

NCA CASI

Career, Technical, and Postsecondary Standards For Quality Education



Purpose and Direction

STANDARD 1: The institution maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning, thinking, and employability skills as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

INDICATORS	
In applying this standard, NCA CASI ("the Agency") reviews the following indicators:	
1.1	The institution's leaders engage in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to annually review and revise a widely communicated institutional purpose and mission statement for student success which is reflected in a five year strategic plan, student data, and other instructional materials.
1.2	Vision and mission statements address the learning process and indicate the institution's belief about the nature of postsecondary career-technical education learners and a commitment to positive student achievement; statements promote an equitable, just, and inclusive community, free of bias and prejudice, that inspires students to respect and value diversity.
1.3	Leadership and staff demonstrate a commitment to high expectations for professional practice, and the institution's culture, educational programs, and instructional practices provide challenging and equitable learning experiences that actively engage students and focus on an understanding and application of knowledge and skills for all students.
1.4	Leadership and staff commit to ensuring that the institution's culture, educational programs, and instructional practices enable all students to achieve learning, thinking, and employability skills, including skills in communication, problem solving, technology, collaboration, social and civic responsibility, creativity, and innovation.

Governance and Leadership

STANDARD 2: The institution operates under governance and leadership that facilitate the fulfillment of its stated mission through effective governance and leadership, proficient administrative capacity, program compliance, and constituent involvement.

INDICATORS	
In applying this standard, the Agency reviews the following indicators:	
Governance and Leadership	
2.1	The institution’s governance and leadership are evidenced by decision-making aligned with applicable laws of incorporation and institutional bylaws.
2.2	Leadership promotes an environment of empowerment, innovation, and institutional effectiveness that is conducive to the successful fulfillment of the institution’s mission.
2.3	The institution provides ongoing training of governing body members, providing members with written policies delineating the duties and responsibilities of the governing board, administrators, faculty, and support staff.
2.4	The governing board supports a conflict of interest policy.
2.5	The institution maintains fiscal and administrative oversight allowing for the institution’s mission and goals to be accomplished.
2.6	Salaries, benefits, and professional advancement opportunities are documented and allow the institution to attract and retain quality personnel.
2.7	The institution is guided by documented, up-to-date governance policies.
2.8	The institutional policies include provisions for a succession plan that address both short- and long-term challenges.
Administrative Capacity	
2.9	Institutional personnel responsibilities are clearly defined.
2.10	Each employee possesses the education and professional experience needed to fulfill a shared leadership and collective accountability role in planning, budgeting, and developing policy and curriculum resulting in annual appraisals indicating competent and effective leadership.
2.11	The institution’s written policies and practices provide a foundation for truth in institutional advancement found in publications, advertising, student admissions, student grading, etc.
2.12	The institution’s policies and practices align with its mission and goals, assure quality career-technical education, and promote safety of the institution’s facilities.

2.13	A written teach-out plan ensures equitable treatment of students in the event that an entire institution or specific program ceases to operate.
Program Compliance	
2.14	Programs are in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, approved policies, and financial and compliance audits, along with any other such means of financial reporting.
2.15	The institution responds in a timely manner to and takes adequate action to resolve deficiencies in matters of compliance.
Constituent Involvement (Including but not limited to: Students, Faculty, Staff, Business & Industry/Advisory Committee Representatives, Higher Education, Agency Partners)	
2.16	Constituents are involved in opportunities that foster collaboration and provide meaningful leadership and communication roles.
2.17	The institution provides a formal channel of ongoing communication with its constituents, facilitating responses to constituent concerns and suggestions, and implementing feedback for improvement.
2.18	The institution supports a system that regularly solicits the knowledge and skills of community partnerships to advance the institution's mission and effectiveness, and enhance the work of the institution.

Teaching and Assessing for Learning

STANDARD 3: The institution’s curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.

INDICATORS	
In applying this standard, the Agency reviews the following indicators:	
Curricula	
3.1	An institutional charter provides authorization to operate as an educational entity which provides curriculum and instruction that are appropriate to the level of education indicated by the charter and/or legal authority of the institution, and identifies the population to be served.
3.2	Credentials and standards are consistent and appropriate and conform to commonly accepted practices and industry-based career-technical standards.
3.3	Curriculum content correlates to the mission of the institution and meets the needs of local and regional labor markets.
3.4	The institution evaluates competing and/or similar programs offered regionally and locally to gauge employment needs and assist in establishing reasonable program costs.
3.5	Curriculum and courses have clear objectives and learning outcomes, defined by state requirements or program authority/agency, which provide guidance in identifying and shaping learning outcomes and curriculum in postsecondary institutions.
3.6	Curriculum encompasses research-based postsecondary and career-technical learning methodologies for the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge and technical skills, problem solving, and higher order and critical thinking skills, including collaboration and reflection.
3.7	Curriculum integrates academic knowledge and skills with rigor as reflected by specific industry standards, credentialing entities, and constituent/technical advisory committees.
3.8	Course/program content and flexibility in sequencing support career-technical postsecondary learner achievement and are based on state requirements, program authority/agency guidance, industry certificates and degrees, and industry credentials and standards.
3.9	Course/program content supports the career pathway and leads to a certificate, credential, and license as applicable.
3.10	Curriculum supports social responsibility and lifelong learning by including higher order and critical thinking skills, problem-based learning and decision making skills, analysis, and

	evaluation.
3.11	Distance education offered as a stand-alone course or as an instructional strategy within the course curriculum correlates with the mission of the institution as it pertains to course sequencing, course content, course objectives, and general education components.
3.12	The curriculum is articulated by agreement and/or credit transfer, in which associate degree requirements are value-added compliance components for postsecondary degree attainment, and may be applied to additional education and degree attainment which delineates how credentials/certificates/licenses transfer.
3.13	The institution publishes descriptions of each program, credential, certificate, and/or license with the typical length of each program, including the program description, requirements, and other requirements/prerequisites needed to obtain the credential on full-time or equivalent part-time study.
3.14	Information is available to current and prospective postsecondary students and the general public in a variety of media formats and the information regarding program and course content is consistent.
Instruction	
3.15	Individual student learning needs are assessed by a variety of pre- and post-assessments measuring student readiness, progress, and achievement, and accommodations are made to ensure learner achievement.
3.16	Assessment feedback is communicated on an ongoing basis to students to assure learning and understanding for student achievement.
3.17	Instructional strategies are varied and documented in lesson plans that meet current and prospective individual learning styles, with articulated prerequisites for acceptance into programs found in program documents.
3.18	Programs incorporate planned multiple methods/approaches for assessing student achievement, including information external to the institution/program. Methods of assessment, grading scale, and grade requirements are indicated in the curriculum outline/syllabus and other student materials.
3.19	Individual programs identify student competency in the core skills of the occupation as identified by the industry standard.
3.20	Programs are appropriately accredited, chartered, or approved by industries or entities that require licensure or certification for career-technical and postsecondary education completers to enter the occupation/profession. These data are part of the evaluation of program success with respect to student achievement.
3.21	Career-technical and postsecondary education programs include quantitative measures for completion, licensure, and job placement.
3.22	Teaching and learning are continuously reviewed, revised, and adjusted in response to data

	from multiple assessments, documentation of student achievement, examination of professional practice, and input from constituents.
Recruiting and Admission Practices	
3.23	The institution maintains and follows satisfactory policies regarding recruitment, advertising, and publication development, including academic calendars and catalogs, and the institution appropriately disseminates this information.
3.24	Institutional policies and procedures that guide the recruiting, admissions, enrollment, and grading practices conform to and support the institution's mission, goals, and objectives.
3.25	Institutional information provided to the public includes the institution's mission and purpose, recruitment and admissions practices, grading scale, nondiscrimination statement policy, and communication materials reflect diversity with no evidence of stereotyping.
3.26	Publications for current and prospective students and the general public are scrutinized by institutional staff for accuracy, clarity, consistency, cohesiveness, accessibility, and compliance with standards that address career-technical and postsecondary requirements for entry into the field and additional information pertinent to career field.
3.27	Policies, procedures, timelines, and calendar of marketing and recruitment activities are appropriate and are followed by the institution.
3.28	Prerequisites and other requirements for each program are clearly and consistently stated and communicated to prospective students in all promotional materials.
3.29	Program length reflects state approval for the program and, as applicable, industry standards and is effective for credential achievement.
Measures of Program Length and Objectives of Credentials Offered	
3.30	The institution delineates the length and increments of the academic year and grading periods, identifies any established time limits for program completion, which are published in the institutional calendar and student and faculty handbooks, describes each credential together with the typical length of each program, and demonstrates effective measures of program length in relation to credential objectives.
3.31	Awarded career-technical and postsecondary education credentials conform to commonly accepted practices and industry standards and demonstrate successful transitions to work.
3.32	Institutional hours of operation, including program and course schedules, are held at times that allow student access to classrooms and faculty are conducive to postsecondary attendance, adult learning, and achievement, and are within the guidelines from authorizing state accountability and industry credentialing entities.
Student Achievement	
3.33	Student achievement in relation to the institution's mission includes different standards for different programs as established by the institution, including consideration of course completion, state licensing examination, job placement rates, career-technical and

	postsecondary measures of achievement, and industry assessments as appropriate to the program content.
3.34	Career-technical and postsecondary student achievement reflects the education mission of the institution/programs being evaluated.
3.35	Programs demonstrate that students have acquired career-technical and postsecondary competency in core skills of occupations.
3.36	Institution regularly collects and analyzes enrollment data, retention rates, and career-technical and postsecondary student outcome data; uses that data as part of an institutional evaluation/assessment of success in meeting the mission; and uses evaluation results to develop and implement improvement plans, based on criteria/processes for evaluating the institution's objectives/goals and the outcomes resulting from the improvement plans.
3.37	If the institution or its programs are required to adhere to state-established or industry credential agency-required student achievement rates, -- including job placement, state licensure, and program completion rates -- NCA CASI will apply those rates; provided that composite rates shall be established by NCA CASI for institutions with multiple programs subject to different state or industry credential agency-required rates; and provided that the institution must also meet any applicable standards for Title IV eligibility established by the U.S. Department of Education for job placement rates or other measures of student achievement.
3.38	Each institution will receive established composite expected student achievement rates applicable to programs that are not subject to required student achievement rates established by the state or an industry credential agency. Such composite rates – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall address job placement, state licensure, and program completion rates; • Shall meet any applicable standards for Title IV eligibility established by the U.S. Department of Education for job placement rates or other measures of student achievement; • Shall take into account student achievement rates for related fields or institutions; rates established in state plans under the Perkins Act; the institution's own prior achievement rates reported in its most recent annual report; and standards of nationally recognized program credentialing agencies.
3.39	Notwithstanding 3.38, an institution may establish its own student achievement standards. If it does so, the institution's standards shall be reviewed to ensure that they address job placement, state licensure, and program completion rates and are reasonable in light of related nationally recognized program credentialing agency standards and state standards for student achievement and shall review the institution's processes for collection and review of student achievement data for accuracy and for use in institutional improvement plans.

Resource and Support Systems

STANDARD 4: The institution has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

INDICATORS	
In applying this standard, the Agency reviews the following indicators:	
Faculty	
4.1	Institution's faculty is hired with the prescribed education and/or technical skills through specific wage-earning experiences and/or training and has been deemed qualified by the state accountability or industry credentialing agency requirements to instruct postsecondary non-degree granting career and technical education.. Work experience in compliance with state/local standards may be accepted in lieu of education credentials where credentials/education is consistent with state certifications or industry requirements.
4.2	Faculty demonstrates competence to teach assigned subjects with the requisite knowledge and skills to provide effective instruction.
4.3	Faculty's training, earned degrees, scholarship, experiences, and classroom performance are commensurate for credential/degree level offered.
4.4	Faculty consistently engage in professional development that aligns with the institution's purpose and direction, and with individual evaluations and continuous improvement plans. Relevant activities include orientation, mentoring, and professional development opportunities.
4.5	Institution utilizes student output and achievement data to drive curriculum and instruction.
4.6	Institution utilizes student output and achievement data to inform professional development needs.
4.7	Faculty's classroom performance is evaluated through multiple evaluation methods, and the institutional policies support the evaluation and provide feedback and continuous improvement opportunities to faculty and staff.
4.8	Number of faculty meets the mission of the institution and program and learner needs.
4.9	Institution's student/teacher ratios are maintained and documented in accordance with state standards or acceptable industry practices.
4.10	Faculty takes an active role in developing and reviewing curriculum content.

Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies	
4.11	Facilities and equipment are compliant with federal ADA and EEOC rules and regulations and meet the most stringent state and local safety and fire codes, and the institution documents regular safety inspections and practiced fire and crisis management plans.
4.12	Institution maintains sufficient physical resources, including classroom/laboratory space, library offerings, equipment, and supplies required by business industry standards and program accrediting bodies, to achieve the institutional or programmatic mission and goals and accommodate students.
4.13	Institution maintains a clean, safe, and orderly environment conducive to learning.
4.14	Safety hazards and deficiencies are addressed in accordance with the inspecting agency's guidelines.
4.15	Institution has a facilities, technology and equipment plan or plans, including an institutional/program budget to maintain, upgrade, and replace technology, facilities, equipment, and supplies sufficient to support the institution's programs (and that reflects the resources allocated for these purposes).
4.16	Institution's technology infrastructure supports operational needs and meets business and industry standards to ensure timely delivery of distance education and support services for current student numbers and expected near-term growth in enrollment.
4.17	Physical resources, classrooms, and laboratories have adequate space to meet business and industry standards and accommodate student needs.
4.18	Institution implements a written security and crisis management plan and provides implementation training for internal constituents.
4.19	Institution provides media services and resource materials required by the programmatic mission and goals.
4.20	Technology to deliver distance learning is up-to-date, in accordance with industry standards, and is properly maintained.
Fiscal and Administrative Capacity	
4.21	Institution permanently maintains student records, containing period of enrollment, financial information, and educational program records.
4.22	Fiscal resources identify source of institution's revenues, expenditures, and financial capacity.
4.23	Institution is subject to regular annual external audits.
4.24	Institution budgeting process includes current and future budgets that are sufficient to achieve the institution's mission and goals for the period of accreditation.

4.25	Individuals in leadership and managerial roles, including those who oversee the fiscal and budget processes, are qualified by education and have experience in accordance with the Institution's mission and/or state accountability and/or industry credential requirements.
4.26	Institution has adequate administrative staff to operate effectively at the institution's scale of operations during the accreditation period.
4.27	Institution has written policies that clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of administrators.
4.28	There is stability in leadership and administrative operations.
4.29	Financial transactions are monitored using a recognized accounting system.
4.30	Institution protects confidential student records in accordance with Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the processes that protect student privacy are clear in policies and communication.
4.31	Tuition payments and tuition cancellation policies are written, consistently administered, and comply with applicable regulations.
4.32	Program costs (tuition, supplies, materials, textbooks, etc.) are transparent and openly disclosed to students prior to entry.
Support Services	
4.33	Institution has an administrative, financial, and technical commitment to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to enable all admitted students to complete a certificate in a publicized timeframe.
4.34	Institution ensures that each postsecondary student, including adults with special needs, has access to the needed guidance and support services that include, but are not limited to, academic, career, and personal counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, financial aid, educational and career planning, and employment assistance.
4.35	Intervention strategies, orientation, tutoring, remediation, counseling, and differentiated instructional strategies facilitate and encourage academic success.
4.36	Drugs and substance abuse prevention and intervention services are publicized.
Title IV and Federal Compliance (for participating institutions)	
4.37	Institution discloses the results of financial or compliance audits and program reviews based on the most recent student loan default rate data to the Secretary of Education, state authorizing agencies, and other cognizant accrediting agencies.
4.38	Institution has mechanisms in place to report to the agency information regarding an institution's compliance deficiencies as reported in audits, program reviews, loan default rates, or such other information as the Secretary of Education may have provided to the institution.

4.39	Institution's timely resolution of compliance deficiencies reported in audits, program reviews, or related to loan default rates, or otherwise reported by the Secretary of Education.
4.40	Financial aid obligations and scholarship eligibility requirements are transparent and openly disclosed to students.
4.41	The Institution provides Constitution Day instruction and voters registration resources.

Using Results for Continuous Improvement

STANDARD 5: The institution employs a comprehensive evaluation system that documents institutional performance and student achievement as a catalyst for continuous improvement.

INDICATORS	
In applying this standard, the Agency reviews the following indicators:	
Comprehensive Evaluation System	
5.1	The institution designs and implements a comprehensive evaluation system that yields data about the institution’s performance and student achievement evaluation system to assess progress toward meeting expectations for institutional performance and student achievement.
5.2	The evaluation system for institutional and student records is secure and confidential, is in accordance with state and federal regulations, and is an accurate representation of institutional and student achievement data.
5.3	Ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning measures of student achievement assure that career-technical and postsecondary education program goals and objectives are in alignment with and support the institution’s purpose, mission, goals, objectives, and continuous improvement initiatives.
5.4	Quality of the institution includes the success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution’s mission, which may include different standards for different institutions or programs, as established by the institution, including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examination, and job placement rates.
5.5	Career-technical and postsecondary education programs are aligned with economic growth industries, employer needs, and industry and credentialing standards.
5.6	Length of career-technical and postsecondary education programs are in accordance with licensure and industry credential guidelines.
5.7	Evaluation of curriculum includes an assessment of course sequencing, general education components, course content covering the major field of study; clearly state course objectives, and the correlation of the curriculum to the mission of the institution.
Record of Student Complaints	
5.8	The institution maintains a record of student complaints received, action taken, and resolution and follow-up covering at least the most recent accreditation period, and makes such record available to on-site Agency evaluators.
5.9	The institution analyzes faculty and staff evaluation data and uses results to develop and implement improvement strategies within the Institution’s continuous improvement or strategic plan.

5.10	The institution communicates the results of its institutional performance and student achievement to all constituents.
5.11	The institution has standards and processes to assess if a pattern of student complaints exists that would raise questions as to the institution's compliance with the Agency's standards or requirements.