

A description of the terms and definitions follows.

**REGIONAL ACCREDITATION:  
WARNING, PROBATION, WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION**

The seven regional accrediting commissions share a common framework and a common understanding of terms for certain actions regarding accredited institutions: Warning, Probation, Show Cause, Withdrawal of Accreditation, Denial of Accreditation, and Appeal.

**Public Sanctions:**

- **Warning:** Indicates that an institution has been determined by the commission<sup>1</sup> not to meet one or more standards<sup>2</sup> for accreditation.
- **Probation:** Indicates that an institution has been determined by the commission not to meet one or more standards for accreditation and is an indication of a serious concern on the part of the Commission regarding the level and/or scope of non-compliance issues related to the standards.

By federal regulation, the Commission must take immediate action to withdraw accreditation if an institution is out of compliance with accreditation standards for two years unless the time is extended for good cause.

**Show cause:** An institution is asked to demonstrate why its accreditation should not be withdrawn. A written report from the institution and, if specified by the commission, a focused visit are preliminary to a hearing with the commission. Show cause may occur during or at the end of the two-year probation period, or at any time a commission determines that an institution must demonstrate why its accreditation should not be withdrawn (i.e., probation is not a necessary precursor to show cause).

**Withdrawal of Accreditation:** An institution's accredited status is withdrawn, and with it, membership in the association.

**Denial of Accreditation:** An institution is denied initial accreditation because it does not meet the requirements for accreditation.

**Appeal:** The withdrawal or denial of accreditation may be appealed. Institutions remain accredited (or candidates for initial accreditation) during the period of the appeal.

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<sup>1</sup> *Commission* encompasses decisions made by any appropriate decision-making body of one of the seven regional accrediting bodies.

<sup>2</sup> *Standards* encompasses any requirements for accreditation, including eligibility requirements, standards, criteria, or policies of the commission.