

Summary of Accreditation RFI Responses

On December 20, 2023, the UNC System Office, in conjunction with the NC Community Colleges System Office, issued a joint [Request for Information](#) (RFI) to regional accrediting agencies to determine whether these agencies are willing to accredit North Carolina's institutions of higher education consistent with changes made in [Session Law 2023-132](#) requiring institutions to change accreditors at the completion of each accrediting cycle. Below is a summary of the responses received.

- Higher Learning Commission
 - o Willing to accept North Carolina higher education institutions as clients.
 - o Prefer requirement that institutions switch accreditors at the end of every accreditation cycle be removed from statute, but willing to start accreditation process.
 - o Accelerated accreditation process possible for institutions currently accredited by a historically regional accreditor.
 - The timeline for accelerated accreditation is roughly 18 months.
 - o Traditional process typically takes between 5 and 10 years.
 - o Willing to accredit systems but encourage institutions to seek individual accreditation before system-wide approval.
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
 - o Willing to accept North Carolina higher education institutions as clients.
 - o Mentioned continuous switching requirement but did not make a statement on whether it is problematic.
 - o The timeline for accreditation is dependent on the institution's level of readiness. Did not mention how quickly accreditation can be received, but the typical reaccreditation cycle is 8 years.
- New England Commission on Higher Education
 - o Informed us that they will not be submitting information in response to the RFI for the following reason:
 - Issue with continuous switching requirement.
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
 - o Informed us that they will not be submitting information in response to the RFI for the following reasons:
 - Issue with continuous switching requirement.
 - Taking on this number of institutions would require a significant increase in staffing and resources.
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
 - o Issued detailed response to RFI.
 - o Would be interested in accepting NC Community Colleges if the continuous switching requirement is removed.
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission
 - o Informed us that they will not be submitting information in response to the RFI.