

I.11 Initial accreditation

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An institution that has a master's program in library and information studies that is not accredited by the ALA Committee on Accreditation must go through precandidacy and candidacy status before being granted initial accreditation by the COA. As a prerequisite to the initial accreditation of a program, the ALA requires that the institution be accredited by its appropriate regional accrediting agency. This requirement does not apply to Canadian institutions.

At the end of the candidacy period and following the comprehensive review of the program, the COA makes an accreditation decision. The COA takes one of the following actions: 1) to grant initial accreditation, 2) to maintain the program's candidacy status, or 3) to deny initial accreditation. If initial accreditation is granted, the COA will schedule a comprehensive review or progress review following its usual procedures. Initially accredited programs may be required to submit detailed annual narrative reports to the COA to enable the committee to monitor the development of the new program.

A decision to maintain a program's candidacy status cannot be appealed. If a program is maintained in candidacy, the COA will schedule a comprehensive review visit to occur within three years and will provide a detailed Decision Document that states the areas of its concerns.

If a program is denied initial accreditation, reapplication for precandidacy status can be made two years following the date of the Decision Document denying initial accreditation.

I.11.1 Retroactive period of initial accreditation

Initial accreditation, when granted, applies retroactively for students who complete degree requirements 24 months prior to the date that initial accreditation is granted. For example, if initial accreditation is granted in January of 2015, students who complete degree requirements in January 2013 or later are considered to have graduated from an ALA-accredited program.

Updated February 20, 2014; retroactive period of initial accreditation effective for accreditation decisions made January 25, 2014 and thereafter

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