

Petition Submitted by the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education

As required under CFR Title 34, Part 603, Subpart B for the US Department of Education Secretary's recognition of the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education as a State agency that is a reliable authority as to the quality of public postsecondary career and technical education in the State of Pennsylvania.

The petition describes how the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education meets the criteria set forth in CFR Title 34, Part 603.

Criteria: 603.24(a)(1)(i): Scope of Operations and Legal Authorization

Pennsylvania has 73 vocational-technical schools offering public post-secondary vocational education. In 2017-2018, approximately 13,525 adults were enrolled in 57 Career and Technical Centers (CTCs) non-degree programs across the state.

The Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education (PSBCTE) and the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) have their legal authorization established in the Pennsylvania Statutes under Title 24, Education, Chapter 1, Public School Code of 1949, Article 18, Vocational Education, (A) School Districts.

Collectively, these statutes give the PSBCTE powers, duties and jurisdiction to supervise the public institutions that offer Pennsylvania Public Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (PPPCTE) and to formulate and adopt curricula, courses of study and other instructional aids necessary for the adequate instruction of PPPCTE.

Additionally, these statutes give the PSBCTE powers over the Bureau of Career and Technical Education which is designated as the Bureau for ensuring Federal and State standards are met. The PSBCTE, through the Pennsylvania Secretary of the Department of Education, authorizes the BCTE to manage the state's accreditation program.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 1: A1 - Title 24, Education, Chapter 1, Public School Code of 1949

Exhibit 2: A2 - List of PPPCTE Institutions

Criteria: 603.24(a)(1)(ii) Scope of Objectives and Actives

Pennsylvania Career and Technical Centers offer programs in the following national cluster areas:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business, Management & Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety & Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sales & Service
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Pennsylvania vocational objectives include the following:

- All students will reach the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education and master the knowledge and skills that meet the program defined academic standards to complete an adult career and technical education program.
- All students will reach a state-defined threshold level of career and technical education to complete an adult program and attain the knowledge and skills that meet program defined and industry validated career and technical skill standards.
- All students will reach a state-defined threshold level of career and technical education and attain a diploma, certificate or other formal awards.
- All students will reach the state-defined threshold level of adult career and technical education to complete a program and successfully transition into employment, to further adult education or advanced training and/or military service.
- All students will reach the state-defined threshold level of career and technical education and upon leaving adult schooling, be placed in employment reflective of the skills learned.
- All adult career and technical education programs preparing students for further training and employment in careers or occupations with significant under representation of males or females will increase participation for underrepresented males or females.
- All career and technical education programs preparing students for further training and employment in careers or occupations with significant under representation of males or females will increase program completion for underrepresented males and females.

The accreditation process for the State's career and technical centers is a voluntary process and is granted only after satisfactorily assuring the PSBCTE, through the recommendations of BCTE, that the institution has met the requirements of the Accreditation System of Institutions for Adult Education (ASIAE) process. Key reasons (as stated in the ASIAE Guidelines) why the accreditation of Pennsylvania Public Postsecondary Career and Technical Education is important to Pennsylvania education are:

- To expand training opportunities for adult students to meet the needs of individuals and the community
- To enhance opportunities for workforce and economic development to help the community reach its overall goals
- To benchmark quality standards for program development, instruction, equipment, processes and services for the purpose of making comparisons and improving the quality of adult education
- To increase enrollment opportunity for schools by being responsive to community needs and helping the school be successful
- To provide accreditation services not readily available to our schools at a cost saving for school systems and the state of Pennsylvania
- To offer a more efficient accreditation process using data and information that is already on file at the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)
- To enhance collaboration between schools and PDE

The following is the role of the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education (PSBCTE) and Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE):

1. The Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education (PSBCTE) and the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) have legal authorization and the responsibility for developing, administering, and coordinating the evaluation and approval of Pennsylvania Public Post-Secondary Career and Technical Education (PPPCTE) programs and institutions in Pennsylvania.

2. The Pennsylvania State Board for Vocational Education, through the Pennsylvania Department of Education, approves programs, facilities and general conduct of the public post-secondary Career and Technical Education programs.

3. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has the responsibility to establish and coordinate an advisory body: Institutional Accreditation Advisory Group (IAAG). The IAAG provides counsel to Pennsylvania Department of Education and makes a meaningful contribution to the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education process.

4. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) administers the accreditation program for the Pennsylvania State Board for Vocational Education. Accreditation status will be granted to an institution that has satisfactorily assured the Pennsylvania State Board for Vocational Education, through the recommendation of PDE, that it has met the published requirements.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 3: B1 - 2020 Accreditation Guidelines

Exhibit 4: B2 - Status of 2018-19 Adult Concentrators

Exhibit 5: B3 - PA Accreditation Policy and Procedure Handbook

Criteria: 603.24(a)(1)(iii) Approval of Varying Program Levels

The post-secondary Career and Technical Center programs and institutes authorized by the agency are designed for the purpose of training an individual to effectively pursue employment in an occupational or technical career. The approval process is based on the validation of the programs' objectives of non-degree level programs (at least 300 hours and no longer than 24 months in length).

Career and technical schools seeking PDE Accreditation must be approved through the State Career and Technical Education Information System (CATS) detailing the following information:

- Labor Market Needs
- Planning
- Program Content and Industry Standards
- Student/Teacher Ratio
- Utilization of Materials

- Equipment and Supplies
- Safety Practices
- Accountability Standards
- Student and Teacher Industry Certifications

Programs are then reviewed by the accreditation coordinator and program specialist. Programs must be approved before the career and technical center can be accredited.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 5

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 6: C1 - Program Approval Form-Leigh Career and Technical Institute
- Exhibit 7: C2 - Program Approval Form-Clearfield Career and Technical Center

Criteria: 603.24(a)(2)(1) Staffing and Operational Procedures

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) is the designated body that has the responsibility for developing, administering, and coordinating the evaluation and approval of Pennsylvania public post-secondary career and technical education programs and institutions and administering the ASIAE process in Pennsylvania. BCTE's Career and Technical Education Adviser serves as the State Accreditation Coordinator (SAC) and is responsible for implementing the agency's accrediting operations. The SAC leads the site-evaluation process, participates in the ASIAE site-evaluation final review and, as the key technical support provider, serves as a liaison between the team and the institution's administration.

The SAC is assisted by two professional staff members who provide technical assistance to all programs and institutions, perform program and institutional monitoring, serve as site and/or team chairs, provide training to schools seeking accreditation and to the on-site evaluation team, as well as assist the schools in BCTE program delivery. The BCTE staffers are state civil servants and are required to have academic training and professional experience in career and technical education.

The Accreditation procedures are laid out in the Accreditation Handbook for the approval of the Accreditation. Each chapter gives a step-by-step account of the PPPCTE operations procedures.

Also See Attachment B3 - PA Accreditation Policy and Procedure Handbook

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 10: E1 - PA Statues Title 24
- Exhibit 11: E2 - Accreditation Budget FY18-19

Criteria: 603.24(a)(2)(ii) Fiscal Capacity

The Pennsylvania Department of Education receives funding from state allocations and federal grants. The FY2019 budget totals \$4,859,379 and includes operational costs for the Bureau of Career and Technical Education. The accreditation activities are included in the Division of Adult and Post-Secondary CTE budget. This budget allocation includes salary, travel, and other expenses and benefits for the staff, members assigned to accreditation activities. (See BCTE Position Descriptions in attachment D1) Travel and salary expenditures for all BCTE staff when they assist with accreditation activities, are reflected within their individual division budgets. Administrative functions of the accreditation process are fully funded through permanent sources. No curtailment of the accreditation process has occurred due to fiscal constraints.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 10: E1 - PA Statues Title 24
- Exhibit 11: E2 - Accreditation Budget FY18-19

Criteria: 603.24(a)(2)(iii)(A) Site Team Representatives

The agency has policies and procedures for identifying and selecting site evaluation team members. The agency's SAC is responsible for coordinating the selections. The agency's site evaluation team pool consists of personnel from BCTE, state certified career and technical instructors, state continuing education coordinators, career and technical institution administrators, persons from colleges, and members of the public who are professionals experienced in the career and technical areas within the community.

Each site evaluation team member who is not an employee of BCTE must provide a current resume and evidence of their qualifications, which then are reviewed by the SAC.

Site team members are required to receive training and additional periodic training on the agency's standards and complete the agency's Conflict-of-Interest policy, site evaluation procedures, the ASIAE Administration Guidelines and the agency's Self-Study Guidelines.

The agency is also required to comply with the state's non-discrimination policy in its employment practices.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 12: F1 - Request for Evaluators
- Exhibit 13: F2 - McMonigal Resume
- Exhibit 14: F3 - Conflict of Interest Lehigh Career and Technical Inst Review
- Exhibit 15: F4 - Equal Employment Opportunity 1999-09
- Exhibit 16: F5 – Lehigh Training Agenda

Criteria: 603.24(a)(2)(iii)(B) Consultant Representatives

The Institution Accreditation Advisory Group (IAAG) serves as the agency’s advisory board. The agency’s policies and procedures for identifying and selecting IAAG members are established and approved by the PSBCTE. The IAAG provides consultation and advisement to the agency on the development of standards, operating procedures, policy development and interpretation of educational needs and support projections of the PPPCTE system. It also provides the agency with current data and information about the job market, employer needs and community opportunities. The group regularly reviews the agency’s Self-Study Guidelines and its Accreditation Standards.

Potential IAAG members are identified by the BCTE Director from various sources. The agency’s SAC then reviews the qualifications, experience and educational background of each candidate and makes recommendations to the Director, who then selects the IAAG member.

Also See Attachment B1 - Exhibit M

Exhibits:

Exhibit 17: G1 - IAAG Committee

Exhibit 18: G2 - Resume

Exhibit 19: G3 - IAAG Minutes

Criteria: 603.24(a)(2)(iii)(C) Decision-Making Representatives

The agency’s decision-making body is the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education (PSBCTE) whose membership is dictated and guided by the Pennsylvania Code. Its 21 members are selected by the Governor and confirmed by the Pennsylvania State Senate. Its membership includes senators, representatives, college presidents, local school board members, superintendents of career and technical schools, business leaders, private trade school presidents, and a school counselor.

The State Board provides training to new members on an individual basis.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 20: H1 – Regulations PSBCTE

Exhibit 21: H2 - Pennsylvania State Board of Education Members

Exhibit 22: H3 - State Board for CTE Minutes

Criteria: 603.24(a)(3)(1) Approval Status and Written Procedures

The agency’s definitions of the approval status and the procedures used to determine the various accrediting categories that an institution may receive are outlined in the Accreditation System of Institutions for Adult Education (ASIAE) Administrative Guidelines. The agency’s accreditation categories include Accreditation, Probationary Accreditation with Stipulations,

Disapproval of Accreditation, Revoking Accreditation, and Re-Affirming Accreditation.

The agency's Administrative Guidelines outline its established procedures and methods for evaluating and re-evaluating public institutions offering postsecondary career and technical education. Agency policy dictates that for accreditation and re-affirming accreditation, it will require a comprehensive evaluation of the institution for compliance with all of its standards. This process includes the submission of a self-study and completion of an on-site evaluation. A point system is used by the evaluators for each section of the self-study during the site review. Any institution that meets all or is only

deficient in one category will be recommended for accreditation. An institution that has not more than two deficiencies will be recommended for probationary accreditation with stipulations and will have one year to address corrective actions. An institution that has more than two deficiencies is recommended for disapproval of accreditation.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9 & 10

Exhibits:

Exhibit 23: I1 - Re-Accreditation Letter

Criteria: 603.24(a)(3)(ii) Self-Analysis and On-Site Review Requirements

The agency policies require institutions to conduct a comprehensive self-assessment in accordance with the ASIAE Self-Study Guidelines. The agency requires that the self-assessment include a precise written description and evidence to support its responses. The agency provides its institutions with instructions that emphasize the importance of the quality of the assessment and provides technical assistance to an applicant institution as specific needs and issues arise. Site team members review the institution's self-study and provide comments. The comments are then given to the institution prior to the visit to help with the evaluation of documents when on site.

On-site visits are in accordance with the ASIAE Guidelines. Procedures for site visits are reviewed with the institution prior to the site visit. Site team members are given an agenda prior to the visit which is also reviewed on the first day of the site visit.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 6, 7, 16 & 17

Exhibits:

Exhibit 24: J1-Site Team Comments Before On-Site Visit

Exhibit 25: J2 - STC Agenda

Criteria: 603.24(a)(3)(ii)(A) Self-Analysis Requirements

Institutions are required to establish a represented committee to help develop the institution's Self-Study and to ensure that all involved parties affected by the accreditation are informed of the processes.

The following areas are included in the Self-Study:

- Goals and objectives
- Strategic plan and outcomes
- Occupational needs assessments
- Program planning objectives, course outlines and competency lists
- Use of advisory committee input
- Instructor qualifications (degree level, trade experience, professional development, industry certification, etc.)
- Instructional training plans
- Course quality standards, results and grades
- Enrollment levels
- Student-teacher ratios
- Job placement assistance activities
- Placement rates and completion rates
- Safety training and practices
- Facilities, equipment and supplies
- Institution's vision and mission statements
- Student admissions policies
- Job descriptions
- Student follow-up studies
- Course descriptions
- Methods for keeping curriculum current
- Marketing and public relations activities
- Complaint procedures
- Nondiscrimination and educational equity policies
- Other factors that may impact program quality

Exhibits:

Exhibit 26: K1 - Lebanon CTC List of Constituents

Criteria: 603.24(a)(3)(ii)(B) On-Site Visit Requirements

The agency's on-site evaluation teams consist of six to seven reviewers and include personnel from PDE, Continuing Education coordinators, adult vocational instructors, vocational administrators, postsecondary educators and individuals whose expertise, experience and education are related to the type of institution and programs being evaluated.

The team verifies the accuracy of the information in the applicant institution's self-study to assess whether the institution complies with the agency standards (Leadership, Program, Students, Faculty/Staff/Facilities, Employers) and verifies/clarifies how the institution uses the data and information gathered to make decisions and improve the overall quality of the institution. Areas such as program objectives, course outlines, instructor qualifications, facilities, equipment and supplies, and other unique factors that impact program quality are

reviewed. During the on-site evaluation, site evaluators interview school administrators, board members, Careerlink, instructors, counselors, students and participate in off-site visits to businesses which employ the CTC's adult students.

At the end of the on-site visit, the team discusses the issues and concerns, prepares a Preliminary Draft Report identifying the strengths, opportunities for improvement and corrective action, and assigns scores to each section.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 27: L1 - Preliminary Draft Report-Lehigh Career and Technical Institute

Criteria: 603.24(a)(3)(iii) Reevaluation

The agency reevaluates accredited institutions every five years for reaffirmation of accreditation. The process is identical to the original accreditation process. Programs are reviewed annually for any new submissions, deletions, or changes.

The agency also requires each accredited institution to submit an annual report. In the annual report, the institution provides a written narrative and documentation to support how it continues to adhere to the five standards as outlined in the ASIAE Guidelines. The SAC reviews the annual reports and looks for any triggers leading to areas of deficiency. If any triggers are found, the institution will be required to provide additional information and/or a corrective action plan.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 12

Exhibits:

Exhibit 28: M1 - York Approved Programs

Exhibit 29: M2 - Annual Review Report York 2020-2021

Exhibit 30: M3 - Annual Report Review

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(i) Has an Advisory Body

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) utilizes an advisory committee entitled the Institution Accreditation Advisory Group (IAAG). This group is comprised of administrators from career and technical schools, industry, vocational associations, among others. The purpose of the IAAG is to strengthen the Pennsylvania Postsecondary Vocational Educational (PPPCTE) system. The group provides valuable advice to the State agency, through the BCTE, related to the development of standards, operating procedures and policy; and interprets the educational needs and support projections of the PPPCTE system.

Key goals include:

- Provide information to update, modify, expand and improve the quality of career and technical education programs related to PPPCTE

- Support and strengthen the relationship between business, industry, the community and education
- Make recommendations to strengthen and expand the curriculum and provide assistance in

implementing these recommendations

- Assist in identifying needs, determining priorities and reviewing and evaluating programs and

systems related to the PASBVE's Accreditation program.

IAAG members serve on accreditation teams including site visits, as part of the training process. This allows the members to have hands-on knowledge of how the policies and procedures are implemented by the institutions and evaluated by the team.

Also See Attachment B1 -Exhibit M

G1 - IAAG Committee

G3 - IAAG Meeting Minutes

Exhibits:

Exhibit 31: N1 - IAAG Member on Review

Criteria 603.24(b)(1)(ii) Demonstrate Meaningful Contribution by the Advisory Body

The main purpose of the Institutional Accreditation Advisory Group (IAAG) is to strengthen the PPPCTE system. The group provides valuable advice to the State agency, through the BCTE, related to the development of standards, operating procedures and policy and interprets the educational needs and support projections of the PPPCTE system. The IAAG reviews and makes recommendation to the accreditation guidelines to ensure quality and integrity in the PPPCTE accreditation system. The IAAG reviews Preliminary Draft Reports and makes recommendations of accreditation status to PDE. Members of the IAAG serve on site review teams to gain knowledge of the accreditation process. Periodic training is done as new members join the IAAG.

Also See Attachment G3 - IAAG Minutes

Exhibits:

Exhibit 32: O1 - IAAG Training

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(iii) Revision of the Standards

The Bureau of Career and Technical Education uses a variety of methods for communicating with the public on revisions to PPPCTE accreditation standards or regulations. The Pennsylvania Department of Education website lists all information regarding PPPCTE accreditation. This list includes a description of accreditation, PPPCTE accreditation

guidelines, application form, program approval form, annual operational report form, and a list of all career and technical schools that have PPPCTE accreditation to include original accreditation dates, expiration dates, etc. If any changes are being proposed, they are listed on the site with contact information for any comments or questions. BCTE staff also attend career and technical education workshops and symposiums and uses such events as a vehicle for disseminating information to the affected community. Another method is PENN*LINK, which is a system BCTE uses to communicate through an e-mail distribution list. Any comments or questions are compiled and reviewed by the IAAG Committee.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 33: P1 – Change to Guidelines taking out Credit Hour criteria

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(iv) Program Evaluation

Pennsylvania Public Postsecondary Career and Technical Education requires all accredited institutions to conduct surveys of their students, faculty and the industry. Student surveys ask questions in regard to program delivery, content, facilities and equipment, and overall satisfaction. Faculty surveys ask questions in regard to preparedness, equipment, materials and any suggestions on improvements. The industry surveys ask questions in regard to the level of skill of the student and satisfaction of the employer who has hired the student. These surveys are then compiled by the institution and reviewed against their educational goals for each program and for the institution as a whole. These surveys are used as evidence in the self-study and during the on-site visits where the site team reviews them for content and consistency. Institutions also must show completion rates, credentials earned, placement rates, drop out ratios and how this information aligns with its educational goals.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 5
L1 - Preliminary Draft Report
M2 - Annual Report Review

Exhibits:

Exhibit 34: Q1 - Lehigh Self-Study
Exhibit 35: Q2 - Employer Survey Results

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(v) Experimental and Innovative Programming

Pennsylvania Public Postsecondary Career and Technical Education encourages all Career and Technical Centers (CTC) be apprised of new and emerging training and through their Occupational Advisory Committees, the CTCs are able to offer such training to their communities. Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology (CPI) has started a Wastewater Utility Operator/Technician program. The need for this program was determined through contact and discussion with CPI's local employer / manufacturers, local WIB (Central PA) data (e.g. Water & Liquid Waste Treatment Plant & System Operators is a High Priority Occupation within the region), job advertisement postings, Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA - paworkstats.state.pa.us) data, and national, state, and local data regarding

the need water and wastewater operators. Regionally, two key factors are having a significant effect on employment in these sectors: 1.) The Chesapeake Bay Watershed program, which regulates all waters, streams, and tributaries that lead to the Chesapeake Bay (Pennsylvania is part of this program), and 2.) the Marcellus Shale and subsequent DEP regulations of water and wastewater handling in central Pennsylvania. Coupled with the high average age in the industry (54 yrs old) and growing regulation, water and wastewater operators will be in high demand over the long-term.

Along with significant vendor input, numerous employer meetings were held by CPI to gather information related to curriculum and equipment. Prior to hiring of their instructor, administration attended training sessions on advanced manufacturing at various statewide conferences (e.g. PACTA, ACTE). Prior to and after hiring their instructor / coordinator, teams from CPI visited schools that operate similar renewable energy programs. Curriculum teams met continuously throughout the design phase. Upon completion of the competency area and crosswalk, CPI offered its Water and Wastewater to both the public and to industry through its EE&I Program. The Program's Lead Instructor/Coordinator is Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approved to offer Water and Wastewater Programs for CEU credit and is a member of the Water Works Operators Association of PA (WWOAP) and the American Water Works Association (AWWA).

The Water Utility Operator Program Prepares students for the PA DEP Operator Certification Tests for all Water treatment sub-classes and prepares students for the ISA exam(s) for Certified Control System Technician.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 36: R1 - CPI Wastewater Program

Exhibit 37: R2 - CPI Approved Programs

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(vi) Institutional/Program Approval

All persons serving on on-site reviews are trained in ASIAE standards, policies and procedures. Reviewers also sign a conflict of interest form showing they will be impartial and objective when reviewing the institution. They review the institution's self-study and submit any comments or questions regarding the self-study to the SAC who will then submit them to the institution before the site-visit. During the site-visit, the reviewers review sections of the self-study and use a scoring system provided by PDE as an evaluation mechanism. Scoring guidelines have been developed to:

- Help calibrate how the Applicant Institution is performing relative to the Standards and Quality Initiatives
- Identify the key areas for improvement focus and to help track improvement over time
- Identify successful role model practices for benchmarking and sharing with other schools in the adult learning system

Also See Attachment F5 - Training Agenda

J1 - Site Team Comments

B1 - Exhibit L, Chapter 16 & 17

L1 - Preliminary Draft Report
F3 - Conflict of Interest Form

Exhibits:

Exhibit 38: S1 - Site Team Evaluations

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(vii) Review of Standards

PDE formally reviews its standards, policies and procedures once per year. They are also reviewed during every site visit. After every on-site visit, evaluations are given to the site reviewers and the participating staff at the institution requesting feedback on the visit and the accreditation process as a whole. These evaluations are compiled and reviewed by the IAAG. All comments are taken into consideration and when appropriate, changes are made to the accreditation process.

Changes to the standards, if minor, will be made during the spring and be released to career and technical centers for use during the following program year.

Once every four years, the SAC will distribute the accreditation standards to each of the career and technical centers located in Pennsylvania. Each career and technical center administrator will be asked to review the standards and provide input on not only the standards but the accreditation process and guidelines.

Changes to the standards will be reviewed by the IAAG. During the review of the results, the IAAG will also provide input into the standards and guidelines. The approved changes will be presented to the State Board for Career and Technical Education for their review and approval.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 18
S1 - Site Team Evaluations
P1 - Email to CTCs Regarding Revisions to Guidelines and Comments

Exhibits:

Exhibit 39: T1 - Meeting Minutes

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(viii) Independent Judgement of Quality

All institutions follow the same self-study when applying for PPPCTE accreditation. The State Accreditation Coordinator works to make sure that the training and review completed by the site evaluation team is consistent and follows the ASIAE guidelines. Team members also must sign a conflict of interest form which would exclude anyone who resides or previously worked in the institution's school district, which could in any way potentially prejudice the outcome of the site evaluation or is in any way bias towards the institution, staff or its students.

Also See Attachment F5 - Training
Agenda F3 - Conflict of Interest Form

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(ix) Complaint Procedures

Any institution that wishes to file a complaint regarding the PPPCTE Accreditation process, must do so in writing to the Director of Career and Technical Education at the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Solutions will be executed as appropriate. If necessary, a disposition of the complaint will be provided in writing within 10 calendar days of the final decision.

Neither the PA State Board for Career and Technical Education nor the PDE has had complaints submitted to them in regard to PPPCTE Accreditation. A process is in place to discuss complaints in the ASIAE Guidelines.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 11

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(x) Publicly Available Information

The public can find all information regarding PDE Accreditation on the PDE website – www.education.state.pa.us. Such information includes the ASIAE Administrative Guidelines, Accreditation Application form, Program Approval form, Annual Report form, and a list of all PDE Accredited Institutions including those institutions applying for accreditation and those coming up that year for re-accreditation. At any time, interested parties make comments to PDE by phone, mail or e-mail using the contact information provided at the bottom of the webpage.

When policy changes are made, announcements are sent out to PPPCTE centers and posted on PDE's website.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 40: U1 - PPPCTE Accreditation on Web

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(xi) School/Program Changes

Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education accredited institutions must submit an annual report to PDE by August 31 of each year. In the annual report, the institution reports any changes to their vision and/or mission statement and any changes to:

- Administrative/Staff Personnel
- Policies/Procedures – per program
- Instructional Delivery

Any changes to the programs are completed through the Career and Technical Information System (CATS) and approved by the SAC.

The SAC reviews all changes to determine if the institution remains in compliance with PPPCTE ASIAE Accreditation standards.

Also See Attachment M2 - Annual Report Review
C1 - Program Approval Form

Exhibits:

Change in Adult Education Coordinator

Criteria: 603.24(b)(1)(xii) Interagency Consultation

The Pennsylvania Department of Education maintains regular and ongoing contact with its public postsecondary Career and Technical Education counterparts in other states to exchange current information about accreditation review, methods, techniques and standards. Through calls and emails, PDE confers with other state agencies when considering major changes to the policies and standards.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 41: V1 - Email Correspondence with Oklahoma

Criteria: 603.24(b)(2)(i) Due Process – On Site Visits

As part of the on-site review, each team is assigned to conduct interviews of specific members of the institution. These interviews include board members, administrative director, adult education instructors, adult students, counselors, Career Link staff, and interviews with representatives from business and industry who hire the institution’s adult education students. Each site team group is given a list of specific questions to ensure consistency from one institution to the next. These interviews give the site reviewers a chance to further validate evidence provided in the self-study through a consensus of the group.

Also See Attachment B1 - Exhibit H & Chapter 9
J2 - On-Site Agenda

F5 - Training Agenda

Exhibits:

Exhibit 42: W1 - Evaluator notes for on-site interview

Criteria: 603.24(b)(2)(ii) Reports on Strengths, Weaknesses and Compliance

After a site-visit, a Preliminary Draft Report is generated and sent back to the applicant institution for review. In the report is a written comment and if applicable - commendation, opportunity for improvement or corrective action. The institution will have 30 days from the date of the Preliminary Draft Report Cover letter to respond in writing to any items in the report and may submit supporting documentation. If the institution does respond to the Preliminary Draft Report, the response will be reviewed by the SAC and if necessary, the site team members. The Preliminary Draft Report will be amended to reflect any changes and before being given to the IAAG for their review and recommendation of accreditation status.

Exhibits:

Exhibit 43: X1 - Preliminary Draft Report Letter - York

Criteria 603.24(b)(2)(iii) Response to Report

As stated in the previous criteria, the career and technology center has an opportunity to respond to the Preliminary Draft Report up to 30 days of the date of the Preliminary Draft Report cover letter. The SAC will then give the Preliminary Draft Report to the IAAG for review and they will make a recommendation of accreditation status to the SAC. The SAC will complete a Final Draft report with recommended accreditation status to the Director, Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE). The Director will then present the Final Draft Report to the Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education for their review. The Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education will send the Final Draft Report with BCTE's accreditation status recommendation to the institution and provide an opportunity for the institution to appeal the recommendation within 30 days of the Final Draft report.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9

Exhibits:

Exhibit 45: Y1 - York Response to Draft Report

Criteria: 603.324(b)(2)(iv) Adverse Action and Right to Appeal

The Accreditation System of Institutions for Adult Education Guidelines provides institutions

with information regarding the right to appeal an adverse decision. When an appeal is filed by the institution within 30 days of receipt of the Final Draft Report, PSBCTE will provide written notice to the parties of receiving the appeal, assign a hearing officer so that a hearing may be held to develop a full and accurate record for the Pennsylvania State Board for Vocational Education's consideration. The PSBCTE will review the full record, discuss issues raised, and issue a written final decision including a statement of its reasons thereof. If, after the appeal the decision stands, the institution will be permitted to reapply for accreditation with PDE one (1) year from the denial letter.

PSBCTE has had no institutions file an appeal to an adverse decision of an accreditation.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: (b)(2)(v) Published Appeals Procedures

All procedures regarding the appeal process for PPPCTE accreditation are published in the ASIAE Administrative Guidelines which are distributed during adult education conferences and workshops. The guidelines are available on the PDE website for public viewing.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9
U1 - PDE Website

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24(b)(2)(vi) Approval Status Pending Appeal

The Accreditation System of Institutions for Adult Education Guidelines clearly demonstrates the continuation of the approval status of an institution pending an appeal decision.

The Pennsylvania State Board for Career and Technical Education has had no institutions submit an appeal.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24(b)(2)(vii) Notifications: Appeal Decisions

The Pennsylvania State Board for Vocational Education, at this time, has had no occasion to apply the appeal process. The Department is prepared to address appeals as stated in the PPPCTE Guidelines.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 9

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24 (d)(1) Promote Set of Ethical Standards

As part of the self-study and on site review, the site evaluation team reviews the policies and practices of the career and technical center to ensure the ethical value of its responsibilities to the students and stakeholders.

Also See Attachment B1 - Appendix B, Standard B L1 - Preliminary Draft Report

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion

Criteria: 603.24(d)(2) Maintains Review in Relation to Ethical Practices

All ethical practices of institutions applying for PPPCTE Accreditation are reviewed on site and again in the annual report. Any triggers of deficiencies in these areas will require the career and technical center to provide more information or a corrective action plan.

Also See Attachment B1 - Chapter 12 and Appendix B, Standard B
Q1 - Self Study
M2 - Annual Report Review

Exhibits:

No Exhibits for this Criterion