



Middle States Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools  
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## POLICY 1.7

### ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONS LOCATED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

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The Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools shall accredit and grant Candidacy for Accreditation to institutions as defined by Article I – Name, Office and Purpose, Section 102 – Purposes, of the Bylaws for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The MSA Bylaws state the following:

#### Article I Name, Office and Purpose

##### Section 102. Purposes.

(a) The Association is organized to promote charitable and educational activities within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”) and is incorporated under the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law for any lawful purpose for which a nonprofit corporation may operate under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania including, in particular, the following:

(i) To accredit educational institutions and programs located inside or outside the United States, including, but not limited to, the States of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and New York, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands;

1.7.1. World-wide Accreditation. The Commissions on Secondary and Elementary Schools shall, upon proper application, accredit or grant Candidacy for Accreditation to institutions located anywhere in the world.

1.7.2. Definition of Institutions Located Outside the United States Eligible for Accreditation by the Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools.

1.7.2.1. The Middle States Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools accredit and grant Candidacy for Accreditation to institutions located outside the United States that are described as American and/or international in nature. To be considered for Accreditation or Candidacy for Accreditation, an institution must exhibit the following characteristics:

- a. English is the primary language or one of the primary languages of instruction;
- b. The school's governing documents and documents required for accreditation are available in English;
- c. A majority of the teaching and administrative staffs have been educated in colleges and universities where English is among the primary languages of the program. They must have a good understanding of a United States or international curriculum and instructional practices and be proficient in English;
- d. Members of the teaching and administrative staffs must possess the qualifications of education, experience, and commitment consistent with accepted standards for professional educators;
- e. A majority of the elementary and middle school students must be enrolled in a program that is United States oriented or in a program that prepares them for a rigorous United States or international educational program;
- f. At the high school level, a majority of students must be enrolled in a rigorous United States or international educational program;
- g. Participation in the program permits a student to successfully transfer to a school within the United States or to another overseas school that is American and/or international in nature. Upon graduation, students are qualified to enter an American college or university and/or an international institution of higher learning;
- h. The school provides materials, equipment, and supplies that are necessary to support a rigorous United States or international educational program;
- i. The school's process of education is characterized by methods of school governance that provide opportunities for input and communication and are inclusive of the school's constituencies. If the school's governing body is under the auspices of a national government or central ministry, nonetheless, it maintains a local responsiveness to the needs of the school's stakeholders.

Essentially, the school must meet the Middle States Association standard for Governance and Leadership;

- j. The predominant style of instruction actively engages students and promotes critical thinking and problem solving; and
- k. The climate of learning celebrates diversity and cultivates the attitudes and behaviors that students will need to succeed in a global community.

NOTE: This definition does not apply to schools located in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

1.7.3. Representation in MSCESS Governance for Institutions Located Outside the United States. The Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools shall ensure representation of non-U.S. institutions in the governance of the Commissions through the International Schools Advisory Committee and via representation on the Commissions.

Action	Date	Notes
Initial Adoption	April 15, 2011	Adoption as a MSA-CESS policy; new policy for MSA-CES and revised policy for MSA-CSS
Revisions		