

U.S.Department of Education Staff Report

to the

Senior Department Official on Recognition Compliance Issues

Recommendation Page

1. **Agency:** New England Commission of Higher Education (1952 / 2015)
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidacy status") of institutions of higher education in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont that award bachelor's, master's, and/or doctoral degrees and associate degree-granting institutions in those states that include degrees in liberal arts or general studies among their offerings, including the accreditation of programs offered via distance education within these institutions.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidacy status") of institutions of higher education in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont that award bachelor's master's and/or doctoral degrees and associate degree-granting institutions in those states that include degrees in liberal arts or general studies among their offerings, including the accreditation of programs offered via distance education within these institutions. Jointly with the Commission, this recognition extends to its Executive Committee and also to the Appeals Body for decisions related to the appeal of denial or withdrawal of candidacy; probation; and denial or withdrawal of accreditation.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** 02/07/2018
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for five years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None.

Executive Summary

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education is a regional accreditor that currently accredits approximately 237 institutions in the six states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The agency's accreditation is used by institutions in the region to establish eligibility to participate in the federal Title IV student financial assistance programs under the Higher Education Act. The agency is recognized for the accreditation and pre-accreditation ("Candidacy status") of institutions of higher education that award bachelor's, master's, and/or doctoral degrees and associate degree-granting institutions in those states that include degrees in liberal arts or general studies among their offerings, including the accreditation of programs offered via distance education within these institutions. The Department received 1 complaint for agency during this recognition period, which is discussed in the following criterion: 602.16(a) (1)(ix) Student Complaints.

Recognition History

The NEASC-CIHE has been on the Secretary's list of recognized accrediting agencies since 1952. Its last full petition for continued recognition was reviewed at the Spring 2013 NACIQI meeting. At that time, the Secretary revised the wording of the agency's scope to remove any references to the NEASC's Board of Trustees and requested that the agency come into compliance with four issues within twelve months and submits a compliance report on those issues. The agency's compliance report submission was reviewed at the Spring 2015 NACIQI meeting, which resulted in the agency's continued recognition for a period of 2 years. The agency's review for continued recognition is the subject of this analysis.

PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS

The Department did not receive any written third - party comments regarding this agency.