

**Update notes for
Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3), fourth edition
April 13, 2018**

At the COA Spring Meeting (April 12-13, 2018), the Committee on Accreditation (COA) approved policy adjustments to *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3)*, fourth edition, sections I.1, I.2, I.10, I.15, and I.22.

Also see updates made by COA on April 27, 2018, to section II.7 at http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/sites/ala.org/educationcareers/files/content/AP3/4thedition/Update_notes_AP3_4th_ed_4-27-18.pdf

Section I.1 The role of accreditation:

Inserted the following after the last sentence of the third paragraph:

While COA recognizes that there are many information disciplines that provide important contributions to the education of a professional librarian and that professional education in librarianship may contribute to the skills and accomplishments of information professionals outside of librarianship, the accreditation process overseen by COA was entered into by ALA and COA "... in order to acknowledge the central role of the COA accreditation process to the recognition of librarianship as a distinct and autonomous profession..." (ALA-COA MOU 2010).

Rationale: To more effectively communicate the Committee on Accreditation's mission and role in the accreditation of programs leading to the professional degree in library and information studies.

Section I.2 Accreditation terminology:

Added the following definitions:

CHEA: The Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Officially recognizes the American Library Association as the accrediting agency for master's-level programs in library and information studies.

COA: The Committee on Accreditation - The autonomous committee that administers the accreditation review process of educational programs for the profession of librarianship.

ERP: The External Review Panel - A group of two to six library and information faculty and practitioners appointed by the COA through the Office for Accreditation to visit a program and verify information in the Self-Study. Panelists are also vetted by the program to avoid any conflicts of interest.

LIS: Library and Information Studies - In the context of ALA-COA communications, LIS has this specific reference. In other contexts, including some ALA-accredited programs, LIS may refer to Library and Information Science, but this is not the specific meaning in the context of COA accreditation.

Rationale: To provide precise definitions for common acronyms used throughout *AP3*.

Section I.10 Candidacy status and Initial accreditation of additional programs:

Removed the last sentence of the first paragraph and replaced it with:

~~All candidate programs must have an on-site comprehensive review.~~ Each candidate program must be reviewed by a separate External Review Panel and undergo an on-site comprehensive review even if the reviews are scheduled concurrently with another accredited program. The school is responsible for the fees and expenses for each of the additional programs being accredited.

In the second paragraph, replaced the phrase, “from the accredited degree” with “from the accredited program.” It now reads as follows:

Indications that a course of study is a separate program from the accredited degree program and should be brought forward for Candidacy status include:

Rationale: To provide a solution to issues that arise when a school with multiple accredited programs seeks to migrate an accredited program to another campus and/or administrative structure.

Section I.15 Accreditation decisions:

Added the bold text to the last paragraph and revised the “effective for” statement:

Any standard on which a program has follow-up reporting (**following a comprehensive review or interim reporting review**) is made public by the Office for Accreditation **in the Directory of ALA-Accredited Programs and** as a part of the usual means (e.g., press release, Accreditation Decisions and Actions Taken reports, and *Prism*).*

* ~~Effective beginning with decisions in January~~ for all programs beginning in May 2018

Rationale: For fuller public disclosure on COA decision making in response to:

- Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) standard 12B: Demonstrates Accountability
- ALA Task Force on Accreditation Communication and Process recommendation 16: “Make accreditation decisions and documentation publicly available.”

Section I.22 Institutional or programmatic changes:

Added the bold text to the third paragraph:

Any change in **organizational structure and/or** executive administration **relevant to the accredited program** must be communicated in writing to the Office for Accreditation within 30 days. Examples of **organizational or** executive administration changes that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- **The placement of an ALA-accredited program in a different administrative unit**
- Chief executive officer of the institution, e.g., president;
- Head of the accredited program, e.g., dean, director, chair;

- Chief academic officer of the institution, e.g., provost.

Rationale: To specify indicators that should initiate a notice to the Office for Accreditation and the Committee on Accreditation for enabling oversight of the impact of institutional or programmatic changes that might impact the accreditation status of a program.