

**World • Indigenous • Nations • Higher • Education • Consortium**

# **WINHEC ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK**

**HIGHER EDUCATION, THIRD EDITION**

## **WINHEC ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY**

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## **PREAMBLE**

### **The Concept and Formation of a World Indigenous Accreditation Authority**

#### **WINHEC Founding Principles:**

This World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium was founded on the principles outlined in the following Articles of the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Article #12,

Indigenous Peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of human remains.

Article #13,

Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Article #14,

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article #15,

Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

In addition the Consortium supports the Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education (1999) in the belief that Indigenous people have the right to be Indigenous.

### **WINHEC Vision:**

“We gather as Indigenous Peoples of our respective nations recognizing and reaffirming the educational rights of all Indigenous Peoples. We share the vision of all Indigenous Peoples of the world united in the collective synergy of self determination through control of higher education. Committed to building partnerships that restore and retain Indigenous spirituality, cultures and languages, homelands, social systems, economic systems and self determination.”

### **WINHEC Mission:**

Provide a forum and support for Indigenous peoples to pursue common goals through higher education.

### **WINHEC Goals:**

The purpose of WINHEC is to provide an international forum and support for Indigenous Peoples to pursue common goals through higher education, including but not limited to:

1. Accelerating the articulation of Indigenous epistemologies (ways of knowing, education, philosophy, and research);
2. Protecting and enhancing Indigenous spiritual beliefs, culture and languages through higher education;
3. Advancing the social, economical, and political status of Indigenous Peoples that contribute to the well-being of Indigenous communities through higher education;
4. Creating an accreditation body for Indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify common criteria, practices and principles by which Indigenous Peoples live;
5. Recognizing the significance of Indigenous education;
6. Creating a global network for sharing knowledge through exchange forums and state of the art technology;
7. Recognizing the educational rights of Indigenous Peoples;
8. Protecting, preserving and advocating Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights, in particular the reaffirming and observance of the Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples (June, 1993); and
9. Promoting the maintenance, retention and advancement of traditional Indigenous bodies of knowledge.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook presents a compilation of information related to the accreditation of Indigenous-serving postsecondary institutions and programs by the Accreditation Authority established in 2003 on behalf of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (see resolution on pg. 21). It includes:

1. the guiding principles and general information about accreditation, its nature and purposes;
2. the eligibility requirements for an Applicant for Accreditation;
3. a procedural guide outlining the application process;
4. a procedural guide outlining the accreditation review process;
5. guidelines for implementing cultural standards and self-study;
6. sample cultural standards and self-assessment guide; and
7. a glossary of words and terms included in the Handbook.

Institutions seeking initial accreditation are provided copies of this Handbook to guide their application, self-study and other preparations for a site visit by an external review team (elements of this Handbook are adapted from the U.S. Northwest Association of Colleges and Universities Accreditation Handbook).

Accreditation is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the cultural and educational community being served. In the case of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, this recognition is extended to include significant participation by the Indigenous peoples to be served through the respective institution/program, including responsibility for establishing review criteria and participating in the self-study and review process. An underlying consideration in the implementation of this accreditation process is the inherent diversity of Indigenous cultural histories, traditions and world views, all of which must not only be acknowledged, but must be recognized and celebrated as a valued asset and serve as one of the fundamental premises on which the accreditation process rests.

In postsecondary education, accreditation performs a number of important functions, including the validation of credibility on the part of the public being served, and encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness. The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, and achievements, and then provides the expert critiques and suggestions of an external review team, and the recommendations of the accrediting body. Since the accreditation is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged toward continued self-study and improvement.

Accreditation of institutions and specialized programs is granted by a number of national and regional organizations, each representing a lens through which to examine the quality and integrity of the institutions/programs in question. Though each of these organizations has its distinctive definitions of eligibility, criteria for accreditation, and operating procedures, most of them undertake accreditation as one means of assuring the public constituencies about the quality and integrity of the services rendered. While the procedures of the various national and professional accrediting structures differ somewhat in detail, each is intended to fulfill the following purposes:

1. foster quality assurance in postsecondary education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness in a context that values diversity and reflects locally defined definitions of what constitutes quality and effectiveness;
2. encourage institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;
3. insure the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution/program has clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so; and
4. provide counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions.

Accreditation by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority means that an Indigenous-serving postsecondary institution/program's own goals are soundly conceived, that its educational and cultural programs have been intelligently devised, and that its purposes are being accomplished in a manner that should continue to merit confidence by the Indigenous constituencies being served.

When granted, accreditation applies to the entire institution/program in operation at the time of the most recent full-scale review. It indicates that the institution/program has been carefully and thoroughly examined and has been found to be achieving its own particular purposes in a satisfactory manner.

Accreditation by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority takes into account and supports the diversity which exists among Indigenous-serving postsecondary institutions. Quality is evaluated in terms of the purposes the institution seeks to accomplish. Once deemed to have met the criteria established by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority and outlined in this Handbook, candidate institutions and programs become full voting members of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority Board with all the rights and privileges specified in the enclosed Guiding Principles.

## **Guiding Principles for WINHEC Accreditation Authority**

[Adopted by WINHEC Executive Board on Nov. 10, 2002]

Following are the guiding principles considered in the formation of an Indigenous higher education accrediting system for implementation under the auspices of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium.

1. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will serve as a vehicle for strengthening and validating Indigenous higher education institutions and programs based on standards and procedures developed and implemented by WINHEC member institutions.
2. The criteria for accreditation review will be founded upon the diverse Indigenous language and cultural beliefs, protocols, laws and practices that provide the epistemological and pedagogical basis for the institutions and programs under review, and will be applied in a manner that is consistent with the principles outlined in the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 1994 Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the 1999 Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education.
3. The primary focus of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority will be the internal congruence and cultural integrity of the institutions/programs under review, with secondary consideration given to linkages with external/mainstream institutions and accreditation systems.
4. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will provide a means for institution-level accreditation of Indigenous-controlled higher education institutions, as well as program-level accreditation of Indigenous-oriented programs within Indigenous and mainstream institutions (including teacher education programs).
5. The accreditation review process will include the role of locally respected Elders and recognized cultural practitioners, and the use of the heritage language(s) as reflected in the institution/program under review.
6. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will promote Indigenous research that is respectful of cultural and intellectual property rights and closely integrated with the communities being served.
7. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority self-study process will be guided by local cultural standards that are developed by the respective Indigenous communities, and thus will provide international recognition and validation for educational initiatives grounded in Indigenous world views, knowledge systems and ways of knowing.
8. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority encourages opportunities to promote, participate and collaborate with others through a variety of arrangements that support indigenous efficacy and cultural congruency of the institutions/programs within the indigenous, non-indigenous and mainstream review processes (including joint accreditation and reciprocal agreements).

9. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority seeks to engage in collaborations and partnerships with local, regional and national accreditation bodies to the extent such collaborations and partnerships are mutually beneficial to our Indigenous institutions and programs seeking review and accreditation.
10. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will provide accredited institutions and programs with access to the following WINHEC services:
  - a. Each accredited institutional member shall receive formal acknowledgement and recognition of its accreditation status in the form of an official certificate from WINHEC, have one vote on the Accreditation Authority Board, and be invited to participate in program reviews of other Applicants for Accreditation.
  - b. Each accredited member shall be included in the planning and implementation of cooperative activities (e.g., conferences, scholar/student exchanges, shared programs/curricula, cooperative research initiatives) of WINHEC programs and institutions.
  - c. Each accredited member shall have opportunities to enroll students in and contribute to the offerings associated with articulated international baccalaureate and graduate degree programs focusing on Indigenous studies, including the acceptance of approved transfer credits among all member programs and institutions.
  - d. Accredited members shall have opportunities for faculty and students to form partnerships on joint research activities and to participate in faculty/student exchanges among member programs and institutions.
  - e. Accredited members shall be responsible for contributing to and have access to a database of Indigenous scholars for external review of research papers, theses, grant proposals, manuscripts, etc.
  - f. Accredited members shall be invited to participate in and contribute to international seminars, conferences, policy papers and comparable initiatives that pertain to the interests of the member programs and institutions.

#### Categories of Recognition

The WINHEC Accreditation Authority offers three options for recognition and membership aimed at encouraging a variety of programs and institutions to pursue the WINHEC mission and goals on behalf of the Indigenous communities they serve.

WINHEC Accreditation is reserved for education programs or institutions that provide formal academic credentials (diplomas, degrees, certificates) based on completion of a recognized course of study associated with the credentials awarded. WINHEC accreditation recognizes schools, colleges and related formal educational institutions and programs for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the cultural and educational



community being served. In the case of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, this recognition is extended to include significant participation by the Indigenous peoples to be served through the respective institution/program, including responsibility for participating in the self-study and review process. An underlying consideration in the implementation of this accreditation process is the inherent diversity of Indigenous cultural histories, traditions and world views, all of which must not only be acknowledged, but must be recognized and celebrated as a valued asset and serve as one of the fundamental premises on which the accreditation process rests.

WINHEC Affirmation is an endorsement process by which an Indigenous-serving educational entity submits documentation in accordance with WINHEC eligibility requirements demonstrating commitment to recognized principles of cultural integrity and educational benefit on behalf of the Indigenous people being served.

WINHEC Affiliation is a form of recognition signifying common purpose and shared commitment to serving the educational needs of Indigenous peoples and communities. Affiliation status may be extended to any educational entity that is formally engaged with an accredited WINHEC program or institution.

## **ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Eligibility Requirements of Applicants for Accreditation**

Applicants for accreditation shall submit a Letter of Intent requesting approval of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority to prepare an eligibility application portfolio, and if accepted, to prepare a self-study addressing the criteria for review outlined in the enclosed guidelines. Applicants may be either an Indigenous-serving institution (e.g. a Tribal College or Wananga), or an Indigenous-serving program contained within a mainstream institution, and the review process will be adjusted accordingly. Programs will be assessed with regard to their integrity and support in the context of the host institution. Applicants are encouraged to attend and participate in at least one annual meeting of the WINHEC Board before submitting an application for accreditation.

The characteristics of an institution/program and the conditions required by the Accreditation Authority for consideration as an Applicant for Accreditation, for initial accreditation, and for continued membership follow below. Each component of the eligibility requirements is a pre-condition that relates to the appropriate guidelines and criteria by which quality, integrity, effectiveness and accreditation are evaluated. The following essential eligibility requirements must be met for consideration as an Applicant for Accreditation:

#### **1. AUTHORITY**

The institution/program is authorized to operate by an education authority approved by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or controlling entity as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates (i.e. tribe, state, province, nation).

#### **2. MISSION AND GOALS**

The institution/program's mission is clearly defined and adopted by its oversight board

consistent with its legal authorization, and is appropriate to an institution/program of higher education. The institution/program's particular purpose is to serve the educational interests of its Indigenous students and communities, and adequate resources are allocated for the intended purpose and used accordingly.

3. INSTITUTIONAL/PROGRAM INTEGRITY

The institution/program is governed and administered with respect for and in consideration of the educational needs and legitimate claims of the constituencies it serves, as determined by its chartered purposes and accredited status.

4. CULTURAL STANDARDS

The institution/program has identified a locally appropriate and accepted set of “Cultural Standards” representing local definitions of cultural knowledge, beliefs, protocols, laws and practices against which its performance can be reviewed and evaluated (see example in Appendix A). These local Cultural Standards must be defined by Indigenous people from the context in which they will be used, and be submitted to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority for approval as a pre-condition for consideration of eligibility.

5. OVERSIGHT BOARD

The institution/program has a functioning oversight board responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution/programs to ensure that the institution/program's Indigenous mission is being achieved. The oversight board has at least five voting members, a majority of whom are representative of the Indigenous communities being served and have no contractual, employment, or personal financial interest in the institution/program.

6. PERSON IN CHARGE

The institution/program employs a responsible administrative authority who is appointed by the oversight board and whose principal responsibility is for the well-being of the institution/program. The person in charge may not serve as the chair of the institution's oversight board.

7. ADMINISTRATION

The institution/program provides the administrative and support services necessary to achieve its mission and meet its goals.

8. ACADEMIC APPOINTEES

The institution/program employs a core of full-time, qualified academic faculty. The academic personnel are representative of the Indigenous populations being served and adequate in number and qualifications to meet its obligations toward achievement of the institution/program's mission and goals. Faculty members are involved in the formulation of institutional policy and participate in academic planning, curriculum development and review, student academic advising, institutional/program governance and are evaluated in a periodic and systematic manner. Individual faculty qualifications reflect the mission and goals of the institution/program and are consistent with the educational needs of the Indigenous people being served.

**9. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

The institution/program offers one or more educational programs that are congruent with its mission and are conducted at levels of quality and rigor appropriate to the credentials offered. It provides a locus or environment in which the learning experience is enriched through interaction with Indigenous people and communities.

**10. INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND RELATED INSTRUCTION**

The institution/program includes a core body of studies for all students that are grounded in Indigenous knowledge, world views and ways of knowing.

**11. COMMUNITY LEARNING RESOURCES**

The institution/program provides community resources and services for students and faculty appropriate to its mission and for all of its educational programs wherever located and however delivered.

**12. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The applicant institution/program subscribes to internationally recognized conventions related to the cultural and intellectual property rights of Indigenous peoples (including the Mataatua Declaration), as well as all locally applicable guidelines for research in Indigenous settings. The institution/program's faculty members and students are free to examine and test established views and present unpopular opinions appropriate to their area of study, as judged by the Indigenous and academic/educational community.

**13. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

The institution/program identifies and publishes the expected learning outcomes for each of its credentialing programs and provides the appropriate instruction, guidance and support necessary to insure that students achieve these outcomes.

**14. ADMISSIONS**

The institution/program publishes its student admission policy which specifies the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admission procedures and practices.

**15. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

The institution/program publishes in appropriate publications and/or electronic sources, accurate and current information that describes purposes and objectives, admission requirements and procedures, academic rules and regulations directly affecting students, program and course requirements, costs and refund policies, student rights and responsibilities, academic credentials of faculty and administrators, and other items relative to the relationship of the institution/program to the students and Indigenous populations being served.

**16. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The institution/program verifies a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to achieve its mission and meet its goals within an annual

balanced operating budget, under the jurisdiction of the appropriate oversight board.

**17. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

The institution/program's financial records are externally audited annually by an independent certified public accountant or on a regular schedule by an authorized audit agency.

**18. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

The institution/program systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures (involving Indigenous participation), assesses the extent to which it fulfills its mission and achieves its goals, and periodically publishes the results to its constituencies, including the principal Indigenous peoples being served.

**19. OPERATIONAL STATUS**

The institution/program will have completed at least one year of its principal educational programs and is operational with students actively pursuing its programs at the time of consideration as an Applicant for Accreditation.

**20. DISCLOSURE**

The institution/program discloses to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority any and all such information as the Authority may require to carry out its review and accreditation functions, within the scope of applicable cultural protocols and legal privacy requirements.

**21. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY**

The institution/program accepts these eligibility conditions and related policies of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority and agrees to comply with these conditions and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with Authority policy. Further, the institution/program agrees that the Accreditation Authority may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or members of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its status with the Authority. The Authority treats institutional self-study reports and evaluation committee reports as confidential. The institution, however, may choose to release the documents.

**Overview of the Accreditation Review Process**

The WINHEC Accreditation Authority shall appoint an accreditation review team made up of representatives from at least four member institutions/programs, two of which are from the same national context as the applicant institution/program. The review team shall include a minimum of one Elder who has been associated with a member program or institution.

The review team shall prepare a report based on a review of the self-study and an on-site visit to the candidate program/institution. This report (including the self-study) shall be submitted to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority for final consideration of membership approval.

The review process to be jointly conducted by the institution and the Accreditation Authority includes the following steps:

1. A representative of the Authority contacts the applicant institution/program upon receipt of a Letter of Intent seeking to apply for WINHEC accreditation, at which time it is determined if the program/institution should proceed with an Eligibility Application Portfolio. Upon submission and approval of the Eligibility Application Portfolio, the program/institution conducts a self-study.
2. The institution/program analyzes itself through a self-study, as outlined in the next section. Copies are mailed to the review team members four to six weeks before the committee visit.
3. Review team members study the institutional self-study report, visit the institution/program and prepare a written report.
4. A draft report from the review team is prepared and sent to the institution/program chair. The chair is given an opportunity to respond to the review team's written report before the final report is prepared.
5. The team's final report is mailed to the chair and the Accreditation Authority board members four to six weeks before the next scheduled board meeting.
6. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority Board reviews the institution/program self-study and the review team's report, interviews the review team chair and if necessary, the person in charge of the institution/program, and takes action on the basis of information obtained. These actions may include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. The Authority may grant full accreditation with all rights and privileges thereof, which will be subject to renewal in 10 years.
  - b. The Authority may grant a provisional accreditation, stipulating specific adjustments and modifications required and a timeframe in which they must be addressed. If the modifications are met in the specified time, full accreditation will be granted. If the modifications are not met as specified, the Authority may withdraw further recognition, or extend the provisional status until the modifications are met.
  - c. The Authority may grant a two year preparation period for the accreditation self-study of programs, departments, colleges or universities that are part of a mainstream higher education institution to ensure that the applicant understands the transformation of the mainstream institution towards indigeniety.
7. If at any time during the 10-year full accreditation period the Accreditation Authority is notified that an accredited institution/program no longer meets the minimal conditions under which it was originally accredited, the Authority will review the information to determine if it warrants investigation, if so, an investigation will be conducted and recommendations will be presented to the Accreditation Board for action. If deemed appropriate, the Authority reserves the right to rescind accreditation under its auspices.

The institution/program involved may appeal such action to the WINHEC Executive Board for further consideration.

8. Institutions/programs that receive full accreditation are required to submit an Interim Report to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority at the 5-year mark of the 10-year period of full accreditation.

The review process is a major undertaking, and a full academic year is considered to be the minimum working time needed. Preparation should normally begin more than a year before the date of the site visit. The Authority permits the withdrawal of a request for accreditation at any time (even after evaluation) prior to final action.

### **Institutional/Program Commitments and Responsibilities**

The effectiveness of self-regulatory accreditation depends upon an institution/program's acceptance of certain responsibilities, including involvement in and commitment to the accreditation process. An institution/program is expected to conduct a self-study at the interval specified by the Accreditation Authority and, at the conclusion of the self-study, accept an honest and forthright peer assessment of institutional strengths and weaknesses. The self-study is to assess every aspect of the institution; involve personnel from all segments of the institution/program, including academic personnel, staff, students, administration, Indigenous community members and the oversight board; and, provide a comprehensive analysis of the institution/program, identifying strengths and weaknesses.

An institution/program must be committed to participation in the activities and decisions of the Accreditation Authority. This commitment includes a willingness to participate in the decision-making processes of the Authority and adherence to all policies and procedures, including those for reporting changes within the institution/program. Only if institutions accept seriously the responsibilities of membership will the validity and vitality of the WINHEC accreditation process be ensured. In those instances where such institutional commitment and support is lacking in reference to Indigenous higher education programs, WINHEC may be requested to conduct an audit of institutional responsibilities vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples as judged against current international standards, and offer recommendations regarding appropriate steps that can be taken to bring the institution in alignment with such standards.

Each member institution/program is responsible for ensuring integrity in all operations dealing with its constituencies, in its relations with other member institutions, and in its accreditation activities with the WINHEC Accreditation Authority. Each institution/program is expected to provide the Authority access to all parts of its operation and to provide accurate information about the institution's affairs, including reports of other accrediting, licensing, and auditing agencies. In the spirit of collegiality, institution/programs are expected to cooperate fully during all aspects of the process of evaluation: the preliminary visit in preparations for an evaluation visit, the evaluation itself, and any follow-up to the evaluation visit. Institutions are also expected to provide the Authority, or its representatives, with information requested during evaluations, enabling evaluators to perform their duties with efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Costs of WINHEC Accreditation Authority Review Process**

Accreditation Reveiw Expenses. The logistical costs (travel, lodging, meals, etc.) of a WINHEC Accreditation Authority review process are the responsibility of the applicant institution/program. A projected budget for such expenses is to be submitted at the time of the initial application and is considered in conjunction with other conditions for determining acceptance as an Applicant for Accreditation. In addition, a US\$1000 application fee is to be paid by the institution/program to the Accreditation Authority, which covers the administrative and communication costs associated with the review, including the recruitment of review team members and the cost of printing and distributing the report of the self-study committee to the review team. The application fee also includes the first-year Accreditation Authority membership dues if approved for accreditation.

## **ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY**

The institution/program self-study is regarded as the most significant part of the accreditation process. The benefits to the institution/program will be proportional to the incisiveness of the inquiry. The aim of the self-study is to conduct a critical examination of the institutional/program services under review to determine the degree to which they achieve the internal goals of the institution/program and meet the external review criteria and cultural guidelines endorsed by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority. A well-conducted self-study should result in a renewed common effort within the institution/program to consolidate and improve the whole.

Self-study should be viewed as an ongoing process to:

- analyze the resources and effectiveness of the institution/program in fulfilling its mission as it relates to serving the educational needs of Indigenous people;
- demonstrate that the achievements of students who complete programs are commensurate with the credentials or other recognitions awarded;
- appraise the relationship of all the institution/program's activities to its purposes as an Indigenous-serving institution/program; and
- provide a sound basis for institution/program planning and improvement.

The institution/program self-study should assess student achievement with respect to programs and services offered to accomplish its educational purposes. Prime consideration is to be placed on performance as it relates the achievement of improved educational opportunities that are consistent with the cultural aspirations of the Indigenous peoples and communities being served.

The self-study presented to the Accreditation Authority in preparation for a full review team visit must be of a comprehensive type, must evaluate the entire institution/program, and must address each of the Authority's requirements. The objectives of the self-study effort should be clearly and specifically stated, the methodology worked out in advance, and a time schedule set. It is important that those involved in the study have ready access to all relevant data and materials. There must be frequent and widely disseminated reports of progress during the course of the ongoing self-study so a high level of interest can be maintained.

**Role of Self-Study.** The WINHEC Accreditation Authority, while requiring the submission of a self-study report in connection with a review for accreditation, recognizes that the self-study process is more beneficial to the institution/program when it is undertaken in response to significant needs felt by the Indigenous community being served. Accordingly, a variety of approaches to self-study are acceptable. An institution/program is permitted to propose some variation in the design of the self-study which it considers to be of intrinsic value as long as the overarching purposes of a comprehensive self-study are met and all Authority requirements are addressed. Representatives of the institution/program and the Authority should come to a clear



agreement, well ahead of the initiation of the self-study process, concerning any particular needs which the institution/program hopes to have the self-study address. These understandings should be confirmed, in writing, by the Accreditation Authority.

Even though educational institution/programs are faced with many demands and limited resources, their quest for continuing improvement implies that they support a mechanism for ongoing self-analysis. An overall design for continuing self-analysis, once it has been set up, provides a framework for data-gathering and analysis. This need not be costly in a small, simply organized institution/program. The nature of the organizational set-up for self-study will vary according to the scope, nature, and emphasis of the self-study.

Self-Study Steering Committee. Selection of the right persons to serve on the self-study steering committee is very important. Institution/program groups characterized by lack of bias, by objectivity, and by the ability to work cooperatively and to forge compromises should be organized to mount a self-study. Strong, skillful, and committed leadership is essential and the selection of the coordinator of the study is therefore of paramount importance. It is important to have a steering committee broadly representative of the institution/program under review and the Indigenous communities being served so that a comprehensive assessment may be promoted. Also, others whose interests might be affected by the results of the study should in some way be involved.

How the leadership and the participating personnel for the self-study are selected, whether by election, appointment, or some combination of both, should be resolved in accordance with the tradition and climate of the institution/program. Whatever the method of selection, it is imperative that sufficient time for effective participation be cleared and that adequate staff support be provided.

Most institution/programs have multiple constituencies who have somewhat differing interests and values. An institution/program organizing for self-study should have these various points of view in mind as it makes its plans and staffs its committees. The role of the oversight board in the self-study process should be carefully considered. The institution/program should keep board members informed of policy matters addressed in the self-study.

Development and Form of the Report. Each committee or sub-group responsible for the various aspects of the study shall prepare a report in which it sets forth the issues addressed, the data gathered and the means by which it gathered them, the techniques employed in analyzing the data, and a statement indicating how the results can be used to increase institution/program effectiveness. The separate reports shall be brought together by the steering committee, which has the responsibility for preparing a single, unified report.

The "Cultural Standards and Guidelines for Self-Study" which follows below provides a suggested framework of essential considerations for the self-study and for the external review team. An institution/program undergoing review is encouraged to design a narrative report best suited to its mission and supported by the necessary data presented in a concise and readable form. When preparing the self-study report, the following information should be included:

- Goals/outcomes to be achieved through the self-study review.
- General description of the program/institution including the vision and mission statement, and the cultural standards which guide and provide direction to the program/institution, and how they are integrated throughout the various programs, research, services and outreach programs.
- Describe the strengths, successes, challenges and directions for improvement of the program/institution.

A summary chapter of findings and recommendations evolving from the self-study process should be prepared. Some means to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the self-study should be specified and included as part of the summary chapter. At the end of each section of the self-study, a list of the supporting documents that will be available for use by the external review team should be provided.

Self Study Process Summary. Recommendations for organizing and conducting a comprehensive self-study in preparation for a WINHEC Accreditation Authority review:

1. Appoint a steering committee of a size and representation appropriate to the complexity of the institution/program under review and with strong leadership to plan the work and monitor the editing of the final report. The steering committee should include strong representation from the Indigenous communities being served, including respected Elders from those communities.
2. Set up whatever task forces and committees the steering committee decides are needed, with the first task to become thoroughly familiar with the WINHEC Accreditation Handbook and other documents or materials identified by the steering committee.
3. Determine specifically what factual and statistical data are required and request appropriate officials or committees to assemble such data. The steering committee should supply ideas on format and inform the various constituencies about the self-study.
4. Emphasize relationships among, as well as performance within, units and communities involved; encourage healthy cross- fertilization of ideas. The self-study needs to represent the entire institution/program and the cultural context in which it operates.
5. Highlight the role of the chief executive officer, which is to provide maximum support for the self-study, to stimulate without dominating, and to see that the results are translated into appropriate action and/or long-range plans.
6. Adopt a specific timetable; make it realistic and insist on maintaining it. Set a publication date for the self-study report at least eight weeks before the external review team is due to arrive so that it can be in the hands of the team four to six weeks before the visit. Having determined the completion date, allow a month preceding that for final editing and duplicating.

7. Carry the results of the self-study through to action. Renewed thinking, patterns, proposals, and very likely new unity will emerge during the process. The institution/program should see that each proposal is channeled in the proper direction and is consistently followed up.

### CULTURAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR SELF-STUDY

The following instructions are based on the guiding principles adopted by the WINHEC Executive Board in the establishment of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority:

1. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will serve as a vehicle for strengthening and validating Indigenous higher education institutions and programs based on standards and procedures developed and implemented by WINHEC member institutions.
2. The criteria for accreditation review will be founded upon the local Indigenous language and cultural knowledge, beliefs, protocols, laws and practices that provide the epistemological and pedagogical basis for the institutions and programs under review.
3. The primary focus of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority will be the internal congruence and cultural integrity of the institutions/programs under review, with secondary consideration given to linkages with external/mainstream institutions and accreditation systems.
4. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will provide a means for institution-level accreditation of Indigenous-controlled higher education institutions, as well as program-level accreditation of Indigenous-oriented programs within Indigenous and mainstream institutions (including teacher education programs).
5. The accreditation review process will include the role of locally respected Elders and recognized cultural practitioners, and the use of the heritage language(s) and appropriate cultural protocols as reflected in the institution/program under review.
6. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority will promote Indigenous research that is respectful of cultural and intellectual property rights and closely integrated with the communities being served.
7. The WINHEC Accreditation Authority self-study process will be guided by local cultural standards that are developed by the respective Indigenous community, and thus will provide international recognition and validation for educational initiatives grounded in Indigenous world views, knowledge systems and ways of knowing.

As indicated in Guiding Principle #7, one of the pre-conditions for a WINHEC Accreditation Authority review is the identification of a locally appropriate and accepted set of “Cultural Standards” against which the cultural integrity of the institution/program can be reviewed and assessed (see example in Appendix A). “Cultural Standards” refers here to a locally defined set of guidelines, principles and/or values that reflect the cultural essence to which the goals of the

particular program or institution are directed and under which it operates. The intent is to affirm the performance of Indigenous-serving institutions and programs in reference to standards appropriate to the Indigenous cultural contexts involved, rather than impose a single set of generic standards assumed to be equally applicable to all institutions/programs. These local Cultural Standards must be in place and submitted to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority for reference as a pre-condition for consideration of eligibility.

Cultural Standards Development. If such Cultural Standards do not yet exist in the Indigenous region under consideration, the following actions are recommended. Arrange to convene a broadly representative group of Indigenous people from across the region being served who can either develop and adopt an original set of cultural standards/guidelines applicable to the tribes/region/nation involved, or review, adapt and endorse an existing set of cultural standards, such as the Alaska version in Appendix A, or the Hawai'i Guidelines for Culturally Healthy and Responsive Learning Environments (available at <http://www.olelo.hawaii.edu/dual/nhmo/>). Once adopted by the appropriate Indigenous authorities, the relevant cultural standards/guidelines should be submitted to the WINHEC Accreditation Authority to serve as the basis on which the educational and cultural integrity of the respective institution/program will be reviewed for accreditation.

Along with the sample Cultural Standards in Appendix A is a sample self-assessment chart that can be used to document and assess the evidence related to each standard or guideline. Following each standard and related indicators is a section in which to identify supporting evidence for the standard/indicator. The purpose of the supporting documentation is to provide evidence of the manner in which each standard and its elements are met. The evidence, in whatever form it is presented, is intended to provide greater meaning to the narrative and analysis of the self-study and will serve as the basis on which the review team assesses the educational and cultural integrity of the institution/program under review. The Accreditation Authority anticipates three kinds of documentation for use in the self-study as follows:

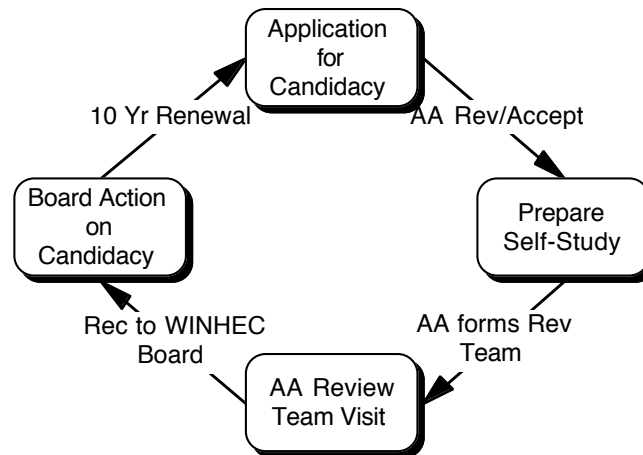
**Required Submissions:** documents or information to be included in the body of the self-study, provided in the appendices, or mailed with the self-study to the members of the external review team and to the office of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority;

**Required Exhibits:** documents or oral and visual information to be summarized in the self-study, provided in the appendices, or made available on site during the visit of the review team;

**Suggested Documents:** documents or information recommended to the institution/program for consideration in preparing the self-study. These should be made available on site to the review team as appropriate.

In preparing the self-study, the institution/program is expected to demonstrate that it meets each standard, each element of the standard, and any applicable policy. The self-study document should be succinct, thoughtful, and analytical including an appraisal of the institution/program's strengths, weaknesses, and achievements relative to each standard.

## WORLD INDIGENOUS NATIONS HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM



### WINHEC ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY Application/Review Cycle

#### Sample Site Visit Review Schedule

Following is a sample schedule for a typical Site Visit by a WINHEC Review Team.

Day 1 - Travel

Day 2 - Opening Talking Circle with administration to review accreditation process, visitation agenda and institutional materials. Orientation/welcome to community and cultural teachings

Day 3 - Welcome/introduction to campus and college programs, meetings and visits with administration, faculty and students

Day 4 - Final meetings and Closing Circle with administration and discussion of reflections on the site visit. Final team meeting to review site visit, and discussion of writing assignments for draft Review Team report and recommendations.

Day 5 - Travel day for return home.

## **GLOSSARY**

**Accreditation** is a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the cultural and educational community being served. In the case of the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, this recognition is extended to include significant participation by the Indigenous peoples to be served through the respective institution/program, including responsibility for establishing review criteria and participating in the self-study and review process. The term “accreditation authority” is used by WINHEC, though it should be considered synonymous with “qualifications authority” or “validation authority,” both of which are used as conventions in some places to refer to the same system outlined here for accreditation.

**Affirmation** is an endorsement process by which an Indigenous-serving educational entity submits documentation in accordance with WINHEC eligibility requirements demonstrating commitment to recognized principles of cultural integrity and educational benefit on behalf of the Indigenous people being served.

**Affiliation** is a form of recognition signifying common purpose and shared commitment to serving the educational needs of Indigenous peoples and communities. Affiliation status may be extended to any educational entity that is formally engaged with an accredited WINHEC program or institution.

**Authority** is used here to refer to the structure that has been established by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium to implement an accreditation review process guided by a Board made up of WINHEC members. The Accreditation Authority derives its authority from the Executive Board of WINHEC, the parent organization.

**Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights** are the legal protections accorded to Indigenous persons and communities over their traditional knowledge and creative endeavors which provide an exclusive right over the interpretation and use of that knowledge. Indigenous people have tabled the Maatutua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations as a means to protect communal rights as well as those accorded to individuals in the context of the western legal system (<http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/mataatua.html>).

**Cultural standards** refers to a set of guidelines or criteria that have been developed by a particular cultural group to represent how they wish to see the values, protocols, laws, traditions and practices to which they subscribe reflected in the programs, communities and institutions that impact their lives.

**Elders** are accorded a central role as the primary source of cultural knowledge in Indigenous societies. However, the identification of “Elders” as culture-bearers is not simply a matter of chronological age, but a function of the respect accorded to individuals in each community who exemplify the values and lifeways of the local culture and who possess the wisdom and

willingness to pass their knowledge on to future generations. Respected Elders serve as the philosophers, professors and visionaries of a cultural community. The title accorded to respected Elders of a community is specific to particular Indigenous traditions, e.g. Kupuna for Native Hawaiians and Kaumatua for Maori.

**Epistemology** is a fancy term used to refer to the way knowledge is constructed and organized within a given cultural tradition. As such, it also reflects the ways of knowing associated with a particular world view and knowledge system.

**Faculty** is used here to refer to individual members of an academic staff associated with a higher education institution or program, recognizing that in some academic traditions, “faculty” refers to the whole of the academic staff associated with a particular disciplinary or professional unit (e.g., a Faculty of Education).

**Local, regional, national and international** designations are intended to distinguish between “local” indigenous communities or clusters of communities that share a common cultural tradition, vs. geographic “regions” that may contain multiple and diverse indigenous peoples, vs. “national” countries that operate under a particular governmental jurisdiction, vs. “international” coalitions that transcend national boundaries. “Nation” may also refer to indigenous jurisdictions in which people exercise self-government.

**Program** as used here is intended to be distinguished from “program of study” in that it refers to the equivalent of an academic department, center, institute or other unit that operates in the context of a host institution with a mandate to address specific Indigenous educational needs. A “program of study” refers to the sequence of courses and other requirements that are the basis for earning a particular degree, certificate or license within an institution.

**Self-Study** is used here to refer to a process of internal or self-review and examination of institutional or program practices in reference to a particular set of criteria or standards against which the review will be conducted.

## **WINHEC EXECUTIVE BOARD RESOLUTION**

**TITLE: Establishment of a WINHEC Accreditation Authority and Adoption of the WINHEC Accreditation Handbook**

WHEREAS, the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium was founded on the principles outlined in Articles 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the 1993 United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and

WHEREAS, the Consortium endorses the Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1994)., and

WHEREAS, the Consortium supports the Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education (1999) in the belief that Indigenous people have the right to be Indigenous, and

WHEREAS, one of the founding goals of the Consortium was to create an accreditation body for indigenous education initiatives and systems that identify common criteria, practices and principles that Indigenous peoples live by, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to create the appropriate structures and mechanisms needed to exercise the rights and achieve the goals outlined above

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Executive Board of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium that we do hereby establish the WINHEC Accreditation Authority, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Board of the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium hereby adopts the WINHEC Accreditation Handbook for initial implementation, as submitted to the Board by the Working Party on Accreditation on August 12, 2003, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium encourages all higher education institutions, programs and related agencies serving Indigenous peoples to adopt the standards of educational quality and cultural integrity established by the WINHEC Accreditation Authority.

Resolution Adopted by WINHEC Executive Board

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Turoa Royal, Executive Chairperson

Date: Aug. 12, 2003



## APPENDIX

### **Sample Cultural Standards and Self Assessment Form**

[Attached is an example of the kind of culturally responsive accreditation review criteria and indicators that are proposed above, using a variation on the Alaska Cultural Standards as a vehicle to illustrate what locally appropriate standards might look like. These are included here to serve only as an illustrative example and are not intended as a prescribed model or format. Each program or institution seeking WINHEC accreditation is expected to develop and submit its own version of locally appropriate cultural standards/guidelines/principles/values/protocols to provide the basis on which it wishes to be assessed. In the end, the WINHEC accreditation process is an assessment of the consistency between what a candidate program/institution professes to be about and its actual practices in reference to the Indigenous peoples being served.]

## **EXAMPLE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**

Based on Alaska Cultural Standards and Indicators for:

Program Graduates  
Instructional Practice  
Curriculum Design  
Operational Characteristics  
Community Involvement

### **PROGRAM GRADUATE INDICATORS**

#### **A. Program graduates are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.**

Graduates who meet this standard are able to:

- 1) assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well-being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member;
- 2) recount their own genealogy and family history;
- 3) acquire and pass on the traditions of their community through oral and written history;
- 4) practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;
- 5) reflect through their own actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them;
- 6) live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.
- 7) determine the place of their cultural community in the regional, state, national and international political and economic systems;

#### **B. Program graduates are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.**

Graduates who meet this standard are able to:

- 1) acquire insights from other cultures without diminishing the integrity of their own;
- 2) make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;

- 3) make appropriate choices regarding the long-term consequences of their actions;
- 4) identify appropriate forms of technology and anticipate the consequences of their use for improving the quality of life in the community.

**C. Program graduates are able to actively participate in various cultural environments.**

Graduates who meet this standard are able to:

- 1) perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate to local cultural traditions;
- 2) make constructive contributions to the governance of their community and the well-being of their family;
- 3) attain a healthy lifestyle through which they are able to maintain their own social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual well-being;
- 4) enter into and function effectively in a variety of cultural settings.

**D. Program graduates are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.**

Graduates who meet this standard are able to:

- 1) acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders;
- 2) participate in and make constructive contributions to the learning activities associated with a traditional camp environment;
- 3) interact with Elders in a loving and respectful way that demonstrates an appreciation of their role as culture-bearers and educators in the community;
- 4) gather oral and written history information from the local community and provide an appropriate interpretation of its cultural meaning and significance;
- 5) identify and utilize appropriate sources of cultural knowledge to find solutions to everyday problems;
- 6) engage in a realistic self-assessment to identify strengths and needs and make appropriate decisions to enhance life skills.

**E. Program graduates demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.**

Graduates who meet this standard are able to:

- 1) recognize and build upon the inter-relationships that exist among the spiritual, natural and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others;
- 2) understand the ecology and geography of the bio-region they inhabit;
- 3) demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between world view and the way knowledge is formed and used;
- 4) determine how ideas and concepts from one knowledge system relate to those derived from other knowledge systems;
- 5) recognize how and why cultures change over time;
- 6) anticipate the changes that occur when different cultural systems come in contact with one another;
- 7) determine how cultural values and beliefs influence the interaction of people from different cultural backgrounds;
- 8) identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE INDICATORS**

#### **A. Instructors incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.**

Faculty who meet this standard:

- 1) recognize the validity and integrity of the traditional knowledge system;
- 2) utilize Elders' expertise in multiple ways in their teaching;
- 3) provide opportunities and time for students to learn in settings where local cultural knowledge and skills are naturally relevant;
- 4) provide opportunities for students to learn through observation and hands-on demonstration of cultural knowledge and skills;
- 5) adhere to the cultural and intellectual property rights that pertain to all aspects of the local knowledge they are addressing;
- 6) continually involve themselves in learning about the local culture.

**B. Instructors use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the students.**

Faculty who meet this standard:

- 1) regularly engage students in appropriate projects and experiential learning activities in the surrounding environment;
- 2) utilize traditional settings such as camps as learning environments for transmitting both cultural and academic knowledge and skills;
- 3) provide integrated learning activities organized around themes of local significance and across subject areas;
- 4) are knowledgeable in all the areas of local history and cultural tradition that may have bearing on their work as an instructor, including the appropriate times for certain knowledge to be taught;
- 5) seek to ground all teaching in a constructive process built on a local cultural foundation.

**C. Instructors participate in community events and activities in an appropriate and supportive way.**

Faculty who meet this standard:

- 1) become active members of the community in which they teach and make positive and culturally appropriate contributions to the well being of that community;
- 2) exercise professional responsibilities in the context of local cultural traditions and expectations;
- 3) maintain a close working relationship with and make appropriate use of the cultural and professional expertise of their co-workers from the local community.

**D. Instructors work closely with parents to achieve a high level of complementary educational expectations between home and college.**

Faculty who meet this standard:

- 1) promote extensive community and parental interaction and involvement in their student's education;
- 2) involve Elders, parents and local leaders in all aspects of instructional planning and implementation;

- 3) seek to continually learn about and build upon the cultural knowledge that students bring with them from their homes and community;
- 4) seek to learn the local heritage language and promote its use in their teaching.

**E. Instructors recognize the full educational potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for them to achieve that potential.**

Faculty who meet this standard:

- 1) recognize cultural differences as positive attributes around which to build appropriate educational experiences;
- 2) provide learning opportunities that help students recognize the integrity of the knowledge they bring with them and use that knowledge as a springboard to new understandings;
- 3) reinforce the student's sense of cultural identity and place in the world;
- 4) acquaint students with the world beyond their home community in ways that expand their horizons while strengthening their own identities;
- 5) recognize the need for all people to understand the importance of learning about other cultures and appreciating what each has to offer.

## CURRICULUM DESIGN INDICATORS

### **A. An Indigenous oriented curriculum reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that students bring with them.**

A curriculum that meets this standard:

- 1) recognizes that all knowledge is imbedded in a larger system of cultural beliefs, values and practices, each with its own integrity and interconnectedness;
- 2) insures that students acquire not only the surface knowledge of their culture, but are also well grounded in the deeper aspects of the associated beliefs and practices;
- 3) incorporates contemporary adaptations along with the historical and traditional aspects of the local culture;
- 4) respects and validates knowledge that has been derived from a variety of cultural traditions;
- 5) provides opportunities for students to study all subjects starting from a base in their own knowledge system.

### **B. An Indigenous oriented curriculum recognizes cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future.**

A curriculum that meets this standard:

- 1) recognizes the contemporary validity of much of the traditional cultural knowledge, values and beliefs, and grounds students learning in the principles and practices associated with that knowledge;
- 2) provides students with an understanding of the dynamics of cultural systems as they change over time, and as they are impacted by external forces;
- 3) incorporates the in-depth study of unique elements of contemporary life in Indigenous communities, such as the protection of land rights, subsistence, sovereignty and self-determination.

### **C. An Indigenous oriented curriculum uses the local language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.**

A curriculum that meets this standard:

- 1) utilizes the local language as a base from which to learn the deeper meanings of the local cultural knowledge, values, beliefs and practices;

- 2) recognizes the depth of knowledge that is associated with the long inhabitation of a particular place and utilizes the study of “place” as a basis for the comparative analysis of contemporary social, political and economic systems;
- 3) incorporates language and cultural immersion experiences wherever in-depth cultural understanding is necessary;
- 4) views all community members as potential teachers and all events in the community as potential learning opportunities;
- 5) treats local cultural knowledge as a means to acquire the conventional curriculum content as outlined in state standards, as well as an end in itself;
- 6) makes appropriate use of modern tools and technology to help document and transmit traditional cultural knowledge;
- 7) is sensitive to traditional cultural protocol, including role of spirituality, as it relates to appropriate uses of local knowledge.

**D. An Indigenous oriented curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.**

A curriculum that meets this standard:

- 1) draws parallels between knowledge derived from oral tradition and that derived from books;
- 2) engages students in the construction of new knowledge and understandings that contribute to an ever-expanding view of the world.

**E. An Indigenous oriented curriculum situates local knowledge and actions in a global context.**

A curriculum that meets this standard:

- 1) encourages students to consider the inter-relationship between their local circumstances and the global community;
- 2) conveys to students that every culture and community contributes to, at the same time that it receives from the global knowledge base;
- 3) incorporates the educational principles outlined in the Coolongatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education.



## OPERATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS INDICATORS

### **A. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program fosters the on-going participation of Elders in all aspects of the education process.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) maintains multiple avenues for Elders to interact formally and informally with students at all times;
- 2) provides opportunities for students to regularly engage in the documenting of Elders' cultural knowledge and produce appropriate print and multimedia materials that share this knowledge with others;
- 3) includes explicit statements regarding the cultural values that are fostered in the community and integrates those values in all aspects of the education program and operation;
- 4) utilizes educational models that are grounded in the traditional world view and ways of knowing associated with the cultural knowledge system reflected in the community.

### **B. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program provides multiple avenues for students to access the learning that is offered, as well as multiple forms of assessment for students to demonstrate what they have learned.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) utilizes a broad range of culturally appropriate performance standards to assess student knowledge and skills;
- 2) encourages and supports experientially oriented approaches to education that makes extensive use of community-based resources and expertise;
- 3) provides cultural and language immersion programs in which student acquire in-depth understanding of the culture of which they are members;
- 4) helps students develop the capacity to assess their own strengths and weaknesses and make appropriate decisions based on such a self-assessment.

### **C. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program provides opportunities for students to learn in and/or about their heritage language.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) provides language immersion opportunities for students who wish to learn in their heritage language;
- 2) offers courses that acquaint all students with the heritage language of the local community;
- 3) makes available reading materials and courses through which students can acquire literacy in the heritage language;

**D. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program has a high level of involvement of professional staff who are of the same cultural background as the students with whom they are working.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) encourages and supports the professional development of local personnel to assume teaching and administrative roles in the program;
- 2) recruits and hires instructors whose background is similar to that of the students they will be teaching;
- 3) provides a cultural orientation and mentoring program for new personnel to learn about and adjust to the cultural expectations and practices of the surrounding community;
- 4) fosters and supports opportunities for staff to participate in professional activities and associations that help them expand their repertoire of cultural knowledge and pedagogical skills.

**E. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program consists of facilities that are compatible with the community environment in which they are situated.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) provides a physical environment that is inviting and readily accessible for local people to enter and utilize;
- 2) makes use of facilities throughout the community to demonstrate that education is a community-wide process involving everyone as teachers;
- 3) utilizes local expertise, including students, to provide culturally appropriate displays of arts, crafts and other forms of decoration and space design.

**F. An Indigenous oriented educational institution/program fosters extensive on-going participation, communication and interaction between program and community personnel.**

A program that meets this standard:

- 1) holds regular formal and informal events bringing together students, parents, instructors and other program and community personnel to review, evaluate and plan the educational program that is being offered;
- 2) provides regular opportunities for community participation in deliberations and decision-making on policy, curriculum and personnel issues related to the program;
- 3) sponsors on-going activities and events that celebrate and provide opportunities for students to put into practice and display their knowledge of local cultural traditions;
- 4) incorporates the participatory principles outlined in the Coolongatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education.

#### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT INDICATORS**

##### **A. A culturally supportive community incorporates the practice of local cultural traditions in its everyday affairs.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) provides respected Elders with a place of honor in community functions;
- 2) models culturally appropriate behavior in the day-to-day life of the community;
- 3) utilizes traditional socialization practices that reinforce a sense of identity and belonging;
- 4) organizes and encourages participation of members from all ages in regular community-wide, family-oriented events;
- 5) incorporates and reinforces traditional cultural values and beliefs in all formal and informal community functions.

##### **B. A culturally supportive community nurtures the use of the local heritage language.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) recognizes the role that language plays in conveying the deeper aspects of cultural knowledge and traditions;
- 2) sponsors local heritage language immersion opportunities for young children when they are at the critical age for language learning;

- 3) encourages the use of the local heritage language whenever possible in the everyday affairs of the community, including meetings, cultural events, print materials and broadcast media;
- 4) assists in the preparation of curriculum resource material in the local heritage language for use in the education programs;
- 5) provides simultaneous translation services for public meetings where persons unfamiliar with the local heritage language are participants.

**C. A culturally supportive community takes an active role in the education of all its members.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) encourages broad-based support of families in all aspects of their member's education;
- 2) insures active participation by community members in reviewing all decision-making regarding initiatives that have bearing on the education of their members;
- 3) encourages and supports members of the local community who wish to pursue further education;
- 4) engages in subsistence activities, sponsors cultural camps and hosts local events that provide an opportunity for community members to actively participate in and learn appropriate cultural values and behavior;
- 5) provides opportunities for all community members to acquire and practice the appropriate knowledge and skills associated with local cultural traditions.

**D. A culturally supportive community nurtures family responsibility, sense of belonging and cultural identity.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) fosters cross-generational sharing of parenting and child-rearing practices;
- 2) creates a supportive environment for youth and adults to participate in local affairs and acquire the skills to be contributing members of the community;
- 3) adopts the adage, "It takes the whole village to raise a child."

**E. A culturally supportive community assists new members in learning and utilizing local cultural traditions and practices.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) sponsors a cultural orientation and community mentoring program for new personnel to learn about and adjust to the cultural expectations and practices of the community;
- 2) sponsors regular community potlucks to celebrate significant events and to promote on-going interaction and communication between all its members;
- 3) attempts to articulate the cultural knowledge, values and beliefs that it wishes to pass on to future generations;
- 4) establishes a program to insure the availability of Elders' expertise in all aspects of the life in the community, including the educational programs.

**F. A culturally supportive community contributes to all aspects of curriculum design and implementation for local educational programs.**

A community that meets this standard:

- 1) takes an active part in the development of the mission, goals and content of local educational programs;
- 2) promotes the active involvement of students with Elders in the documentation and preservation of traditional knowledge through a variety of print and multimedia formats;
- 3) facilitates student involvement in community activities and encourages the use of the local environment as a curricular resource;
- 4) promotes active community involvement in all aspects of educational programs and institutions impacting its members.

**SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR WINHEC ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY**

<b><i>Indicator:</i></b>	<b><i>Evidence of Standards in Practice:</i></b>	<b><i>Rating</i></b> 1=weak, 5=strong
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Report on First WINHEC Accreditation Experience Aotearoa, July, 2004**

[Attached is a report on the accreditation experience associated with the first accreditation reviews conducted under the WINHEC Accreditation Authority in Aotearoa in July, 2004. The report, prepared by the Aotearoa Liaison Team which coordinated the review, outlines the process by which the three candidate programs (one at each of the Maori Wananga) prepared their self-study and the external review team conducted its review. Included are lessons learned and recommendations for future applicants and review teams.]