



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
**COMMANDER**  
**NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND**  
**250 DALLAS STREET**  
**PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32508-5220**

NETCINST 1500.3F  
N5  
27 May 2022

NETC INSTRUCTION 1500.3F

From: Commander, Naval Education and Training Command

Subj: INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Ref: (a) NAVEDTRA 135D of 10 August 2018

Encl: (1) Process Guide on Institutional Accreditation  
(2) Self-Study Milestones

1. Purpose. To provide information and guidance on institutional accreditation for Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) activities and to establish responsibilities for its administration.

2. Cancellation. NETCINST 1500.3E.

3. Scope. Institutional accreditation applies to all NETC Learning Centers (LC) and their respective Learning Sites (LS).

4. Background. A fundamental tenet of the Navy is to provide the opportunity for all personnel to learn and develop commensurate with personal abilities and aspirations that are aligned with the requirements of the Naval service. For our Sailors, this means that our learning organization, as an advocate for the continuance of life-long learning, leads in developing appropriate competencies in their chosen professional specialties. Accreditation is a valuable tool that helps the Navy realize this tenet.

5. Discussion. Accreditation is a recognizable status granted to a learning institution or program that has been found to meet or exceed stated criteria and standards of learning. It has two basic purposes: (1) to assure the quality of the institution and its programs, and (2) to assist in the improvement of the institution and its programs.

a. Institutional accreditation affords Navy LCs and their cognizant LSs the opportunity to attain accredited status from a

national or regional accrediting agency. Accreditation is the primary vehicle that ensures the Navy is on par with other learning organizations, within and outside of the military domain, publicly or privately operated. An important dimension of accreditation is in the universal recognition of its attainment. Successful completion of the accreditation process signifies not only that personal and professional skill development in the Navy are soundly designed, delivered, and measured, but that those recipients of knowledge and capabilities attain higher levels of professional and technical competencies. See reference (a) for guidance.

b. Accreditation applies to institutions or programs, and is distinguished from certification and licensure, which apply to individuals. Agencies that conduct institutional accreditation are national or regional in scope, and consider the characteristics of the whole learning organization. For this reason, an institutional accrediting agent gives attention not only to the learning programs of the institution it accredits, but to other institutional characteristics such as student personnel services, administrative structure, resources, facilities, and equipment. Accreditation does not result in college credit recommendations for the educational programs or courses at the LSs. This is a separate function of the American Council on Education, which specifically reviews and evaluates learning courses and occupational experiences submitted by the Navy.

c. NETC, in collaboration with the Council on Occupational Education (COE), a nationally recognized accrediting agency, requires all LCs and their respective LSs to seek and maintain accredited status. The grant of an accredited status by COE reflects a long and laborious process. Enclosure (1) outlines the primary component of the accreditation process. The LC must first seek initial affiliation as a candidate followed by an extensive self-assessment and, when necessary, self-improvement effort to demonstrate compliance with COE's standards and criteria on the quality of its learning processes. Accreditation is for a period of 1 year. Continued accreditation is determined annually by COE through verification of the LCs annual report confirming steady compliance with the established standards, criteria, and conditions.

d. Reaffirmation of accreditation must occur from 2 to 6 years after initial accreditation or any subsequent reaffirmation decision. The time interval for reaffirmation is determined by COE as a part of its accreditation or reaffirmation decision. LCs must meet the same requirements for reaffirmation as required for initial accreditation; however, at the discretion of COE, the LC may be required to undergo reaffirmation earlier than the previously determined year.

6. Policy. To execute our mission with precision and expertise, NETC must maintain effective adaptation and delivery of innovative learning and skill development continuum. We will aggressively seek out, within public and private industry and in academia, those "islands of excellence" from which we can leverage the best practices. The accreditation process is one valid way towards this endeavor. All LCs and LSs are required to pursue accreditation through the national accrediting agency, COE, as a minimum. Any additional accreditation of a LC or any of its LSs with a regional agency or a local college will be allowed, if related expenses are shouldered by the LC.

a. Accreditation Process Guide. Enclosure (1) provides guidance to the workflow of the accreditation process. The self-study, which is the main vehicle for this process, serves as an evaluation and planning mechanism for the improvement of all institutional services. The process involves the total command staff in evaluating their training programs and related functions. Findings are documented on the Self-Study Report.

b. Self-Study Milestones. Enclosure (2) outlines the recommended milestones for planning and scheduling self-study tasks. Self-study is an opportunity for the command to assess its operations and programs, and have the assessment validated by a visiting team of professional colleagues. The self-study process also provides evidential support to the objectives of NETC Inspector General Command Inspection Program.

c. Reaffirmation Visit Delays. In the event that a LC requires a delay of the scheduled reaffirmation visit, it must submit to COE, copy NETC N52, a formal waiver request with justification and plan of action for readiness for a reaffirmation visit. An official directive, when available, affecting the delay shall be attached to the request. Prior

coordination with NETC N52 is required before any request is submitted to the accrediting agency.

d. COE Accreditation Seal. COE allows accredited LCs to reproduce and use its seal on graduation certificates, letterhead, catalogs, transcripts, and websites. If used on the LC's website, it must also be linked to COE's website (<https://council.org>). No other COE seal reproductions are authorized for use.

## 7. Responsibilities

### a. NETC N52 shall:

(1) Budget and manage program resources to meet Institutional Accreditation Program requirements.

(2) Provide funding as required for expenses listed in paragraph 7b(5) of this instruction.

(3) Designate an Accreditation Program Manager (APM) to coordinate the command-wide functional responsibilities of institutional accreditation.

### b. NETC APM shall conduct Institutional Accreditation Program oversight, to include:

(1) Communicate with the COE concerning the unique military requirements of the LCs, current Points of Contact (POC), and any substantive changes affecting the LC's operational structure.

(2) Provide technical support to initiate, renew, or modify contractual documents concerning institutional accreditation.

(3) Liaison with COE on when the LCs are due for their next reaffirmation visits.

(4) Provide to the LC Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) their Average on Board Under Instruction data from the Corporate enterprise Training Activity Resource System Monitor for their reporting in the COE Annual Report in lieu of Full

Time Enrollment to be used for computation of the LC Annual Accreditation dues.

(5) Validate substantiating documents and invoices for the following services:

(a) COE annual dues and fees for all NETC LCs.

(b) Costs of the preliminary evaluation visit by the representative(s) of COE to the LC and designated LS(s).

(c) Cost of COE's Evaluation Team reaffirmation visit.

c. LCs shall:

(1) Designate an ALO in writing by name, code, email, and commercial telephone number and forward a copy of the designation letter to the NETC APM.

(2) Ensure the ALO attends the required Academy workshop prior to representing their respective LC during the reaffirmation visit.

(3) Provide funding for the following expenses:

(a) Dues or fees for additional accreditation, regional or local, incurred voluntarily or beyond the required COE accreditation.

(b) Registration fee and travel costs for the ALO to attend an Academy workshop. The Academy must be attended no later than 6 months and no earlier than 18 months before the date of the LCs accreditation visit.

(c) Production and publication of the Self-Study Report.

(d) Administrative support to the COE visiting team.

(e) Any expenses related to hosting the COE accreditation team beyond those paid by NETC.

d. LC ALO shall:

(1) Serve as the primary POC on institutional accreditation.

(2) Act as the main link between their respective LC and LS(s) concerning institutional accreditation matters.

(3) Serve as lead coordinator for the accreditation self-study, and therefore, be knowledgeable in the requirements and process of accreditation.

(4) Maintain an updated list of all LSs under the cognizance of their LC with a copy submitted to the NETC APM.

(5) Notify COE in writing, with a copy to the NETC APM, of any substantive change(s) affecting their respective LC or LS(s).

(6) Attend mandatory Academy workshop and conferences as defined by the accrediting agency or as applicable to the LCs reaffirmation requirements.

(7) Forward copies of all accreditation documents, including the Self-Study Report and applicable lessons learned, to the NETC APM.

(8) Submit the Annual Accreditation Report to COE on the date specified by COE (usually due in December). The Annual Accreditation Report can be accessed via the COE website (<https://council.org>).

8. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager.

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, NETC will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 (Review of Instruction). This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



K. BECK  
Chief of Staff

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically on the NETC Public Web Site ([www.netc.navy.mil](http://www.netc.navy.mil)), via the NETC Reference Library in DON TRACKER, or by e-mail at [netc\\_directives@navy.mil](mailto:netc_directives@navy.mil)

PROCESS GUIDE ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

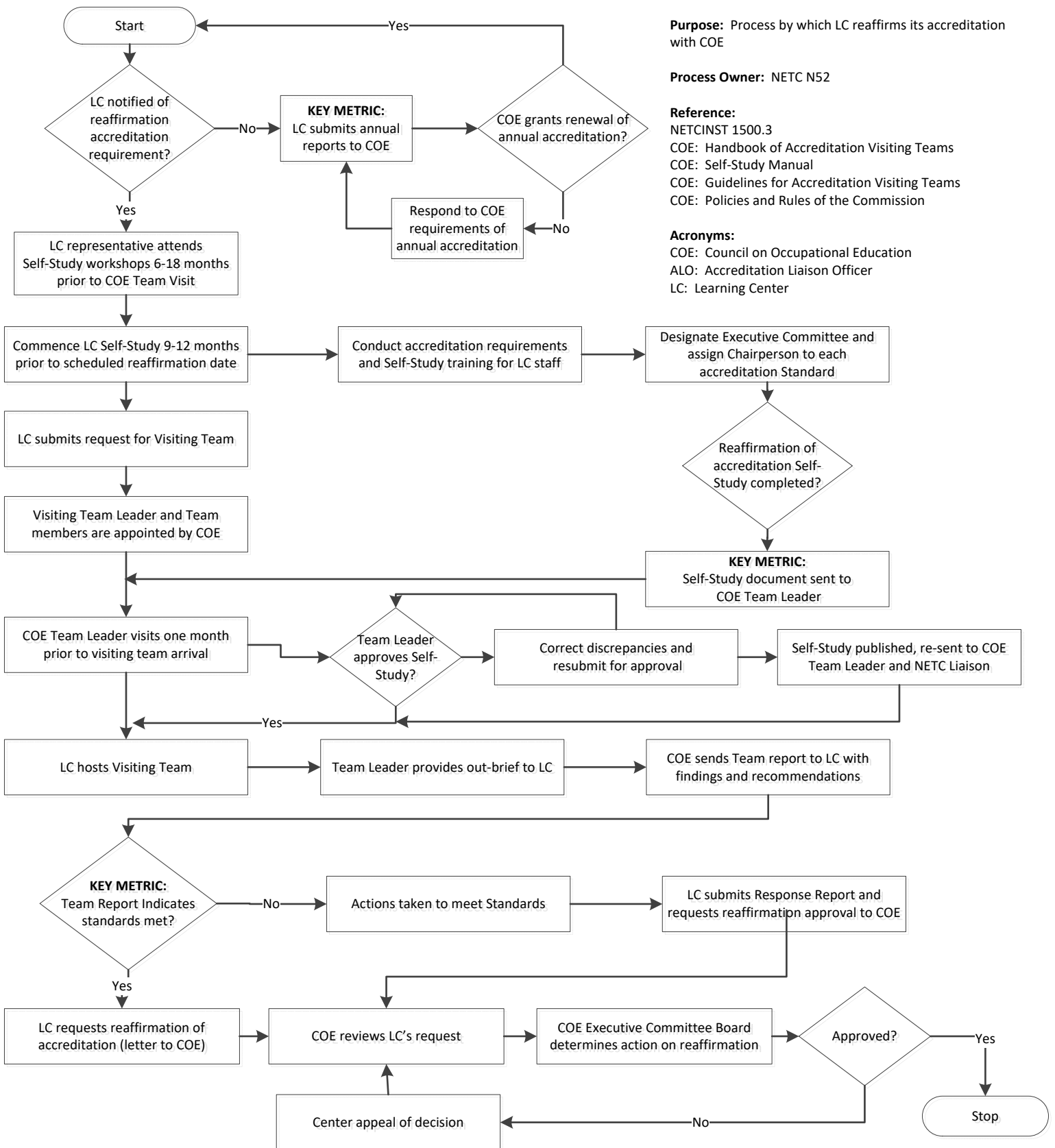
**Title:** Institutional Accreditation (COE) Program Process

**Purpose:** Process by which LC reaffirms its accreditation with COE

**Process Owner:** NETC N52

**Reference:**  
NETCINST 1500.3  
COE: Handbook of Accreditation Visiting Teams  
COE: Self-Study Manual  
COE: Guidelines for Accreditation Visiting Teams  
COE: Policies and Rules of the Commission

**Acronyms:**  
COE: Council on Occupational Education  
ALO: Accreditation Liaison Officer  
LC: Learning Center





### **SELF-STUDY MILESTONES**

1. Establish Your Timeline. LCs coordinate with each LS for their own timeline. The object is to have realistic and synchronous timing.

a. +10 Months out. Plan self-study approach and define requirements.

(1) Identify Executive Committee members (usually composed of the Commanding Officer (CO), Executive Director, Department Heads, and ALO). This committee is responsible for approving the self-study timeline, review of draft standards, final approval of standards, and directing LSs.

(2) ALO orients Executive Committee on self-study process (i.e., Purpose/Objectives, Requirements, Duties/Responsibilities, Communication/Cooperation/Coordination, and importance of total command involvement).

(3) LC determines role of LSs and how their requirements will be addressed in the self-study. Category of LS (e.g., large or small) may be based on structural size, number of courses taught, or number of staff and students. The COE team may request a separate visit to LSs based on their category (e.g., large or small).

(a) A large LS's particular mission and structure may be addressed as addenda to the LC self-study (to include Preface, Institutional and Community Characteristics, Standards 2, 3, 5, 8, and 9 to the LC self-study).

(b) Smaller LSs will be addressed within the LC self-study (Center standards speak to issues of LS not included in the addenda).

b. +8 Months out. Assign responsibility, conduct training, and finalize standards briefing schedule.

(1) Identify Committee Chairs and members for each standard. Include Chairs for Institutional and Community Characteristics, Preface, and Glossary. Chairs must have members to assist in performing tasks but NOT to delegate overall responsibility.

(2) Appoint an Editing Committee (distinctly separate from the Standards Committee). This committee reviews drafts for format, grammar, punctuation, etc. The whole committee is involved during the initial draft phase.

(3) Other committees may be formed to review content of the self-study for accuracy and consistency of presentation in the report; media design, printing, and publishing; and hospitality and visit coordination.

(4) The ALO conducts training for all personnel on:

- Accreditation process overview
- Objectives of accreditation
- Standards and criteria for accreditation
- Duties/responsibilities of each person
- Communication/cooperation/coordination efforts
- COE self-study handbooks
- Use of Accreditation Standards Check Sheet
- Process timeline

(5) Finalize standards briefing schedule to the Executive Committee. The ALO should brief the Executive Committee on two standards per week and allow an opportunity to review each draft standard at least twice. Institutional and Community Characteristics, Preface, and Glossary should be included in the review.

c. +7 Months out. Develop your accreditation standards.

(1) CO conducts an all-hands briefing to highlight importance/value of accreditation, emphasize time requirement, and stress total command involvement in the accreditation process.

(2) Start actual work on self-study standards by gathering data from the LC and LS(s).

d. +6 Months out. Complete first review of draft standards.

(1) Review two to three standards per week (approximately 1-hour briefs).

- Start with less detailed standards
- Maintain Center focus
- Keep integrity of schedule
- Make corrections, if necessary
- Review all standards at least once within 45 days

(2) Review both LC and LS (if applicable) standards together. Include Institutional and Community Characteristics, Preface, and Glossary.

(3) Start graphic design for front cover and other applicable pages of the report. Do the same for the electronic medium.

e. +5 Months out. Complete second review of draft standards.

(1) Conduct a formal review of two to three standards per week (1-hour briefs) to monitor progress and fine-tune drafts. Some standards may need additional reviews.

(2) Review graphics (hard and electronic copies).

f. +4 Months out. Refine your self-study.

(1) Allow approximately 6 weeks for final editing (action by the Editing and Content Review Committees).

(2) Ensure agreement of content throughout the report, including those for the LS(s).

(3) Begin layout of Self-Study Report for printing or publication.

g. +3 Months out. Complete the final Self-Study Report for submission to the Executive Committee. The steps include:

- Finalize layout and graphics
- Complete work on all standards
- Complete Self-Study Report addenda
- Complete electronic media (copy)

h. +2 Months out. Publish your Self-Study Report.

(1) Proofread finished copy of Self-Study Report and send for printing.

(2) Copy e-medium format of Self-Study Report to disk or other designated medium for distribution.

i. +1 Month out. Re-orient staff on your published self-study and keep in communication with COE Accreditation Team.

(1) Finalize preparations for COE Accreditation Team visit to include:

- Billeting/lodging
- Transportation
- Agenda
- Designation of private work area and clerical assistance for the visiting COE Accreditation Team

(2) COE Accreditation Team Leader will do a preliminary visit. Provide copies of Final Self-Study Report and addenda at this time.

(3) Send hard copies plus electronic copies (with addenda) to COE (three hard copies) and to all Accreditation Team members.

(4) Submit electronic copy (disk) to NETC N52.

## 2. Accreditation Visit

a. The visit will begin with a reception, formal introductions, command orientation, and an in-brief by the COE Accreditation Team.

b. During the validation of the Self-Study by the COE Accreditation Team, the LC shall:

(1) Provide support to the Accreditation Team.

(2) Observe appropriate protocol and privacy when communicating with Accreditation Team members.

c. The out-brief, given by the COE Team Leader on the last day of the visit, is reserved for specific key personnel only. The COE Accreditation Team will not elaborate or discuss their findings or recommendations.

3. Post Accreditation Visit

- a. Out-brief command personnel.
- b. Document lessons learned. Send an electronic (disk) or other designated medium copy to NETC N52.
- c. Communicate post-visit status to NETC N52.