



# CERTIFICATION COMMISSION

## **CPCA Certification Commission Institutional Certification Academics Manual Standards and Criteria**

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Institutions working on the  
INSTITUTIONAL CERTIFICATION  
ACADEMICS SECTION  
will be notified by the CPCA Certification Commission.  
of any revisions to this document.

### **CPCA Certification Commission**

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**CPCA Certification Commission**  
**INSTITUTIONAL CERTIFICATION MANUAL**  
**Academics Section**  
**Standards and Criteria**

**CPCA Certification Process**

The Council of Private Colleges of America (CPCA) Board in 2010 commissioned an objective examination of USDE recognized Accrediting Agencies accreditation processes completed in 2014. We compared them to the existing CPCA certification process. The CPCA's purpose was to create the 21st Century Certification process comparable to USDE recognized Accrediting Agencies' academic and administrative standards for faith-based institutions. The Certification process excludes the massive USDE accreditation requirements pertaining to receiving US government grants, loans, and Title IV funds. The Certification process recognizes faith-based economic principles.

Accepting US government funds leads to "whoever pays the piper has the right to call the tune." First, this allows the government to have requirements that violate God's faith-based principles in the Bible. Second, this has and continues producing students having massive amounts of student loan debt. Therefore, the CPCA Certification Commission encourages students to avoid the student loan debt trap and CPCA and Florida Council of Private Colleges (FCPC) institutions to avoid US government funding.

The Certification requires the affirmation of compliance with Certification process standards patterned after historical United States educational institutions that were founded on faith-based principles.

The FCPC and CPCA member organizations require each of its member institutions to be Certified starting with the Candidate Application for Certification. This enables Certified institutions to achieve; distinguished membership levels in the academic and administrative standards comparable to USDE recognized Accrediting Agencies', avoid the US government funding trap, and have the achievements published on the Internet as part of the CPCA Certification Commission website, [cpca-commission.org](http://cpca-commission.org).

The Institutional Certification is a Self-Study of the institution, by the institution, using the Standards and Criteria established by the CPCA Certification Commission. To further assist each institution going through this Certification process the Commission has divided the Self-Study into two sections, Administrative (Section 1) and Academic (Section 2). Both Sections are divided with the Standards and Criteria in a Manual, and Worksheets that support the Manual requirements in a separate document.

The Certification Coordinator for the institution is provided with a Tracking Form to monitor progress of the required information. Completing the requirements of the Institutional Certification takes teamwork from designated individuals in the institution who know the required information and providing that information to the Certification Coordinator.

It is important to remember that line upon line, precept upon precept, and one step at a time will achieve success for the Institutional Certification.

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The Institution’s Certification Coordinator submits the completed Self-Study to the CPCA Certification Commission. The CPCA Certification Commission then conducts a comprehensive review of the Self-Study verifying the institution’s compliance with the CPCA Certification Commission Administration Section Standards and Criteria and the CPCA Certification Commission Academic Section Standards and Criteria.

Annual Report Requirement

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**I. CPCA Certification Academics Section Application**

CPCA Consultants are available to assist the Candidate Institution with the preparation of the required documentation if that is viewed as being helpful by the institution.

When the Institutional Certification **Worksheets** are complete, the Certification Coordinator notifies their CPCA Certification Commission Staff Mentor stating the Institutional Certification Worksheets are complete and wherein the Institution's Cloud Account they can be located for review.

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**II. QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF FACULTY, INSTRUCTORS, and STAFF**

**II.A. Faculty/Instructors/Staff**

The institution has a sufficient number of qualified instructors/faculty to give individualized instructional service to each student. The institution maintains files containing the resumes and official transcripts of its faculty/instructors. Faculty are carefully screened for appointment and are properly and continuously trained with respect to institution policies, learner needs, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology. The institution has clear, consistent procedures to evaluate faculty performance.

1. a. Provide evidence that the institution has a sufficient number of qualified instructors/faculty to give individualized instructional service to each student.
- b. Provide the faculty-to-student ratios for each course.
- c. Provide resumes for each faculty member.
2. a. Provide in a table with the names and qualifications of each faculty/instructor member (an academic/educational degree that is at least one higher than the degree awarded by the program in which he/she teaches and/or the appropriate specialized credentials).
- b. List the courses taught by each faculty/instructor.
- c. List other professional experiences that qualify him/her for the position including any special training they have received in distance learning.
3. Explain how the institution maintains files containing the individual credentials of instructors/faculty and how the institution validates individual resumes and transcripts. (As a minimum, the institution must have an original transcript in its files for the person's highest level degree earned.)
4. Describe how faculty are carefully screened for appointment, and are properly and continuously trained with respect to institution policies, learner needs, distance learning andragogy, instructional approaches and techniques, and the use of appropriate instructional technology.
5. Demonstrate that the institution has clear, consistent procedures to evaluate faculty performance. Provide sample evaluations.
6. Explain any training programs provided the faculty/instructors.
7. If outside instructors/faculty, consultants, technical advisors, subject matter specialists, or other such individuals are used, explain the criteria for hiring them, identify who supervises them, and how they are supervised.
8. Explain how instructors/faculty assists in developing and updating instructional materials, especially course content.
9. Explain how instructors/faculty are used in the distance study portion of a course, i.e., in assignment/lesson and exam grading, consultation with students, academic counseling, online instruction, course revision, development of study guides, etc.
10. Describe the institution's organizational guides for instructors/faculty.
11. Describe any professional development plan for the instructors and faculty.
12. Provide data on faculty/instructor turnover for the last three years and explain why this turnover occurred.
13. Provide evidence that each faculty member possesses an academic/educational degree that is one higher than the degree awarded by the program in which he/she teaches.

14. Explain any exceptions that were made and documented for professionals whose experience and reputation qualified them for appointment as part-time or adjunct faculty members.
15. Describe the policies and procedures for preventing and/or resolving complaints and/or conflicts or interests against faculty and state where they are published and made available to all students.
16. Document that all faculty involved with doctoral students have doctoral/terminal degrees in a relevant field of study from other appropriate institutions.
17. Explain how the dissertation committee consists of at least three members, and that all committee members demonstrated appropriate scholarship, experience, or practice in the subject area. (In lieu of a dissertation, doctoral degree programs may require a project where such a project is consistent with accepted practice at other appropriately certified institutions.)
18. Explain how the dissertation committee includes at least two members who earned their doctoral degrees from appropriately certified institutions other than the awarding institution.
19. At the point of the dissertation, explain how students have the option of nominating their dissertation members or major professors, and how the institution makes the final decisions.

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**II.B. Professional Growth**

An institution demonstrates its interest in improving instruction through upgrading faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are encouraged to become members of professional organizations, to review and apply relevant research, to pursue continuing education or training in their respective fields, and to enhance their skills in developing and using electronically delivered, online, or other forms of distance study.

1. Identify professional organizations with which the instructors/faculty and staff are affiliated and explain their involvement with each.
2. List the names of instructors/faculty and staff and the relevant professional meetings they have attended during the past two years.
3. Explain how the staff is active in Professional activities. List any meetings attended, courses completed, etc.
4. State what training and self-development efforts are sponsored or are encouraged by institution's management for the professional development of faculty, instructors, and staff.
5. Describe any in-house training programs for instructors/faculty and staff.

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**III. Academics - Admission Practices and Tuition Policies, Collection Procedures,  
and Refunds**

**III.A. Admission Practices**

The admissions policies, requirements, and practices of the institution fully conform to CPCA Certification Commission Standards.

1. Provide the institution and program admission requirements. Explain and document how the institution discloses in writing the scope and nature of its courses/programs, its educational and training objectives, and how the institution protects student privacy.
2. Document where the institution states that it does not discriminate in its admissions because of race, sex, color, creed, age, religion, or national origin in admitting students.
3. Explain the process for establishing the program admissions policies. Explain how the institution establishes the qualifications that an applicant must possess to successfully assimilate the educational materials.
4. Describe any evidence that shows that students who meet the minimum admission standards can achieve the announced objectives of the course/program. Explain how the institution determines with reasonable certainty, prior to acceptance of the applicant, that the applicant has been informed of and has proper qualifications to enroll in the course/program.
5. Document how the institution makes certain that the applicant was informed that he/she had been accepted into the program and that the official transcripts or required documentation must be received by the institution within one enrollment period not to exceed 12-semester credits, or the student will not be accepted into the program.
6. Explain what controls ensure that the admissions policy, requirements, and practices are consistently and uniformly applied. If the institution enrolls a person *not* meeting established qualifications for admission, explain and document how it is keeping a record showing the reasons for acceptance of that person.
7. If a specific education level is required for institutional and/or program admission, explain how it is determined if any exceptions are made, and the basis for these exceptions.
8. Describe how educational requirements for admission are documented (e.g., diploma or transcript).
9. Describe any policies and **procedures** that permit students to receive credit for prior non-school learning. Provide a copy of the policy(ies) and procedure(s).
10. Identify the position of the person who makes acceptance decisions, including those in marginal cases, and explain the criteria used in making these decisions.
11. Identify the principal reasons why students are denied admission by the institution or program.
12. Explain the policies and procedures for informing prospective students of any requirements for governmental or other licensing, certification, or registration procedures, which apply directly or indirectly to the particular areas served by the institution's programs.
13. Explain the procedure for students being admitted and registering online. Describe what documentation the institution requires for online enrollment.
14. Describe the admissions policies, procedures, requirements, and prerequisites.

15. Describe how the institution's admissions standards and process require that applicant students whose first language is not English must pass the TOEFL test with the minimum TOEFL scores for degree programs that are offered in English. Show how admissions records for degree program applicants accommodate the recording of the applicant's TOEFL score or other scores.
16. Describe how any non-U.S. institution transcripts of degree-seeking applicants that are not presented in English are either evaluated by (a) an appropriate, competent third party service; or (b) are translated into English by a trained, qualified transcript evaluator fluent in the original language on the transcript. In either case, the evaluator or the service must have expertise in the educational practices of the country of origin. They must include an English translation, along with the original transcript. Both documents must be on file at the institution.
17. State the institution's policies for transfer credits and explain how they are validated.
18. Give the number of students in the last calendar/fiscal year who were awarded transfer credit into your institution and the average number of credits awarded.
19. State the institution's policies and describe the validating procedures for credit for experiential learning and other non-school prior learning.
20. Explain how the person who evaluates academic transcripts or portfolios of experiential learning are properly qualified and trained for his/her assignments.
21. Give the number of students in the last calendar/fiscal year who were awarded credit for experiential learning and other non-school prior learning and the average number of credits awarded.
22. Explain the minimum of doctoral-level semester or quarter credit hours each doctoral program requires to be successfully completed beyond a master's degree, and the maximum number of credit hours that may be earned for the dissertation.
23. Explain how the appropriate time periods for the length of each component of the doctoral degree programs been established by the institution and how are they communicated to potential students and applicants prior to and during the admission process.

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**III.B. Tuition Policies**

Tuition policies are in keeping with the provisions of the CPCA Certification Commission Standards.

1. Describe how the following is verified: Institutions must use Total Course Price in preparing enrollment agreements, calculating refund amounts, and collecting student accounts. Total Course Price includes charges for tuition, registration, educational services, and instruction. Total Course Price also includes earned finance charges, and any fees that are charged to all students for required services, such as proctoring, technology access, library services, etc. Costs expended for normal shipping and handling for distance courses are not subject to refund.
2. Provide the person(s) name who is responsible for ensuring compliance and reference the appropriate Exhibits:
  - a. The costs expended for optional or special services, such as expedited shipment of materials, experiential portfolio assessment, or other optional services such as dissertation binding, must be disclosed effectively to prospective students and are not subject to refund.
  - b. Institutions employing an admissions review process may charge a one-time non-refundable fee not to exceed \$75.
  - c. If the institution requires or permits students to purchase textbooks or other required materials separately, the institution must make available to the student on its website, catalog, or enrollment agreement “a best-effort estimate” of the costs of the textbooks and materials needed for successful completion of course/program. The institution’s textbook pricing policy for new or used textbooks must be fair to students.
  - d. The total course price for any program must be the same for all persons, with the exception of discounts for well-defined groups.
  - e. Any variation in Total Course Price must be *bona fide*. This applies to scholarships, limited-time institution aid grants, discount offers, special prices, or announcements of price increases, all of which must occur during a specified period and must state a specific date of execution or termination. The Total Course Price may be varied, and special discounts or payment plans be offered, as long as the Total Course Price remains the same for all enrollees during a specific period of time.
  - f. The institution must disclose to students on the enrollment agreement any additional charges to the student associated with verifying student identity.
3. State whether the total program/course price is the same for all students at a given time (except for allowable discounts). Provide samples of discounts used in the last 12 months.
4. State if price discounts have a published termination date.
5. Explain how any aptitude tests and student contests are administered and how the results are used and related to price discounts.
6. Describe any scholarship programs, indicate the sources of funds for them, identify who selects the recipients, and list the criteria used in selection.

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**III.C. Tuition Collection Procedures**

Tuition collection practices and procedures are fair. They encourage the progress of students and seek to retain their goodwill. The institution exercises its right to protect its finances through collection practices in keeping with sound and ethical business standards. Such practices take into account the comparable rights and interests of the student.

1. Describe in detail the policies and procedures for the institution's collection of tuition.
2. Supply a complete set of all sample notices and collection letters used by the institution.
3. If outside collection agencies are used, provide the name and address of each agency used, and provide copies of the signed contract(s) with each agency and collection procedures used by it.
4. Provide in a sample of the written ethical standards furnished by the institution to any outside collection agencies.
5. Demonstrate that collection notices, letters, forms, and telephone scripts used by collection agencies conform to ethical business practices. Include samples used by each agency.
6. If outside collection agencies are used, state the percentage of accounts that are turned over to such agencies.
7. Explain how the institution monitors each outside agency's adherence to its collection policies and procedures in conformance with CPCA Certification Commission Standards.
8. Explain how collection policies and practices encourage the student to continue with the program of study.

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**III.D. Tuition Refund Policies**

The institution recognizes that there are legitimate reasons why enrolled students may not be able to complete their programs with benefit to themselves. Accordingly, the institution has a policy for equitable tuition adjustments or refunds in such cases that conform to Tuition policies are in keeping with the provisions of the CPCA Certification Commission Standards.

Records are maintained on tuition refunds and enrollment cancellations to provide a reference source for management analysis.

1. Describe the policies and procedures used in the settlement of students' accounts in cases where there are legitimate reasons why the enrolled students may not be able to complete the program with benefit to them. Provide documentation of refunds and how they are calculated. Include a copy of the refund template used.
2. Explain how refunds to students are made within 30 days after the date of request and identify where it is stated that a student may cancel "in any manner."
3. Explain the procedure used by the institution for a student who has paid in full but no longer wants to submit assignments/lessons for grading but wants to receive all of the instructional materials.
4. Describe any institutional or program policies relating to the release of kits to students and the students' return of equipment, including any tuition payment policies that apply to the kits or equipment. Include examples of how students are informed of these policies.
5. If students are permitted to acquire published textbooks separately, state the policy that applies to this procedure.
6. For the previous 12-month period of enrollments and completions in the institution, compile a table that shows the Tuition Refund statistics and the program/course of study.
7. Show the institution's refund schedule and how refunds are calculated. For example, what would be the refund due to a student who had just completed the third assignment/lesson in a 12-assignment/lesson course? What about four assignments/lessons or five or six or none?
8. Refer to the exhibit and highlight where the refund policy is stated on the enrollment agreement/contract.
9. List all legal actions or other formal investigations initiated against the institution by students during the last two years because of refund or other financial issues, and indicate briefly the current status and/or disposition of each. Also, list any legal actions initiated against students by the institution.
10. List any local, state, and/or federal government agency (such as the Federal Trade Commission) or consumer agency investigations and/or actions taken against the institution in the past five years. Include complaints received from non-government bodies such as the Better Business Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
11. State if the institution operates under any local, state, or federal government consent decrees and/or orders and/or voluntary assurances of compliance. Describe fully.

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**IV. Academics - Program Objectives**

**IV.A. Description of Program Objectives**

Educational program objectives are clearly defined and simply stated. They indicate the benefits for reasonably diligent students. The character, nature, quality, value, source of the instruction, and educational services that are used to help students achieve the objectives are set forth in a language understood by the types of students enrolled. If a program prepares for an occupation, field of occupations, or vocation, the objectives clearly state the types of occupations for which preparation is given.

1. Provide samples of the educational objective(s) for up to five of your most popular (highest enrollments) programs. For degree-granting institutions, these five programs should include one program from each of the academic levels in your institution (associate, bachelor's, master's, first professional, and/or doctorate). Explain how the objectives help the potential student decide if the program is appropriate for him or her.
2. Explain how the institution's advertising and promotional literature, both print and electronic, are in consonance with program objectives.
3. State how the program objectives relate to the kind of education or training offered and identify the expected student learning outcomes in terms of skills, knowledge, licenses, degrees, or other credentials that graduates/completers will attain.
4. Describe how the institution ensures that its program objectives are current and relevant through research and the use of consultants, subject experts, or advisory committees.
5. Describe how the learning objectives for the program and learning outcomes for the courses, research projects, dissertation and all other required academic or professional activities clearly stated. (The learning objectives should indicate the outcomes and competencies a graduate of the doctoral degree program will attain upon successful completion of the program, including expected skills, knowledge, attitudes, and insights characteristic of doctoral degree holders.)
6. Explain how the learning outcomes are advanced, focused, and scholarly, and that they provide the breadth and depth of learning required for doctoral degree programs. (Material and topics in the curricula should clearly be at the frontiers of knowledge and contribute to competence in the subject area or profession at an advanced level.)
7. If a dissertation is required in a program, explain how the program requires the student to work with a supervisory/dissertation committee that is knowledgeable in methods of graduate level study and research as well as the subject area concerned.

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**IV.B. Appropriate Program Objectives**

The program objectives must be reasonably attainable through electronically delivered, online, or other methods of distance study. Appropriate objectives include the development of skills, providing job-related training, the imparting of knowledge and information, the training in the application of knowledge and skills, and the development of desirable habits and attitudes. Evaluation of the program is based on the stated objectives and the success with which students achieve the objectives.

1. Describe the process by which the program objectives are determined and revised, and identify relevant communities of interest that play a role (e.g., Advisory Committees, employer groups, etc.).
2. Describe how program objectives are appropriate for the subjects/degrees taught and explain how the objectives include the development of skills, providing job-related training, the imparting of knowledge and information, the training in the application of knowledge and skills, and the development of desirable habits and attitudes.
3. Explain how program objectives for each program or degree relate to the employment needs of prospective students and the requirements of organizations that might hire them.
4. Describe how program objectives are attainable through the distance study method.
5. Explain how the data from the evaluation of objectives are used for quality control and improvement of programs and educational services.
6. Explain how the evaluation of the program is based on the stated objectives and the success with which students achieve those objectives.
7. For combination resident /distance study programs, describe which is the predominant form of instruction and why.

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#### **IV.C. Comprehensive Curriculum**

The curriculum is sufficiently comprehensive for students to achieve the stated program objectives, and its content is supported by sound research and practice. The institution has policies and procedures for determining credit hours and/or clock hours it awards for its courses and/or programs.

1. Describe how curriculum development is guided by a plan that is usually implemented by a team that includes members with expertise in curriculum development, subject matter/content, instructional design, editing, media applications (if appropriate), and distance study.
2. Provide a copy of your course development manual.
3. Explain how the subject matter/content of the curriculum being developed is supported by sound research and practice (what learning principles are used?)
4. Describe the ways in which the program instructors/faculty and administrators have determined that the curriculum/curricula is sufficiently comprehensive for students to achieve the stated program objectives.
5. If offering CEU's, describe the institution's policy on measuring, determining, and assigning CEU's.
6. Explain and document the policy and procedures for determining the number of clock hours assigned to each program.
  - a. Provide a copy of the institution's policy for determining clock hours.
  - b. Provide documentation of the institution's evaluation and verification of students' work in establishing the appropriate clock hours.
7. Explain and document how each degree program is clearly at its specific postsecondary level (i.e., associate, bachelors, masters, first professional or doctorate) by comparing curricula from other appropriately certified institutions. When making the comparison, include the following information for each institution, including your own;
  - a. program objectives
  - b. number of credits required
  - c. core courses and electives
  - d. general education courses required
  - e. course descriptions
8. Explain the institution's policy and procedures for determining credit hours.
  - a. Provide a copy of the institution's credit hour policy.
  - b. Explain and provide documentation justifying that the amount of academic credit assigned to each course and degree program is appropriate and accurate.
  - c. Describe what formulas, procedures, and internal audits of degree credit assignments are conducted.

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**IV.D. Up-to-Date Curriculum**

The curriculum/curricula reflect(s) current knowledge and practice. Effective procedures are used continuously to keep it/them up-to-date. Internal course/program reviews are conducted on a periodic basis.

1. Explain the procedures for assuring that the curriculum/curricula reflect current knowledge and practice appropriate to the subject matter.
2. Explain what procedures are in place to keep the program curriculum current. Provide the schedule used to initiate these procedures.
3. Document that internal course/program reviews are conducted on a periodic basis and provide a sample of the last course/program review.

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**IV.E. Comprehensive and Up-to-Date Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive to enable students to achieve the announced program objectives. The instructional materials are accurate and reflect current knowledge and practice and are regularly reviewed and revised.

1. Describe the ways in which the program instructors/faculty and administrators determine that instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive and have sufficient depth and breadth to meet program objectives.
2. Explain how the instructional materials prepare students to meet any employment opportunities and/or profession stated or implied in the institution's advertisements, catalogs, websites, and/or program objectives.
3. Describe the schedules and procedures for monitoring, reviewing, and revising, if necessary, instructional materials.
4. Describe the procedures for correcting content errors in instructional materials between regularly scheduled reviews and revisions.
5. Describe how instructional materials reflect current knowledge and practice.

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**IV.F. Examinations and Other Assessments**

Examinations and other assessment techniques are adequate evidence of the achievement of the stated learning objectives and outcomes. The institution must publish its academic grading policies, assignment marking system, course extension policy, and information on issuance and completion of incomplete grades, and apply them with fairness and consistency.

1. Describe what types of examinations and other evaluative techniques are used. Provide documentation.
2. Explain how the number and length of examinations are determined.
3. Explain how examinations, assignments, and other evaluation tools measure the achievement and mastery of announced course/program objectives and outcomes.
4. Describe how required assignments and examinations measure the student's ability to master and apply skills or knowledge that is stated as outcomes for the course/program.
5. Provide the institutions:
  - a. academic grading policies
  - b. assignment marking system
  - c. course extension policy
  - d. information on issuance and completion of incomplete grades
6. Explain the procedures for assuring that grades are applied with fairness and consistency.
7. For those institutions using proctoring exams:
  - a. Explain the procedures for proctoring examinations
  - b. Explain how the institution is meeting these requirements
  - c. Provide instructions to proctors
8. Describe the procedures to verify that the student has completed all required courses.

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**IV.G. Authorship**

Qualified persons competent in their subjects or fields develop the curriculum content identify the proposed delivery method(s) and prepare instructional materials.

1. If commercially produced textbooks are used:
  - a. Provide a list of titles, authors, publishers, ISBN, and copyright dates/editions
  - b. Describe any customization rights accorded the institution by outside publishers
  - c. Explain how the instructional material is approved for electronic delivery (if applicable)
2. Describe how qualified people develop the curriculum content and instructional materials.
3. Describe how study guides are prepared for use with standard texts.
4. Provide a sample of a study guide
5. If outside authors prepare instructional materials specifically for the program (other than textbooks), provide their qualifications for preparing the materials, including for distance study.
6. List the outside educational consultants, if any, who have been retained to assist in writing instructional materials, describe their roles, and give their qualifications.
7. Explain how subject matter experts and/or instructors/faculty are involved in writing and revising instructional materials.

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**IV.H. Organization of Instructional Materials**

The organization and presentation of the instructional materials are in accord with sound principles of learning and grounded in sound instructional design principles.

1. Explain how the organization and presentation of the subject matter/content are in accord with sound principles of learning and grounded in instructional design principles.
2. State if students are required to submit every assignment in the prescribed sequence in order to graduate and if a minimum grade is required for each assignment (or for each part or segment of the program).
3. Describe any exceptions made to the order in which students may proceed through the program.

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**IV.I. Electronic Curriculum Delivery**

Online and/or written instructional materials are appropriately presented. Online materials fit the content and are delivered using readily available reliable technology. Institutionally prepared materials must be keyed to the reading competence of the students in the program and be legibly reproduced.

1. Describe how online and/or written instructional materials are appropriately presented.  
Provide samples of typical assignment/lesson pages
2. For electronically delivered programs, describe how the materials fit the content and are delivered using readily available reliable technology.
3. Explain how the program uses printed instructional materials to complement its online courses.
4. Describe the procedures in place to maintain overall quality of the online materials, and any printing, binding, and packaging process for other instructional materials.
5. Explain how institutionally prepared materials are keyed to the reading competence of the students.

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**IV.J. Study Instructions**

Instructions and suggestions on how to study and how to use the instructional materials are made available to assist students to learn effectively and efficiently.

1. Provide examples of instructions and suggestions to students on how to proceed through the program and to learn effectively.
2. Describe how the institution and/or program give(s) guidance or remediation on learning techniques to students as they proceed through the program.
3. Explain how the students are informed on how to access instructions, chat rooms, bulletin boards, and other appropriate resources for an online program.

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**IV.K. Student Privacy, Integrity and Identity**

The institution has clear, specific, published policies related to student privacy, integrity, and academic honesty. The institution has a student identity verification process that ensures that students who earn the credit or completion credentials are the same students who did the course assignments and assessments.

1. Describe the institution's clear, specific academic policies related to student privacy, integrity, and academic honesty.
2. Explain and document where these policies are published.
3. Explain how the policy has been implemented or enforced. Provide examples.
4. Describe the institution's student identity verification process and explain how it ensures that the student who earned the credit or completion document is the same student who completed the course assignments and assessments.

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**IV.L. Library, Educational Media, and Learning Resources**

The institution ensures the availability of sufficient and appropriate library and learning resources in the form, range, depth, and currency to support the curricular offerings and meet student needs. The institution is expected to have or to provide students with ready access to a reasonably rich array of supplemental information resources that are related to and enhance the content of the subject matter offered to students.

The institution makes effective provisions for students to access learning resources and libraries that are appropriate for the attainment of program learning outcomes. The “library” may consist of an accessible collection of online and physical texts, literary materials, reference books, manuscripts, periodicals, video, and audio materials that are provided by an institution.

1. Describe how learning resources for faculty and students are available and appropriate to the level and scope of the program offerings.
2. List the percentage of online and physical learning resources maintained by the institution.
3. Provide a list of the online library learning resources maintained by the institution.
4. Explain how the learning resources are properly integrated with texts and lesson assignments.
5. Describe how the institution makes effective provisions for students to access learning resources and libraries that are appropriate for the attainment of program learning outcomes.
6. Give the name, position, and qualifications of the person(s) who provide or facilitate library services, including media services.
7. Explain how the faculty, instructors, and staff systematically and regularly evaluate(s) library services to ensure that they are meeting the needs of its users and contributing to the attainment of institutional and program objectives.
8. Explain how the faculty and instructional supervisory personnel are involved in the selection of resources.
9. Explain how students enrolled in a doctoral degree program have access to library resources sufficient for completing the requirements for the doctoral degree program.

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**V. Educational Services, Student Achievement and Satisfaction**

**V.A. Student Inquiries and Submissions**

Relevant student inquiries are welcome and are answered promptly and thoroughly. Accurate assessment, correction services, and counseling by instructors/faculty are provided for assignments/lessons and examinations. The institution has a process for maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of student records, e.g., grades, test results, etc.

1. Describe the process for handling student inquiries (written, electronic, and oral) related to program content and requirements. Provide samples of responses to students.
2. State the average time (in days or hours) it takes to respond to a student's inquiry concerning program content and requirements.
3. Discuss the process for responding to administrative requests and give the average response time to these requests.
4. Describe the process for instructors/faculty in receiving, handling, correcting, and assessing assignments/lessons/submissions/examinations and for returning the results to students. Provide examples of student submissions.
5. Describe how instructors/faculty provide counseling and answer student questions. Include what metrics or performance standards are used to measure these tasks.
6. Describe the process for maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of student records, e.g., grades, test results, etc. Provide a sample of where the institution publishes its grading policies.
7. Describe how the institution requires all doctoral students to develop a dissertation or research project requiring basic, original or applied research. State if the topic of any dissertation or research project approved by a dissertation committee appointed by the institution.
8. Explain if doctoral CANDIDATES' final project or dissertation requires any oral defense with a dissertation committee and how he/she presents it.
9. Explain if the majority of the dissertation committee approved the dissertation or final project before the institution awards a doctoral degree.
10. Explain if and how the institution assists students in disseminating and publishing the outcomes of their research or project.

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**V.B. Individual Differences**

Provisions are made to be responsive and flexible to meet the individual differences of students with diverse backgrounds, prior achievements, employment, and other relevant circumstances. Counseling and guidance are provided, as required, to assist students to satisfy institutional and program requirements, to achieve required program objectives and individual course learning outcomes, and to achieve their educational goals.

1. Explain what services are available to meet the individual differences of students with diverse backgrounds, prior achievements, employment, and other relevant circumstances.
2. Explain what counseling and guidance services are provided, as required, to assist students to satisfy institutional and program requirements, to achieve required program objectives and individual course learning outcomes, and to achieve their educational goals.
3. Explain what advisory services are available for students having difficulty satisfying program requirements.
4. Explain what advisory services are available for student having difficulty with administrative and logistical issues.

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**V.C. Handling Unsatisfactory Student Progress**

Students who are unable to make satisfactory progress through the program are encouraged to continue until they either show an inability to make satisfactory progress or demonstrate satisfactory progress.

1. Explain the process for handling students who are unable to do satisfactory work and describe the procedure for students to resubmit assignments/lessons/projects. Describe how grades are assigned for repeating an assignment/lesson/project.
2. State the institution's policy on student failure of a program and academic dismissal, and where it is published.
3. Provide the number of students dismissed for academic failure in the most recent year and the number of those who were disenrolled for other reasons. Indicate the reason(s) for disenrollment such as non- payment of tuition/fees, failure to submit exams, etc.
4. Explain how the institution monitors satisfactory academic progress in accordance with its policy.

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**V.D. Encouraging Students**

An active program designed to optimize the interaction between the institution and the student is followed to encourage students to start, continue, and finish the program in which they have enrolled if continuing and finishing are the student's goals.

1. State the institution's policy and procedure for monitoring student progress and for encouraging students to start, continue, and finish the program in which they have enrolled, if continuing and finishing are their goals. Provide samples of motivational commentaries on student assignments/lessons, examinations, and other submissions.
2. Identify who has responsibility for checking the students' records for progress, indicate how frequently the records are checked, and whether an automated tracking system is used.
3. If letters, telephone calls, or electronic media are used to encourage submission of assignments/lessons, provide samples and explain the sequences and scheduling of their use. Provide samples
4. Explain how efforts to encourage academic progress are separate from efforts for the collection of delinquent tuition or other financial obligations.

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**V.E. Student Evaluation of Courses**

Opinions of students are systematically sought as one basis for evaluating and improving instructional materials, the delivery of instruction, and educational services.

1. Describe the ways in which reactions of students are sought as one basis for evaluating and improving instructional materials and educational services.
2. Give examples of the methods students can use to evaluate the availability of content, help, and encouragement to continue studying and to evaluate the quality of instructional materials, their level of difficulty, and the pace of the course.
3. If end-of-course surveys are used, describe how they differ from regular, periodic course evaluation. Provide examples.
4. Provide information on the institution's "revision of course" file and describe how it is used to ensure that instructional materials or information are/is current and accurate. Describe the process used to report content errors that might be used in making revisions.

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**V.F. Appropriate Technology**

The institution uses appropriate and readily accessible technology to optimize the interaction between the institution and the learner and enhance instructional and educational services.

1. Describe and give examples of how the institution uses appropriate and readily accessible technology to optimize the interaction between the institution and the learner and enhance instruction and educational services. (When appropriate, provide access and passwords to the Certification Facilitator to view online courses.)
2. Discuss the institution's overall plans in adopting new technology.
3. Identify any equipment or technology that might be used to improve student services and instruction, and explain why such technologies have not been adopted.
4. Provide evidence that when technology is used for any part of a degree program, the institution provides adequate training and support in the use of that technology to students, faculty, and involved participants.

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**V.G. Resident Education**

Resident education or face-to-face learning sessions and electronically delivered, online, or other distance study methods when working together in a course must support each other whenever it is necessary to attain the stated institutional and program objectives and intended student learning outcomes.

1. List the objectives of the resident portion of the program and describe at what point a student enters the resident program.
2. State what percentage of the total instruction the resident program constitutes, and list the tuition charged for each portion. State the capacity (in number of students taught per year) of the resident program included with each combination program offered.

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**V.H. Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes and Benefits**

The institution articulates student learning outcomes has a systematic and ongoing process for assessing student learning, provides documented evidence that show that the results are used to improve programs, curricula, instruction, faculty development, and services, and the results meet appropriate benchmarked standards.

1. Provide evidence of an institution's formal written plan for regularly conducting student learning outcomes assessment for all programs on an annual basis. Provide a copy of any outcomes assessment guides or plans.
2. Provide data for the institution's outcomes assessments and demonstrate how it has been used to enhance its programs and services. Provide specimen copies of any surveys the institution uses as part of its outcomes assessments.
3. Provide evidence that the results from the institution's outcomes assessment meet appropriate benchmarked standards.
4. For programs for which the institution—or its representatives—have promised specific career or other benefits, give the percentage of students/graduates who have been successful in achieving the promised benefits, and explain how the data were gathered.
5. Provide evidence supporting any advertised employment opportunities that will be available for students/graduates for each program, and provide data and information on the employer acceptance of graduates of the institution's program(s).
6. Provide tables that describe the different areas assessed and the methods of assessments and when they are used, and the various methods of assessment and how the institution interprets and uses the results.
7. Provide data that demonstrates that the institution delivers to student the intended learning outcomes and benefits.
8. Provide evidence that the institution can demonstrate that graduates of its degree programs have attained the require skills, knowledge, and abilities in the educational program objectives for the program.

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**V.I. Student Satisfaction**

The institution regularly collects evidence that students are satisfied with the instructional and educational services provided.

1. Provide evidence of students' ratings of the institution's instructional and educational services and opinions resulting from any satisfaction surveys. Include summaries of relevant survey results.
2. Describe how the student satisfaction data gathered above are used for quality control and improvement of the program content, instruction, and educational services.
3. Provide evidence and data from the student's employer surveys and other instruments used to gather opinions on student performance. Include summaries and an analysis of the data.
4. Provide samples of institutional surveys of students taken in items 1, 2, and 3 above during and/or upon completion of individual courses/programs. Describe how these survey results have been acted upon for program improvement in your institution.
5. Describe how the institution has in place an on-going program to assess student achievement with respect to the stated degree program outcomes and must demonstrate how this ongoing program has been used to enhance degree offerings and services.
6. Explain and demonstrate how this ongoing program has been used to enhance degree program offerings and services.
7. Explain how the graduates of its programs have attained the required skills, knowledge, and abilities specified in the educational program objectives for the degree program.
8. As part of the student satisfaction process, the Certification Commission surveys students and Alumni of the institution.

Contact the Certification Commission when the institution is ready for this activity. The Certification Commission will provide the institution with the URL of the Survey Form. The institution then sends an email regarding this Survey process and the URL of the Survey Form to the students and alumni the institution desires to have participate in this activity. At least one current student and one alumnus representing each level and program are to be surveyed. Once completed, the Surveys are automatically submitted to the Certification Commission for review.

The Survey results will be summarized in a letter from the Commission to the institutional.

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**V.J. Progress through the Course/Program**

The institution documents that students complete their studies at rates that compare favorably to those of similar courses/programs offered by similar certified institutions.

1. Provide data on the institution's completion/graduation rates of each course/program it offers.
2. Describe any follow-up studies done on a continuing basis concerning student course completions and program graduation rates.
3. Describe how these studies have been used to improve completion/graduation rates.
4. Explain how the institution conducts measurement of graduation rates, professional placement, career satisfaction, and other outcome measures on an ongoing basis and the results of these measurements must be readily available to interested parties in the institution's data files.

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**V ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS and SUPPORT SERVICES**

**VI.A. Academic Catalog**

Each Certification Commission institution must have available to students and the public a current and accurate Academic Catalog that includes the institution's governance, mission, institutional goals, specific objectives, programs and courses, resources, admissions and standards, academic offerings, rules and regulations for conduct, degree completion requirements, full-and part-time faculty rosters that includes faculty degrees, fees and other charges, refund policies, a policy defining satisfactory academic progress, and other items related to attending, transferring to, or withdrawing from the institution.

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**VI.B. Handbooks**

The Faculty Handbook serves as a guide to all policies of this institution that focus on procedures of relevance to the Faculty. It is maintained and periodically reviewed ensuring its accuracy.

The Student Handbook is the official repository of all policies of this institution that focus on students and should be used as your main resource for admission policies, registration policies, extension and course grading policies, and all other policies that may impact a student.

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**VI.C. Course Syllabi**

A course syllabus should at least contain; Title of the course and course number, Location/time of the course, Name of the instructor, required text/materials, Catalog description of course along with any perquisites, Course objectives/learning outcomes, Grading scale, Assignments with points possible or % grade weight.

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**VI.D. Assessment Services**

Student assessment services are guided by published grading policies and a marking system that includes the prompt return of accurately, fairly, and consistently graded assessments as well as necessary academic counseling by the faculty/instructor or qualified staff member.

1. Explain how student assessment services are guided by published grading policies and a marking system that includes the prompt return of accurately, fairly, and consistently graded assessments as well as necessary academic counseling by the faculty/instructor or qualified staff member. Provide copies of the grading policies and rubrics.
2. Describe how the faculty/instructor or qualified staff member scores, corrects, and grades submitted assignments/lessons/projects and examinations. Provide samples.
3. Explain what controls are in place to ensure the accuracy, fairness, and consistency of scoring, correction, grading, and other assessment services.
4. Explain what provisions exist for safeguarding examination answers, including those delivered online.
5. Describe methods used for submission of assignments/lessons/projects and examinations in distance courses (i.e., tele-test, exam scan cards, e-mail, online auto-grading, etc.) and state how long (in days or hours) it takes to return graded examinations, assignments/lessons/projects, etc. to students.
6. Describe the institution's system for controlling the distribution, receipt, and tracking of examinations and ensuring the prompt return of the results to the student in distance courses.
7. Describe the type of assistance provided to students who fail to complete assignments/lessons/projects/examinations successfully and in a timely manner.
8. Explain how distance students' questions on assignments/lessons/projects/examinations are referred to instructors/faculty or staff members qualified in the subject or field for review and comments.
9. Describe how students are informed of their academic progress and standing in the program on an ongoing basis.
10. Discuss the procedures used to ensure that degree CANDIDATES have met all graduation requirements.
11. Describe how the institution provides students with opportunities to achieve the stated learning outcomes in manners other than face-to-face communication with a student's faculty advisor or major professor. Such opportunities may include telephonic discussions, seminars, professional meetings, library resources including virtual library services, and online bulletin boards/chat rooms for communications with fellow students and faculty.
12. Describe how the institution provides training and support to both students and faculty in the use of that technology.
13. Describe how the appropriate support staff is available that is experienced in serving and/or has been trained to serve in the First Professional and Professional Doctoral degree program.
14. Describe how a dissertation or project manual is provided. Explain how it contains guidelines that pertain to the preparation for and writing of the dissertation, for conducting a project, and for reporting of results. In addition, the program includes a provision for a pattern of scheduled student interactions with faculty and other resource persons throughout the program.
15. Explain how all of the credits and requirements for the doctoral degree be satisfactorily completed at the institution.

16. Describe how the institution provides students with opportunities to achieve the stated learning outcomes in manners other than face-to-face communication with a student's faculty advisor or major professor. (Such opportunities may include telephonic discussions, seminars, professional meetings, library resources including virtual library services, and online bulletin boards/chat rooms for communications with fellow students and faculty.)
17. Explain how the institution provides a dissertation or project manual for students and how it contains guidelines that pertain to the preparation for and writing of the dissertation, for conducting a project, and for reporting of results. Include a copy of the manual.
18. Explain how the doctoral program includes provisions for a pattern of scheduled student interactions with faculty and other resource persons throughout the program.

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**VI.E. Student Records**

Essential, accurate student records are adequately and securely maintained and readily accessible.

1. State what formal academic records are maintained and for how long on students and graduates. Provide samples of these records.
2. Describe how the institution keeps a record of receipt, grading, recordings of the results, and return of examinations. Provide samples of relevant records.
3. Describe what procedures and computer systems are used for the security, maintenance, and protection of student records, and explain how they are readily accessible to authorized staff.
4. Describe transcript services and attach a sample of a transcript (with student name deleted).
5. Provide samples of completion certificates, diplomas, or degrees awarded, and explain under what authority (e.g., board, charter, state authority, trade association, etc.) each one is issued.
6. Explain the policies and procedures the institution has for keeping records on students' academic progress (achievement of course and program learning objectives and outcomes, examination results, etc.). Verify that the policies and procedures are maintained in accordance with applicable professional requirements and state laws.
7. Explain how the institution maintains records of the students' academic results.

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**VI.F. Student Support Services**

The institution provides support services relevant to the students enrolled, such as academic advising, counseling services, employment assistance and/or alumni services.

1. Describe how the institution provides support services relevant to the students enrolled, such as academic advising, counseling services, employment assistance and/or alumni services.
2. For programs that are vocationally oriented, submit information on the number of alumni working in occupations related to the training they received.
3. Describe in detail the services for alumni, such as alumni newsletters, honor societies, associations, clubs, user groups, etc. Provide samples.
4. Submit any other information available on the number of school alumni working in occupations related to the training provided.
5. Describe how appropriate academic counseling services are available upon request.
6. If the institution offers first professional or professional doctoral programs, explain how it is meeting the requirements.

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**VI.G. Student Complaints**

The institution has policies and procedures for the purposes of responding to, addressing, and readdressing, as appropriate, a complaint made by a student.

1. Describe the institution's policy and procedure for responding to, addressing, and readdressing, as appropriate, a complaint made by a student. Provide a copy of the policy and summary of complaints,
2. Explain how the institution provides students the information on how and where they may file complaints with the CPCA Certification Commission and other appropriate agencies.
3. Summarize and describe the nature of complaints from students received in the past 3 or 5 years, and how the institution has been able to resolve them.

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## **VI.I. COURSE EVALUATION**

VI.I. Your CPCA Certification Commission Staff Mentor will contact the Certification Coordinator for your institution to discuss the particulars of this process for your institution including but not limited to which individual courses are to be examined and what elements of each course are to be provided. The evaluation process includes among other items the CPCA Excellence in Education Criteria. There is a separate cost for this Course Evaluation.

In selecting the course materials to be submitted to the Certification Commission for evaluation, the representative courses should be:

1. courses developed in-house by the institution that are broadly and fairly representative of the curriculum, for the entire degree program.
2. selected courses from each level Associates, Bachelors, Master's, and Doctorate.
3. in different subject areas that fairly represent the complete program (i.e., general education, electives, core courses, etc.).

**Individual course materials are to include examinations and examination solutions, and all tools, kits, and equipment provided with the course(s).**

Contact your CPCA Certification Commission Staff Mentor for how and where to send the course materials to be evaluated.

Course materials submitted as part of an institution's certification process **are not returned** to the institution; they are consumed in the review process.

CPCA Course Evaluators are selected to review and report on the institution's course materials. All Course Evaluators go through a training program that includes the CPCA Confidentiality Disclosure Policy and sign the CPCA Confidentiality Disclosure Form before reviewing courses and/or programs for any Institution. Typically, these reviews take place in the Course Evaluator's home or office. However, if an institution offers a combination distance study/resident program, offers courses and/or program connected seminars at off-site locations, or has an extremely large number of courses, then one or more Course Evaluators may be appointed to visit the institution and/or the location where the instruction is taking place including for a Site review during the time of the full Site Visit. Each Course Evaluator submits to the CPCA Certification Commission a written report on the courses reviewed and the location where the courses are presented.

Learning systems and methodology used by CPCA institutions range widely; from resident education with cohort groups, to distance education, to online delivery, to individuals, keeping class records in paper grade books to cloud based Learning Management Systems. It seems that no two institutions are identical. As a result, the evaluating of where groups and/or individuals are learning, how they are learning, and the success they are having in their specific settings requires evaluation options in almost every case. Course Evaluators are selected based on specific criteria of the institution being evaluated.

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**Actions by the CPCA Certification Commission for Institutions seeking Certification.**

The mission of the CPCA Certification Commission Site-Visit is to verify the submitted CPCA Certification Self-Study Administrative and Academics information, and documentation with the Commission's Standards and Criteria.

Once the Self-Study is submitted to the CPCA Certification Commission the Site-Visit is scheduled by the Commission.

Once the Site-Visit has concluded, a Site-Visit Report is prepared by the CPCA Certification Commission Staff Member who chaired the Site-Visit. The Site-Visit Report is due to the CPCA Certification Commission within 15 days after the conclusion of the Site-Visit. This report is forwarded to the institution for their response.

**The Site-Visit Report response from the Institution is due back to the CPCA Certification Commission within 15 days of their receiving the Site-Visit Report.**

The CPCA Certification Commission then acts within 30 days of receiving the Site-Visit Response from the Institution.

CPCA Certification Commission actions include:

- Certification
- Certification with Notation
- Certification with a required Focus-Visit
- Probation
- Deferred

Once Institutional Certification is granted to an institution by the CPCA Certification Commission the institution is eligible to apply for 5-year Comprehensive Certification. Once Comprehensive Certification is granted to an institution by the CPCA Certification Commission the institution is eligible to apply for 10-year Advanced Certification.

An institution may voluntarily withdraw at any time from the Certification process. All fees paid to the CPCA Certification Commission are nonrefundable.

During the Certification process the institution will maintain all designated fees and reporting required annually by the Certification Commission.

**Annual Report Requirement**

The Certification Commission requires each Certification Institution to complete a report regarding the overall activities of the institution over the current year.

This report is divided into 4 sections so that institutions that have individuals familiar with the specific happenings of a specific section can complete that section of the overall report. This will assist the institution to complete this task quickly without major interruption to the institution's

activities. Unfortunately, in small institutions the burden for this annual report tends to fall on the shoulders of one individual, usually the President.

The 4 sections of the report are: (Click on the section name to bring up the specific report form)

[Governance](#)

[Administration](#)

[Academics](#)

[Statistics](#)

The Annual Report sections are available on the CPCA Certification Commission's website [www.cPCA-commission.org](http://www.cPCA-commission.org) under Resources. No passwords are required.

The Annual Report is due **the 1<sup>st</sup> week January each year**. The CPCA Certification Commission reviews the report by the end of February then issues a report to the institution.