



2025-2026 General Assembly

HOUSE BILL 358:

Continuing Budget Operations Part II, Sec. 2.11:

Revise Higher Education Accreditation Requirements

Analysis of: S.L. 2025-92, Sec. 2.11

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Prepared by: Legislative Analysis
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Section 2.11 of S.L. 2025-92 (House Bill 358) revises accreditation requirements for constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and community colleges in the State by doing the following:

- Defining "institutional accrediting agency" as an accrediting agency that is recognized as an institutional accrediting agency by the United States Department of Education.
- Defining "preferred accrediting agency" as an accrediting agency that (1) is an institutional accrediting agency and (2) is one of seven listed accrediting agencies including the Commission for Public Higher Education.
- Repealing the defined term "regional accrediting agency" and replacing references in statute to regional accrediting agencies with references to institutional or preferred accrediting agencies.
- Repealing provisions prohibiting consecutive accreditation by the same accrediting agency in consecutive accrediting cycles of a constituent institution or community college.
- Requiring that a constituent institution or community college maintain accreditation from a preferred accrediting agency.
- Providing that a constituent institution or community college can receive accreditation from an institution that is not a preferred accrediting agency, if the constituent institution or community college continues to maintain accreditation from a preferred accrediting agency.
- Requiring virtual education providers, other than North Carolina Virtual Public School, that partner with local school administrative units to be accredited by an accrediting agency such as Cognia or an institutional accrediting agency.
- Providing that private institutions that are not eligible to be considered for accreditation can be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency that is designated by the State Education Assistance Authority.
- Making various other conforming and technical changes.

This section became effective September 30, 2025.

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