



Responding to Complaints Received about Accredited Institutions

Overview: The AEE, aware of the value of information from the public, will receive complaints against its accredited institutions but pursue only those complaints that bear upon the institution's meeting AEE's accreditation standards. Because the complaint process is intended to pursue only those matters that suggest substantive non-compliance by institutions, the AEE shall expect individuals who have a personal dispute with an institution to use other internal and external grievance mechanisms, particularly the internal grievance procedures of the institution, to resolve the dispute. In no case will the AEE use the complaint process to seek redress or to fashion an individual remedy with an institution on behalf of a complainant.

Details:

- The AEE will consider no complaint that concerns facts or circumstances that took place more than five years from the date the complaint was received by the AEE.
- All complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant although the AEE may at its discretion consider other complaints where warranted subject to the requirements in Additional Information (below).
- The AEE will acknowledge a complaint promptly and within thirty working days of receipt will advise the complainant whether or not the complaint warrants consideration by the AEE.
- If the AEE determines a complaint warrants further consideration, the AEE will give the institution named in the complaint an opportunity of 30 days to respond to the complaint or to a summary of the complaint if the complainant requests confidentiality of identity or documents, before the AEE completes its review and makes a decision regarding the complaint.
- The AEE may require that the institution file a follow-up report or, upon approval by the AEE Accreditation Council, may schedule a focused review to the institution regarding issues raised by the complaint. Such follow-up review may lead to further actions or withdrawal of accreditation following AEE policies and procedures related to such actions.

- The AEE reserves the right to reject any complaint that contains defamatory statements.

When the AEE receives a complaint(s) about an institution that has an impending site visit and that raises questions about the compliance of the institution with AEE accreditation standards, it will forward the complaint(s), or a summary thereof, to the attention of the leader of the site visit team for consideration instead of, or in addition to, the regular review the AEE might undertake regarding a complaint. The review team will notify the AEE Director of Standards Development and Accreditation of its findings, either in the site visit report, or in a separate memo.

Additional Information: In addition to pursuing complaints, the AEE may initiate an inquiry in response to any information that gives reason to be concerned about the institution's meeting one or more of AEE's accreditation standards.