



EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Policy Change Approved on First Reading

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) approved this policy on first reading at its meeting on November 4–5, 2021.

Background

HLC policies currently provide in various contexts that HLC staff, peer reviewers and members of HLC decision-making bodies may benefit from external consultation at various points in HLC evaluations and decision-making processes. Such external consultants could include, for example, legal counsel, financial advisors or other experts with relevant, specialized expertise. Such consultants do not directly participate in any evaluative process. The proposed changes would consolidate the various mentions of external consultation into a single policy while clarifying that any decision to seek out external consultation rests with HLC staff.

If the Board adopts the proposed changes on second reading at its February 2022 meeting, conforming changes will also be made to related HLC policies, including removing similar language in other policies, such as:

- Substantive Requirements for Reaffirmation of Accreditation (INST.C.10.010)
- Routine Monitoring and Data Collection (INST.F.10.010)
- Special Monitoring (INST.F.20.010)
- Change of Control (INST.F.20.070)
- Staff Role and Responsibility (COMM.B.10.010)

Comments Invited

HLC invites comments on this change before the Board takes final action at its meeting on February 24–25, 2022. Comments can be sent to policycomments@hlcommission.org. Comments are due by February 7, 2022.

Proposed Change

Wording that was deleted or revised is shown as strikethrough (~~old wording~~); new language, whether through addition or revision, is shown in bold (**new wording**).

Policy Title: External ~~Expertise in Sanctions or Show Cause~~ **Consultation**

Number: ~~INST.E.40.010~~ **COMM.B.10.030**

As determined in the sole discretion of HLC staff, HLC staff, peer reviewers or ~~the Board~~ members of **decision-making bodies** may seek external assistance from **other** peer reviewers or **other** individuals with appropriate expertise who do not participate as peer reviewers in ~~the an~~ evaluation process or **other HLC process** but provide particularized advice and assistance where appropriate to HLC Board, staff or evaluation team members.

Policy Number Key

~~Section INST: Institutional Processes~~ Section COMM: HLC Obligations

~~Chapter E: Sanctions, Adverse Actions, and Appeals~~ Chapter B: HLC Staff

~~Part 40: External Expertise in Sanctions or Show Cause~~ Part 10: General

Last Revised:

First Adopted: June 2012

Revision History:

Notes: Former policy number 2.5(d). In February 2021, references to the Higher Learning Commission as “the Commission” were replaced with the term “HLC.”

Related Policies: