

Maintaining Accredited Status

The Accreditation Commission reserves the right to request information regarding a program's compliance with Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) Standards at any time during a program's period of accreditation. Additionally, programs are required to comply with routine reporting for monitoring continued compliance during their term of accreditation.

Progress Reports

One Progress Report is due three years after an accreditation decision. The Progress Report is focused primarily on program improvement in areas found to be weak at the time of the last accreditation review. Progress Reports are due at the mid-point of the program's term of accreditation.

The program coordinator will be reminded that a Progress Report is due no less than six months prior to the due date and will be provided with instructions and an electronic template for completing the report. Programs may also request this information at any time from the CIDA office (info@accredit-id.org).

Following the program's submission of a Progress Report, the Accreditation Commission reviews the report at the next scheduled Commission meeting and responds in writing to the program with acceptance, issues, or concerns.

Significant Program Changes

It is the responsibility of the accredited program, or if circumstances warrant, the appropriate academic official, to notify CIDA in writing within 90 days of significant changes in the program. These may include, but are not limited to:

- any change in the established mission or objectives of the program,
- a change in the program head,
- substantive changes in the program faculty,
- a substantive change in status with the institutional accrediting body,
- significant changes in curriculum, budget, or enrollment,
- a substantive change in the length of the program,
- a change in the program affiliation within the institution, such as reassignment to another department,
- a change in institutional affiliation, such as a change in ownership,
- a change to the award of a higher degree or credential,
- a change in delivery method of interior design coursework, for instance from site-based delivery to on-line delivery of courses.

The Accreditation Commission will review all significant changes and determine if the change should be included in the scope of accreditation previously granted. An interim visit may be required if evidence presented in a report of significant change raises questions about a program's compliance with CIDA Standards. In this case, the Commission will determine the scope of the visit and the composition of the team.

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Interim Visit

The Accreditation Commission may require an interim site visit to an accredited program. There are two ways such a visit may be initiated. First, a visit may be required if the Commission finds it necessary to monitor improvement in areas found to be weak at the time of the last accreditation review. The second instance in which an interim visit may be required is if evidence presented in a report of significant change or a complaint raises questions about a program's compliance with CIDA Standards.

If the Commission requires an interim visit to monitor a program's continued compliance with standards and improvement in areas found to be weak at the time of the accreditation review, this visit will take place three years after the date of the accreditation decision. The program will also be expected to submit a written Progress Report. The Accreditation Commission will determine the scope of the interim visit at the time accreditation is awarded. A visiting team will be composed of one to three team members. If possible, at least one team member from the previous accreditation review will participate in the interim visit. The visit will be one to three days in length and the program will be provided with a sample visit schedule prior to the review. Procedures followed for an interim visit are the same as those followed for an accreditation review. The Progress Report is due eight weeks prior to the visit. The program must prepare a student work display to demonstrate compliance with CIDA Standards.

The Accreditation Commission also reserves the right to initiate an interim visit at any time during a program's term of accreditation if evidence calls into question program compliance with CIDA Standards. All accredited programs are required to report significant changes. Such a report may prompt the Commission to initiate an interim visit. In addition, a complaint may present evidence that the program may no longer be in compliance with the Standards. (see page 4.) In these cases, the Commission will determine the scope of the visit and the composition of the team.

Fees and expenses for an interim visit are the responsibility of the program.

Re-Accreditation

A program seeking re-accreditation is not required to submit an application form or fee. Otherwise, the program prepares for a re-accreditation visit as it would for an initial accreditation visit. The accreditation process is intended to facilitate continual program development. Therefore, programs should review their previous Accreditation Report when preparing for a re-accreditation visit to assess their progress since the last site visit.

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Revocation of Status

Revocation of accredited status may occur in the following situations:

- Significant alteration to the program reviewed on the previous accreditation visit;
- Loss of institutional accreditation or failure to meet other eligible institution or eligible program requirements;
- Persistent inadequacies that indicate a failure to meet CIDA Standards, as evidenced by the Progress Report submitted by the program or other reports requested by the Accreditation Commission;
- Ignoring or inadequately implementing recommendations for meeting the Standards;
- Failure to file a Progress Report within 90 days of the due date;
- Failure to submit a Program Analysis Report or to schedule a site visit on the timetable established by CIDA;
- Failure to pay Annual Fees, Site Visit Fees, or other published fees.

Prior to revocation of accredited status, the head of the institution and the interior design program head will be notified of the intentions of the Accreditation Commission and the program will be given the opportunity to show cause as to why accredited status should not be revoked.

A program which has its accredited status revoked may appeal the decision following the procedures outlined under **Appeal Procedure** (see pages 5-6) or may request a re-accreditation visit when the altered program meets the requirements for an initial accreditation visit and/or the stated inadequacies have been rectified.

In such cases, the program must file an application with CIDA and request a site visit. Re-accreditation will be on the same basis as initial accreditation.

Withdrawal from Accreditation

An applicant may withdraw from the process of seeking accreditation at any time upon providing written notice to the Accreditation Commission. An institution may request, in writing, withdrawal from accreditation of the interior design program. In such situations the Accreditation Commission will acknowledge withdrawal from accreditation and also determine an effective end date for the program's accreditation status. The proper authorities shall be notified as appropriate. Also see CIDA Accreditation Policy and Procedure, Fees, page 2.

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Denial of Accreditation

If a program has been denied accreditation, the decision to reapply for accreditation requires that the process be followed as for any non-accredited program. A program denied accreditation may reapply for accreditation nine months after the date of the Accreditation Commission's final decision regarding accredited status. (See CIDA Accreditation Policy and Procedure, Applying for Accreditation)

In the event that the Accreditation Commission takes action to deny accreditation to an applicant program or denies re-accreditation to an accredited program, the program has the right to appeal the decision as outlined under Appeal Procedure, page 7. The institution will have received written notice of the action of the Accreditation Commission and the Accreditation Report detailing the findings of non-compliance with CIDA Standards that formed the basis for such action.

Complaints Against an Accredited Program

Students and other individuals concerned with the quality of interior design education may file a formal complaint with the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) if they can present evidence that indicates a CIDA-accredited program may have violated, or no longer meets, the CIDA Standards under which the program is accredited.

Complaints concerning the school, college, or university itself, and not against the interior design program, are forwarded without comment to the appropriate institutional accrediting body and to the chief administrative officer of the institution.

If complaints concern any facet or aspect of an interior design program accredited by CIDA, the following procedure is followed:

- The complaint must be submitted in writing to the executive director with specific citations regarding program failure to comply with CIDA Standards.
- The complaint is forwarded within 15 calendar days of receipt to the coordinator of the interior design program with a request for a reply, refutation, or explanation; the complainant can request that their identity remain confidential.
- The original complaint and the program reply are presented to the Accreditation Commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting, or earlier if the complaint warrants, and a decision is made concerning disposition of the matter.
- The complainant and the coordinator of the interior design program in question are notified of the decision of the Accreditation Commission within 15 calendar days of the meeting.
- Copies of all the correspondence and the decisions on the matter are placed in CIDA's files for future reference.

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Appeal Procedure

In the event that the Accreditation Commission denies accreditation to an applicant program, denies re-accreditation to an accredited program, or revokes accreditation, the program has the right to appeal the decision. A program seeking to appeal a decision of the Accreditation Commission shall submit a statement of intent, signed by the head of the institution, to CIDA's executive director within 15 calendar days of receipt of the letter transmitting the Accreditation Report. The program shall then submit written grounds for appeal and a fee, established by CIDA to defray the costs of the appeal, to the executive director within 30 calendar days of the date of the letter of intent.

An interior design program may appeal only on the grounds that:

- The Accreditation Commission's decision was arbitrary, capricious, or not supported by substantial evidence in the record on which the Commission took action, or
- The procedures used to reach the decision were contrary to published CIDA procedures or policies, or other established practices, and the procedural error prejudiced the Commission's consideration of the program application.

Only evidence properly submitted to CIDA prior to the decision that is the subject of the appeal may be considered in the appeal. No new evidence may be submitted on appeal.

In the event of a failure to submit within the required time frame the statement of intent to appeal, the appeal fee, or the grounds for appeal, the appeal will be dismissed, and the Accreditation Commission's decision will become final.

The executive director will refer the request for appeal to the Accreditation Commission. The Commission appoints a five-person panel from the Appeal Board to consider the program appeal and establishes a date for a hearing on the appeal. The executive director shall inform the program of the composition of the Appeal Panel and the hearing date. Objections to the composition of the Panel, and/or other procedural matters regarding the manner in which the appeal is to be heard, shall be submitted by the program in writing to the executive director. The executive director will refer objections to the Accreditation Commission whose disposition of the matter shall be final.

Members of the Appeal Panel will be selected from the Appeal Board, which is composed of interior design educators and practitioners who have experience with the accreditation process and other appropriately qualified individuals. Panel members may not be current commissioners or have participated in any way in the accreditation process for the program that is appealing the adverse decision.

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All members of the Appeal Panel shall receive the following at least 14 calendar days prior to the appeal hearing:

- The complete Program Analysis Report and Accreditation Report, or other written documents, rendering the findings of fact on which the appeal is based,
- The program statement of grounds for appeal,
- The visiting team chair's reply to the grounds for appeal, if the adverse decision resulted from a site visit to the program, or a response to the grounds for appeal from the Accreditation Commission.

At the appeal hearing, representatives of the program shall be afforded the opportunity to make a presentation explaining the basis for the appeal. The program shall have not less than 30 minutes for this presentation. The members of the Appeal Panel may also ask questions of the representative of the program about the basis for appeal.

The program may elect, at its expense, to have a transcription or audio recording of the hearing, and the executive director shall arrange for such transcription or recording. The program may elect to have legal counsel present at the hearing. The program may waive the opportunity for an appearance before the Appeal Panel and request that its appeal be considered on the basis of the record before the Accreditation Commission and the program grounds for appeal.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Appeal Panel will convene in executive session to review the evidence and determine its action on the program appeal. The Appeal Panel may uphold or remand the decision of the Accreditation Commission. The program shall be informed in writing of the Panel's action and the basis for the action within 30 calendar days of the hearing.

If the Appeal Panel upholds the decision of the Accreditation Commission, that decision becomes final as of the date of the letter stating the Panel's disposition of the appeal. If the Appeal Panel remands the matter to the Accreditation Commission, the Commission shall consider the action of the Appeal Panel and the determinations of the Panel on which the remand was based at the Commission's next meeting.

The decision of the Accreditation Commission and the program appeal shall be held in confidence, and the program status shall remain unchanged until the appeal or any remand to the Accreditation Commission has been finally resolved.