

Second-Tier Credential Programs and Considerations for Upcoming Accreditation Site Visit Reports

March 2011

Overview of this Report

This agenda item provides contextual information for the COA for the site visit reports that will be presented in Spring 2011 for institutions sponsoring second tier (Tier II) credential (i.e. Induction) programs only. Institutions that sponsor induction programs are typically, but not exclusively, sponsors of second-tier only credential programs. This agenda item discusses the relevance of certain aspects of the Common Standards with respect to Tier II only program sponsors as compared to program sponsors offering initial preliminary teacher preparation in addition to one or more second-tier credential programs.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

In 2009-10 institutions sponsoring Induction programs became integrated into the Commission's accreditation system. This initial year included the participation of induction programs in all accreditation activities except for site visits. Additionally in 2009-10, institutions that sponsor educator preparation programs including an induction program did not have the induction program included in the site visit review. The 2010-11 year is the first year that includes Induction programs in the Commission's site visit schedule. Discussed below are the specific Common Standards that may apply differently to sponsors of only one or more Tier II programs.

Common Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors

Common Standard 8 is as follows:

STANDARD 8: DISTRICT-EMPLOYED SUPERVISORS

District-employed supervisors are certified and experienced in either teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. A process for selecting supervisors who are knowledgeable and supportive of the academic content standards for students is based on identified criteria.

Supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.

The glossary of the Commission's Common Standards states that Common Standard 8 does not apply to an institution that only sponsors second-tier credential programs. Institutions such as school districts or county offices of education that are sponsors of an induction only program or a Tier II administrative services only program, for example, fit in this category. Therefore in all site visit reports where the institution only sponsors one or more second-tier credential programs, there will be no report for Common Standard 8.

Common Standard 7: Site-Based Supervising Personnel

Common Standard 7 addresses field experience in educator preparation programs including the design, implementation, and evaluation of the experiences. Standard 7 states:

STANDARD 7: FIELD EXPERIENCE AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

The unit and its partners design, implement, and regularly evaluate a planned sequence of field-based and clinical experiences in order for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students effectively so that P-12 students meet state-adopted academic standards. For each credential and certificate program, the unit collaborates with its partners regarding the criteria for selection of school sites, effective clinical personnel, and **site-based supervising personnel**. Field-based work and/or clinical experiences provide candidates opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity that affect school climate, teaching, and learning, and to help candidates develop research-based strategies for improving student learning.

The reference to a “site-based supervising personnel” as highlighted above does not apply to second-tier credential programs because an individual in a second-tier credential program does not have a supervisor. The standard requires that the institution work with its partners to develop “criteria for the selection of...site-based supervising personnel.” Since there are no district-employed supervisors or site-based supervising personnel, this phrase of the standard will not be addressed in the site visit reports for institutions that only sponsor a second-tier credential program.

Additionally, second-tier credential programs usually do not select school sites where the clinical practice or field experience takes place; rather, the site is where the individual is employed. Nevertheless each approved second-tier credential program must ensure that each candidate has the full range of experiences required by the standards and if the individual’s teaching assignment does not provide the opportunity to demonstrate the full range of experiences required by the standards, then the program must ensure that the candidate completes additional field work at other sites. In that somewhat limited manner then, the program is involved in site selection.

Second-tier credential programs are responsible to meet the concepts in Common Standard 7, other than the site-based supervising personnel, including the selection of school sites. Staff suggests that the COA consider that for institutions that sponsor only second-tier credential programs the phrase from Standard 7 related to “site-based supervising personnel” should not be reviewed or addressed by the accreditation site visit team.

Common Standard 5: Diverse Populations and Pre-Professional Experiences

Admission to an approved educator preparation program is addressed in Common Standard 5. A few of the concepts in Common Standard 5 do not seem to apply to an institution that sponsors only second-tier credential programs. These concepts are identified in bold text below:

STANDARD 5: ADMISSION

In each professional preparation program, applicants are admitted on the basis of **well-defined admission criteria and procedures**, including all Commission-adopted requirements. **Multiple measures** are used in an admission process that **encourages and supports applicants from diverse populations**. The unit determines that admitted candidates have appropriate **pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics**, including sensitivity to California's diverse population, effective communication skills, basic academic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness.

Though it could be considered that an approved Induction program does not need to have “well-defined admission criteria and procedures” or use “multiple measures” in the admission process, since all eligible participants must be included in the program, staff believes that these concepts are still ones for which all second-tier credential programs should be held accountable, though possibly in a slightly different manner than initial preparation programs. The “well-defined admission criteria” for all Induction programs include the individual holding the appropriate preliminary credential, having a teaching assignment or other planned field experiences that will allow the individual to demonstrate the required knowledge and skills, and agreement to participate in the program, at a minimum. Each approved program must have clearly stated eligibility criteria, at minimum the three criteria identified here, and must follow those criteria. Each second-tier credential program must have clear admission procedures that are followed for each candidate. Staff believes that all second-tier credential programs should be required to document how they meet each of these concepts.

Two other concepts in Standard 5 do seem to be challenging for second-tier credential programs to meet: 1) “an admission process that encourages and supports applicants from diverse populations,” and 2) “admitted candidates have appropriate pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics.” Second-tier credential programs have limited opportunities to “encourage and support applicants from diverse populations” since the admitted individual must hold the appropriate preliminary credential and usually is employed in a district.

A second-tier credential program may only accept individuals who hold the appropriate preliminary credential. Therefore each candidate has completed, in California or elsewhere, a preliminary preparation program. Each candidate, therefore, has presumably already been determined to have appropriate “pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics.”

At colleges and universities, second-tier credential programs (such as Education Specialist Level II and Tier II Administrative Services programs) have been offered for many years. Site visit teams have reviewed the institutions which sponsored these second-tier programs against these concepts found in Common Standard 5 because the program sponsor also offered preliminary preparation programs. This year is the first time that there are institutions hosting accreditation site visits which offer only second-tier credential programs.

Staff suggests that the COA agree that for institutions which sponsor only second-tier credential programs, these two phrases from Standard 5 should not be reviewed or addressed by the accreditation site visit team.

Next Steps

Beginning with the March 2011 meeting, reports from site visits to second-tier only credential programs will be presented to the COA. If the COA agrees with the staff analysis of Common Standards 5 and 7, and with the suggested procedures outlined in this agenda item, technical assistance will be provided to the institutions which sponsor only second-tier credential programs regarding these modifications. In addition, updated information will be provided to all Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) who are assigned to site visit teams visiting institutions which sponsor only second-tier credential programs.