

World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education

ACCREDITATION & ENDORSEMENT MANUAL

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Accreditation and Endorsement Manuel

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Introduction

The World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education (WAPTE) has adopted a set of minimum *standards* and *procedures* to be followed by its member theological associations as the basis for recognizing their respective accreditation and endorsement services. These *standards* and *procedures* are intended to ensure that the accreditation or endorsement status granted to schools by one theological association is equivalent to that given by another WAPTE-affiliated association, while also accommodating appropriate regional differences in approach.

The minimum *standards* and their associated *components* ensure that desirable qualities are represented in the operation of the school and its educational programs. In addition, each association will provide a set of indicators (sometimes called “typical indicators”) that suggest how schools can demonstrate that they meet the standards and their respective components.

The minimum required *process* is intended to ensure that the association engages in a reliable and appropriate process for granting accreditation or endorsement based on the completion of a comprehensive and accurate self-study by the school verified by a site visit by the theological association.

Minimum Accreditation Standards for WAPTE Membership

Each theological association engaged in accreditation shall have generally accepted standards and procedures to guide schools in conducting their self study which are specific enough to assess the school’s compliance. The standards and associated detail may be developed by the association itself or adapted from another accreditation process. The standards must include an assessment of the Pentecostal orientation of the school and its programs. Each affiliated association must submit its accreditation standards to WAPTE for approval.

The following standards are intended to be representative of those that are accepted by WAPTE.

STANDARD ONE: MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A written statement that clearly expresses the institution's mission (purpose) is published in appropriate school documents and functions as the basic foundation for all aspects of its structure, operations and program development. The statement specifies the intended end results that the school is seeking to achieve in terms of student outcomes and clearly indicates the school's commitment to the integration of faith and learning and student spiritual formation within the Pentecostal tradition.

STANDARD TWO: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

As the primary activity of a school, the institution's educational programs are carefully developed and periodically reviewed and updated to reflect the school's biblical mandate, mission, resources and the needs of its constituency and students.

Educational programs include the academic curriculum, instructional processes, practical ministry training and the spiritual and social development programs the school provides for its students, including any off-campus or non-traditional (e.g. internet-based) programs that may be provided. The school strives to attain the highest possible quality in all of its educational programs as evidenced by student outcomes.

STANDARD THREE: FACULTY AND STAFF

The people involved in all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the school are critical to its effective functioning. Therefore, the school seeks to engage and maintain a faculty and staff who are well qualified by academic background, spiritual maturity and experience to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. Staff includes all personnel, whether salaried or not.

STANDARD FOUR: STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES

Student development involves all non-academic programs and activities of the school intended to promote the development of the student's spiritual, social and intellectual potential as a whole person in light of his or her needs, interests and capabilities. These include both on-campus and off-campus learning experiences developed to fulfill the institutional mission. The particular services offered depend on the institution's mission, characteristics of the student body and whether students are housed in campus facilities.

STANDARD FIVE: LEARNING RESOURCES

All resources of a school exist to support the educational program and enable the accomplishment of the institutional mission and goals. Policies regarding learning resources reflect the educational philosophy of the school and are central to the accomplishment of its purpose.

Learning resources include the library and its collections, other collections of materials that support teaching and learning, student study areas, computer and Internet services and the facilities that house such equipment and services. It also includes distribution and maintenance

systems for equipment and materials, instructional information systems, instructional computer and other instructional media.

Several patterns of organization, administration, acquisition, storage and distribution of learning resources may be equally valid and effective in institutions with diverse personnel, physical facilities and levels of financial support.

STANDARD SIX: GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The structure by which the institution is governed consists of its various controlling bodies and individual officers; their relationship, organization lines of authority and job descriptions. These bodies and individuals operate by established procedures, which are designed to facilitate the fulfillment of the institution's mission and goals.

STANDARD SEVEN: PHYSICAL RESOURCES

The institution's physical resources, whether owned, rented or shared with another entity, constitute the environment for instruction and student development. The Board and administrators give priority to maximizing the effective use of these resources. Institutional policy guides in proper stewardship of resources in line with the institutional mission and goals.

The physical resources of a school include land, buildings and equipment. Considerations include appropriate allocation of space for particular activities and efficient use and adequate maintenance of resources.

STANDARD EIGHT: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

A sound financial condition is essential for the long-term continuity of the institution. The allocation of financial resources reveals its operational priorities and determines its effectiveness for service. Considerations include stability and range of sources of income and the efficiency of planning and management of those financial resources in meeting the institutional mission and goals. The governing board and sponsoring constituency of the institution take appropriate responsibility for the funding of the institution.

Although the financial resources of institutions vary widely quality education can be offered with limited resources if programs are designed realistically.

STANDARD NINE: STUDENT OUTCOMES

An educational or training program has validity only to the extent that the lives and ministry of its graduates fulfill the stated mission and goals of the institution and graduates function adequately in the roles for which the institution claims to have trained them. Graduates exhibit a positive attitude toward the spiritual growth they experienced and the preparation for ministry they received at the institution.

STANDARD TEN: RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCHES

Constructive relationships between the institution and the churches that it serves, including their governing bodies, are recognized and actively enhanced by institutional policy and by the conduct of its administrators, faculty, staff and study body, to the mutual benefit of the institution and its constituency.

Activities conducive to such relationships include the formal public relations activities of the Board, administrators and faculty, and the full range of contact students, alumni and staff have with the community and churches. Good relationships are enhanced by effectively equipping students for ministry and by such means as making appropriate educational programs available to the churches.

REQUIRED MINIMUM PROCESS FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Schools seeking accreditation must complete a self study that critically exams the school's compliance with each of the standards, including an identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses with regard to the standards, and the action plans the school will follow to address any deficiencies.
2. Following submission of the self study, the association schedules an onsite visit by three or more experienced faculty and administrators who have no direct relationship with the school to assess the accuracy and completeness of the self study and to make a recommendation on the status and term of accreditation and determine any commendations, recommendations and notations¹ that should apply.
3. The association assigns a status and term of accreditation that conforms to generally accepted patterns. See *Figure 1* (page 7) as an example.
4. The association must conduct a training program for prospective members of visiting teams to ensure adequate understanding of the purpose and processes involved.
5. The association provides a guide to schools giving detailed information on how to conduct a self-study and a guide for the visiting teams on how to conduct an onsite visit.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ENDORSEMENT

Unlike accreditation, which conforms to a relatively common set of issues represented in the accreditation standards, endorsement means different things in different contexts. Thus, the requirements for endorsement are more flexible. Some possible meanings of endorsement include:

1. That the school conforms to doctrinal and spiritual development policies and practices held by a denomination.
2. That the school has committed itself to a process of development leading eventually toward the completion of a self-study and application for accreditation within an agreed timeframe.
3. That the school is recognized to have achieved a level of development similar to accreditation but below the full scope of accreditation.

Associations are free to develop their own endorsement programs so long as they clearly stipulate that endorsement does not imply accreditation and monitor endorsed schools for compliance with this limitation. Where endorsement is intended to imply a level of recognition similar to accreditation (example 3 above), the association must follow a process that involves a

¹ Different associations may use different terms for these to indicate positive aspects of the school (commendations), areas where improvements can be made that are not mandatory (recommendations) and areas where significant improvements are required (notations).

self-assessment by the school according to specific standards and a visit to the school by an endorsement team to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the self-assessment.

Associations wishing to include endorsement programs within its services will submit the endorsement program to WAPTE for review and approval.

Figure 1

ACCREDITATION STATUS AND TERM OPTIONS RECOGNIZED BY WAPTE²

CANDIDATE STATUS	TERM RATINGS FROM ON-SITE VISIT	PROVISIONAL STATUS	FULL ACCREDITATION STATUS						
			5-Year Term	10-Year Term with 5 Year Review	10-Year Term	2-Year Term	3-Year Term		
Granted after a timetable for the self-study and on-site visit is determined, and the <i>Accreditation Commission accepts the Statement of Intent</i> .	Term Ratings from onsite visit	Assignable on Initial Accreditation Visit only.	Granted on either Initial Accreditation Visit or Accreditation Revisit.	Additional Status possibilities upon Accreditation Revisit. These terms are assigned only after any initial term of full accreditation. They are used as a "warning" period that there are serious problems at the school that could lead to its being placed in Probationary Status.	10-Year Term	2-Year Term	3-Year Term		
			5-Year Term		10-Year Term with 5 Year Review	10-Year Term	2-Year Term	3-Year Term	
			Very Strong (5)		Eight Standards or more. Must include: 1, 2, 3, & 5	All Standards except possibly: 7 & 8	All Standards	Six Standards or more. Must include: 1, 2, 3, & 5	Six Standards or more. Must include: 1, 2, 3, & 5
			Strong (4)		Possibly: 7 & 8	None	Two to Four	Two to Four	
			Acceptable (3)						
Weak (2)	No more than two	None	None	Two or Three					
Very Weak (1)	None	Possibly two among 4, 7, & 10	None	Possibly two among 4, 7, & 10	Possibly 4, 7, or 10				
			PROBATIONARY STATUS						
			Failure to respond acceptably to notations—possible from any accreditation status or term.						

² Adopted with permission from the Asia Pacific Theological Association