



Policy Title: **FEPAC Standards Review and Revision Policy**

Approved By: FEPAC Commission

Document History: Policy Implementation Date: August 9, 2003

Last Updated: March 27, 2026

Related Commission Document: Accreditation Standards

References:

Responsible Official: Operations, Policies & Procedures Committee

The Commission employs a comprehensive, systematic on-going standards review program to assess whether its *Accreditation Standards* are adequate to evaluate the education and training provided by the programs it accredits and relevant to the needs of students.

Standards Review

FEPAC performs a combination of reviews as part of the Standards Review to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Accreditation Standards* of maintaining and enhancing the quality of forensic science education according to the Commission mission. The Commission considers proposals for changes to its Accreditation Standards received through internal suggestions from Commissioners or staff; suggestions received from a survey of on-site evaluators and programs undergoing a site visit (refer to applicable FEPAC Site Visit Survey forms); suggestions by FEPAC communities of interest; third party testimony, either written or verbal, from students, graduates, faculty, college administrators, laboratory instructors, practitioners, professional organizations, or members of the public, among others; and new regulations or provisions for recognition promulgated by the U.S. Secretary of Education. The Commission may determine, at any point during its standards review program, that changes to its *Accreditation Standards* are needed. The Commission publicly posts any proposed changes and encourages feedback by submitting comments. FEPAC will ensure that timely received comments to proposed changes are considered before changes are presented to the full Commission for further action. Changes will be completed within a reasonable period of time.

1. REVIEWS

- a) Annual Review – Formal review of the Standards to ensure they effectively evaluate forensic science programs. Reviews consider changes in the field, feedback from accredited programs, complaints, and other relevant input. If issues are identified, proposals for revisions are developed, circulated for comment, and voted on by the Commission. Standards may be added, revised, or removed as needed.
- b) Informal Review – In real time or as scheduled agenda topics, Commissioners discuss Standards for Accreditation based on their application of the standards to the programs considered. These informal reviews may identify potential issues requiring further investigation or modification of the Standards.
- c) Direct Solicitation – The Commission surveys on-site evaluators and programs after each site visit to gather feedback on the Standards’ adequacy, relevance, and effectiveness. Programs are surveyed post-site visit for insights from their recent self-study and site visit evaluation

experience.

- d) Review of Student Outcomes – FEPAC monitors retention and job placement rates for accredited programs through Annual Reports and uses this data in its annual review.
- e) Long-term Review – A review to ensure Standards remain effective and relevant for evaluating forensic science education and meeting student training needs. When reviewing a Standard, the Commission and its constituencies first discuss key quality issues, then examine the Standard in detail. If gaps are found, proposals are developed to modify, replace, or add Standards.
- f) Ad-hoc Review: Special Topic Areas – The Commission periodically meets with stakeholders to address special issues and review related Standards for their effectiveness as quality measures.

2. SCHEDULE OF REVIEWS

Type of Standards Review	Frequency
Annual	annually
Informal	agenda and/or real-time topics at commission meetings
Review of Student Outcomes	annually
Direct solicitation	annually - post site visit
Long-term	every 5 years
Ad-hoc	as needed

Procedures for Revising FEPAC'S Accreditation Standards

The Commission uses the following procedures for adopting changes to its *Accreditation Standards*:

- a. Suggestions for change are reviewed and, if appropriate, incorporated into a draft proposal for change.
- b. Draft proposals are presented to the full Commission for a decision on whether to move forward and solicit public comment.
- c. Subject to paragraph b above, the Commission solicits public comment on proposed changes to its *Accreditation Standards*, which may involve requests for written comments, on-line standards surveys, and/or public hearings. The period for public comment is generally thirty (30) days.
- d. Upon expiration of the public comment period, the Commission reviews and summarizes public comments timely received and assists the Commission in its consideration and decision whether to amend or adopt draft proposals.
- e. Standards for accreditation that are adopted by the Commission are published on FEPAC's web site and in relevant Commission publications and governing documents.

NOTE: THE COMMISSION MAY ADOPT CHANGES TO ITS ACCREDITATION STANDARDS OUTSIDE OF THESE PROCEDURES IN LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN NECESSARY TO ADDRESS INADVERTENT ADMINISTRATIVE ERRORS (E.G., SPELLING, GRAMMATICAL, CALENDARING); CLARIFY BUT NOT CHANGE EXISTING GUIDANCE; IMPLEMENT SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS MANDATED BY THE U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION; OR CONFORM TO THE COMMISSION'S ADOPTED PUBLICATION FORMATS.

Revision History

Date Revised	Summary of Revisions	Approved By