

## Release notes for Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3), third edition, May 2012

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The third edition of the *Accreditation Process, Policies, and Procedures (AP3)* manual, prepared by the Office for Accreditation and approved by the Committee on Accreditation, was released in May 2012. The most noticeable change in the new version is to the online-only format. The content has also been updated to clarify accreditation processes and policies and to reflect current best practices in accreditation. Below are details regarding the content updates.

The overall organization of AP3 remains the same: Section I: Overview of ALA Accreditation; Section II: Guidelines for the Program Presentation; Section III: Guidelines for the ERP; and Section IV: Guidelines for the Appeal Process. Some subsections have been re-ordered or separated into separate sections.

The third edition supersedes the previous edition, effective immediately. Exception: if a program is already in the comprehensive review cycle, it may choose to use the second edition ([http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/files/standards/AP3\\_second\\_edition\\_r.pdf](http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/files/standards/AP3_second_edition_r.pdf)) guidelines for preparation of the Program Presentation upon notification to the Office for Accreditation. ERPs reviewing those programs will be notified as to which edition the program is using.

### Throughout the entire document

- Numerous copy edits have been made; language has been clarified, and terms have been standardized.
- Some sections have been reordered or reorganized to make more logical sense.
- References to “conformity” and “adherence” with the Standards have been changed to “compliance” for consistency.
- Added references and links to other sections of AP3 or to website resources.
- The PDF version has been formatted for efficient printing, if needed. The previous version had only one section or sub-section per page to allow for updating of individual pages in the binder. In the new version, the text is continuous.

### Section I: Overview of ALA accreditation

- I.4 – The Committee on Accreditation’s structure and organization (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/coastructure>)
  - I.4.3 – Voting by the COA. Voting policy revised in accordance with Sturgis: A motion passes based on number of votes cast (revised from number of members present).

- I.6 – Standards for Accreditation (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/standards>). Added language regarding the obligation of programs to publicly disclose the results of evaluations of education effectiveness.
- I.9 – Candidacy status (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/candidacy>)
  - I.9.4 – Length of candidacy status. Added for clarification: Following the comprehensive review, the COA may vote to retain a program's candidacy status and schedule another comprehensive review.
- I.10 – Candidacy status and initial accreditation of additional programs (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/additionalprogram>)
  - I.10.3 – Length of candidacy status. Added for clarification: *Following the comprehensive review, the COA may vote to retain a program's candidacy status and schedule another comprehensive review.*
- I.11 – Initial accreditation (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/initial>). Added for clarification: *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. AND 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.13 – Conditional accreditation (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/conditional>). Added for clarification: *This status may be conferred following the comprehensive review or following issuance of a Notice of Concern (See Section I.16).*
- I.16 – Notice of Concern (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/notice>). Added for clarification: *A Notice of Concern is not issued to programs with conditional accreditation, precandidacy, or candidacy status.*
  - I.16.1 – Procedures for Notice of Concern. Clarified procedure for issuing Notice.
- I.23 – Fees (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/overview/fees>)
  - I.23.1 – Schedule of Fees. Moved from Appendix A.

## Section II: Guidelines for the Program Presentation

- Reordered several sections for clarity and to align with process steps.
- II.2 – Purpose of the Program Presentation (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/programpresentation/purpose>). Added requirement to address each standard and its elements in order
- II.6 – Organization and (added) *format of the Program Presentation* (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/programpresentation/format>). Added instructions on how the Program Presentation should be organized and prepared for distribution

- II.6.1 – Required information. Added requirement: title and version of the Standards used.
  - II.6.2 – Addressing the Standards for Accreditation. Added requirement that the Program Presentation address compliance with each standard and its elements in order.
  - II.6.3 – Presenting evidence. Fleshed out purpose of evidence and how to use the list of suggested evidence. Added footnote regarding FERPA regulations concerning privacy of student records and accreditation.
  - II.6.4 – Examples of evidence. Updated and expanded the list of suggested evidence to demonstrate compliance with the standards.
  - II.6.6 – Format requirements (new section added). Added paragraph requiring use of style guide. Added specific instructions regarding print and electronic versions.
- II.7 – Responding to the ERP report (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/programpresentation/erpreportresponse>) (new section added). Information on the program's options to respond to the ERP report.

### Section III: Guidelines for the External Review Panel

- III.4 – Conflict of interest policy for the ERP (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/erpguidelines/conflictinterest>). Added conflict of interest policy explicitly stated for the ERP.
- III.5 – Role and responsibilities of the ERP (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/erpguidelines/responsibilities>)
  - III.5.1 – Responsibilities of ERP Chair. Added to and clarified responsibilities.
  - III.5.2 – Responsibilities of ERP members. Added to and clarified responsibilities.
- III.7 – The ERP report (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/ap3/erpguidelines/erpreport>). Reorganized this section; clarified and expanded sections on content and format of the report

### Section IV: Appeal Process

- Standardized all deadlines and due dates to number of calendar days (was a mix of business and calendar). Deadlines that were business days have been adjusted to an equivalent number of calendar days.
- IV.3 – Appeal procedure overview (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/overview>). Clarified dates of accreditation for withdrawn accreditation, initial accreditation, or reinstated accreditation if 1) EB upholds COA decision or 2) if EB determination is remanded back to COA.
- IV.3 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/overview>), IV.9 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/determination>), IV.12 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/dates>) - Added: *At the conclusion of an appeal process, the decision of the COA is final and may not be appealed again* to sections that discuss reconsideration of the original decision if remanded back to COA.

- IV.4 – Confidentiality and the appeal process (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/confidentiality>) (was Confidentiality of program status during review).
  - Section IV.4.1 - Confidentiality of appeal review. Added this section regarding confidentiality of all information for anyone involved in the review.
  - Section IV.4.2 - Confidentiality of program status during review moved to this new sub-section.
- Added process information regarding appeal of denial of initial accreditation, including documentation to be reviewed (IV.7.2 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/details>) and IV.8 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/ARCmeeting>)) and retroactive accreditation dates (IV.3 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/overview>) and IV.12 (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/dates>)). Second edition only provided information regarding withdrawal.
- IV.9 – *Recommendation* of the ARC and *determination* of the Executive Board (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/determination>). (Was Decisions of the ARC and the Executive Board.) Clarified that the Appeal Review Committee (ARC) makes a *recommendation* (was decision) to Executive Board (EB) and EB makes the final *determination* (was decision) to uphold COA decision or remand back to COA.
- IV.11 – Review of appeal deadlines (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/timeline>). Added Appeal Process Timeline table. The table includes all steps in the process and gives example dates.
- IV.12 – Accreditation status effective dates (<http://www.ala.org/accreditedprograms/standards/AP3/appealprocess/dates>). Added effective dates of withdrawal or initial if decision is remanded back to COA.

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