



March 24, 2020

NEW COVID-19 ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES FROM ATS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: Regarding accreditation visits affected by the current health crisis, the Board of Commissioners has authorized two options on a temporary basis—both at the discretion of Commission staff, in consultation with the affected schools and visiting committees: (1) postponing the visit, with corollary extension of accreditation if needed, or (2) conducting the visit virtually through interactive technologies (e.g., phone calls or videoconferencing). For any visits for reaffirmation or initial accreditation conducted entirely virtually, staff will schedule an in-person, follow-up visit when it is reasonable and safe to do so (follow-up visits do not require full peer reviews). [NOTE: These options follow [guidance](#) issued on March 17 by the US Department of Education.]

As communicated on March 13, the Board continues to waive residency requirements for all degree programs during the current health crisis. Schools are also permitted to deliver their educational programs through distance education technologies without petitioning for approval during the current crisis. Those technologies do not require sophisticated learning management systems and may include emails, phone calls, videoconferences, or other such approaches. Instructors, however, must still initiate substantive and regular communication with their students, individually or collectively. Schools should also notify their Commission staff liaison of major changes they are making in these areas, if they have not already done so. [NOTE: These allowances follow [guidance](#) issued by the US Department of Education on March 5, 2020.]