NACCAS and how to compile an Institutional Self-Study. Refer to the NACCAS website for dates.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 6. Prepare the Institutional Self-Study.**

After the workshop, work with your staff to put together the Institutional Self-Study. *You must follow the Requirements for Completing the Institutional Self-Study (Appendix 5A&C).* Please be

sure to contact the NACCAS staff specialist assigned to your school if you have any questions about the self-study. Go to www.naccas.org/appendicies.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

7. Request a Candidate Consultation Visit in writing.

Once the institutional self-study has been completed, download the form to request the consultation visit at www.naccas.org under Applications and Forms. Submit along with the required documents and fees listed on the form to NACCAS.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

8. The Consultation Visit

The person representing the school who attended the workshop must be present during the evaluation visit. The school should have at least one copy of the Institutional Self-Study available on the day of the visit for the NACCAS staff and evaluator team to work with at the school, and at least one for the school's own records.

The team will evaluate the self-study, answer questions, and review the self-study with the school's designated staff. The more complete the self-study, the more beneficial the consultation visit will be to the school. You should also have some student files available for the team to review. This is your opportunity to ask questions about NACCAS and how to comply with accreditation requirements. At the end of the visit, you and the NACCAS team will discuss a reasonable deadline for you to make any revisions to the self-study based on your target date for submitting the application for Initial Accreditation.

A copy of the report of the consultation visit will be sent to the school within 15 business days after the NACCAS staff member's return to the office. You do not need to respond to the consultation report, but will need to take the actions that appear in the report in order to be successful in the rest of the accreditation process.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

9. Finish the Self-Study and download the Application for (Initial) Accreditation.

Once you have finalized the self-study, an Application for Initial Accreditation can be downloaded from the NACCAS web site. Note: The complete Application for Initial Accreditation must be received within two years of being granted candidate status.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 10. Complete the Application for Initial Accreditation (include all required exhibits as outlined on the form) and submit it to NACCAS along with one (1) copy of the final version of the Institutional Self-Study (ISS).**

Be sure that the financial statements are submitted separately to the NACCAS Finance Department.

The visit fee must be paid prior to the visit. Note: Once in the Initial Accreditation process it must be completed within one year.

Once you submit the Initial Application for Accreditation, your candidate period is complete!

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

II. ACCREDITATION:

- 1. NACCAS staff reviews the Application for Initial Accreditation and ISS. The school completes any necessary revisions, corrections, and/or clarifications.**

a. The school's application will be reviewed by your NACCAS staff specialist. The ISS will be reviewed by the Document Compliance Specialist who will write the school a letter describing any deficiencies found in the ISS. The school may be required to submit a response to the letter with additional information, corrections, or clarifications to amend the deficiencies in the ISS based on instructions in the letter.

b. The school's financial documents will be reviewed by the NACCAS Finance Department, and if additional financial information is required, the school will be notified.

If the application, attachments and ISS are complete and financial statements have been received, the school will be placed on the list of schools to be visited. (Visit Ready Status) NACCAS schedules visits three months in advance.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

- 2. Schedule the on-site evaluation.** Once your application, ISS, and financial statements have been reviewed, the NACCAS travel staff will contact the school by telephone and/or email to schedule the on-site evaluation.
- 3. Send ISS to evaluators.** Once you have received written confirmation of the on-site evaluation and the contact information for each evaluator, send one copy of the ISS to each of the evaluators visiting the school so that it is received at least two weeks prior to the day of the visit. The school must send the ISS through a traceable means of delivery. Please note that any revisions made to the ISS or to school policies and/or procedures must also be sent to the evaluators prior to the visit. Maintain a copy of the ISS at the school.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

4. **On-site evaluation.** A full team (typically consisting of four people) will arrive at the school to evaluate its compliance with NACCAS' *Standards and Criteria*. This visit is not a consultation. The team is there to evaluate whether or not the school is meeting NACCAS' Standards. Information about the on-site evaluation can be found in the NACCAS Handbook (*Rules of Practice and Procedure*, Part 3). A report of the team's findings during the on-site evaluation is sent to the school within 15 business days of the NACCAS Staff member's return to the office.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

5. **Respond to the Team Report.** *The school will have forty-five calendar days from the date of receipt of the report to respond to any limitations found by the NACCAS team.* The school must submit **five** copies of its response to the NACCAS office via traceable means of delivery.

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

6. **Consideration of the school's application by the Commission.** The school's application, the ISS, the Team Report of the on-site evaluation, and the school's response to the report are reviewed by the Commission at its next eligible meeting. The school will be notified in writing of the Commission's decision within forty-five days of the close of the meeting.

The Institutional Changes and Finance Committee will conduct a final review of the school's financial documents before the Commission meeting at which the school's application will be considered. *The ability to meet Standard VII, Criteria 1 – 3, financial requirements, is a required component of the accreditation process.*

DATE ACCOMPLISHED:

7. ***What happens next?*** Once the school receives accreditation, the school's owners may participate in federal student financial aid. Contact the U.S. Department of Education for information on how to apply for participation in the federal aid programs. **Please note that the Federal Financial Aid application process is entirely independent from NACCAS.**