

Principles for the Redesign of the WASC Accreditation Process

The confluence of these forces of change (See [Changing Context](#)) has led the Senior College Commission of WASC to assess the capacity and effectiveness of its processes to serve the higher education community and the public as well as it has done in the past. It is clear that a single approach, characterized as “one size fits all,” no longer is functional or appropriate.

In 1998 the Commission adopted two Core Commitments and six principles to govern the redesign of the WASC accreditation process. The Core Commitments (See [New Framework](#)) are to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness. The following principles continue to remain relevant and provide solid foundation for the new model of accreditation outlined in this *Handbook of Accreditation*, and they serve as the basis for interpreting how the Core Commitments, new accreditation standards, and redesigned institutional review process will be implemented.

Principle 1: Significant changes are needed to make the content and process of accreditation more relevant both to institutions and to the public.

Principle 2: The WASC process needs to demonstrably add value and be cost effective.

Principle 3: Greater emphasis is needed on evidence of educational effectiveness and student learning.

Principle 4: The accreditation process needs to shift from an “in/out of compliance” stance on every issue to a recognition that many aspects of quality are best addressed on a continuum basis.

Principle 5: More efficient means are needed to establish that institutions meet basic resource and integrity standards.

Principle 6: WASC needs to maintain a posture of experimentation in the years ahead, leading to the institutionalization of a more adaptive and responsive process of accreditation.