



Policies and Procedures

2023

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:

The AIJS Conflict of Interest policy is designed to avoid actual conflicts, potential conflicts and even the appearance of conflicts of interest in the agency decisions. AIJS conflict of interest policies are relevant to members of the Executive Accreditation Council including Public Members, Site Visit Team chairmen, Site Visit Team members, Members of an Appeals Panel, Members of the AIJS Administrative Staff, Agency representatives and Consultants.

AIJS will not assign any individual as Chairman of a site visit, site team member, reviewer or Appeals Panel Member if the individual is an alumnus of the institution, employee of the institution, a candidate for employment within the recent year, or has been employed by the institution within the past five years, belongs to the governing body of that institution or has belonged to the governing body in the past five years, has a personal, consulting or business relationship with the institution under review that could affect his or her objectivity, or has had a personal, consulting or business relationship with the institution under review, has a material interest in a positive accreditation outcome, has a close relative who is an employee of the institution, board member, current candidate for employment, a student at the institution or is an alumnus of the institution. A close relative includes a spouse, parents, guardian, siblings, or children of the individual or their spouse.

AIJS Staff liaisons will not be assigned to any institutions where they have ever been enrolled as a student, been employed or actively been a part of or are presently being considered for employment.

AIJS employees, EAC members, Site Visit Chairmen, Site Visitors, Members of an Appeals Panel, Agency representatives and Consultants to AIJS may not accept awards, honors or honorary degrees from an institution during the period of their employment/service at AIJS. Members of AIJS Administrative Staff may not serve as consultants to member institutions. Members of AIJS Administrative Staff and agency representatives may not serve as a participating “voting” member of an assessment visit or site visit team; AIJS staff may accompany such teams and review such documents. At visits following actions of warning, probation, or show cause an AIJS staff member may not serve as the sole evaluator.

Further, the names and affiliations of prospective site visit teams will be conveyed to an applicant institution in advance of the visit, in order to allow the applicant the opportunity to identify any conflict of interest, actual or perceived.

EAC members, Site Visit Chairmen, Site Visitors, Members of an Appeals Panel, Members of AIJS Administrative Staff, Agency Representatives and Consultants must sign an affidavit indicating that they are aware of the agency’s conflict of interest policies and will act accordingly.

The Chairman of the EAC, at his or her discretion, may disqualify a member of the EAC from participating in the accreditation decision for perceived conflict of interest.

COMPLAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Complaints may be directed to AIJS at the following address/phone number:

Association of Institutions of Jewish Studies
500 West Kennedy Boulevard
Lakewood, NJ 08701-2620
732.363.7330
Email: cstern@theaijs.com

Complaints that are received by AIJS concerning an AIJS accredited institution will be handled according to the following procedures:

1. Within 10 days of receipt by AIJS, the complaint is screened to see if it has any face validity and if it is relevant to AIJS' role in accrediting and overseeing the institution.
2. If AIJS determines that the complaint does not fit into AIJS's responsibilities, the complaint will be acknowledged and replied to as being not within the purview of AIJS. As a courtesy, a copy of the complaint will be forwarded to the institution, and the case will be closed.
3. If AIJS determines that the complaint is relevant to its accreditation Standards or policies and falls within AIJS' oversight responsibilities, AIJS will contact the institution and forward the complaint to the institution. AIJS will then allow 30 days for the institution to respond to AIJS. The institution must provide, in its

response to AIJS, an explanation of its actions, as well as a statement certifying that the institution followed its own published complaint policy.

4. AIJS will then review the institution's response and complaint policy.
5. If the Institution informs AIJS in its response that the complainant did not follow the complaint policy of the school, AIJS will instruct the complainant to follow the complaint policy of the institution.
6. If the complainant claims to have followed the institution's published complaint policy, and the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, AIJS will make a determination as to whether or not the matter involves issues that question the institution's compliance with its own policies and/or AIJS Standards or policies. AIJS will launch an inquiry into the issue within 10 days. AIJS will ask for documentation from the complainant, substantiating the complaint; and an explanation of the disposition from the institution (which should document how the institution followed its own complaint policy and procedures as well as the steps taken to resolve the complaint.)
7. Within 10 days of the receipt of these above materials, a member of the AIJS Administrative Staff, together with the chairman of the Executive Accrediting Council, will review the complaint file to determine if the institution complied with AIJS standards and policies. AIJS will contact the institution and allow the institution the opportunity (30 days) to review the matter and provide an explanation and/or additional information to AIJS.
8. If after receipt of the Institutional response and a review of any additional documentation, AIJS makes a final determination that the institution is not in compliance with AIJS standards and/or policies, a formal corrective action plan will be required from the institution within 30 days.
9. If the response is accepted by AIJS, both the complainant and the institution

will be so advised and the case will be closed.

10. If the corrective action plan is not accepted by AIJS, the matter will be placed on the agenda of the EAC to determine if an adverse action or other sanction should be initiated against the institution for noncompliance with AIJS' Standards of Accreditation.
11. AIJS will make a good faith effort to address anonymous complaints against an accredited institution or against AIJS itself and treat it in a similar manner to a regular complaint. Obviously, there is no mechanism to respond directly to an anonymous complainant.
12. All complaints received by AIJS regarding an accredited institution will be filed and stored in an easy and accessible manner. Site visitors will be given access to the file of an institution that is being reviewed, and any complaints on file in AIJS will be considered in the final decision of the EAC.

If a written complaint is filed against AIJS directly, the complaint is recorded and acknowledged. Within 10 days of the receipt of the complaint, a member of the AIJS Administrative Staff will review the complaint and submit both the complaint and the review of the complaint to the Chair of the EAC to evaluate the validity of the complaint.

If the complaint is deemed justified, the EAC will instruct AIJS staff of the appropriate means to resolve the matter and will notify the complainant within 10 days of the review of the complaint. If the complainant is anonymous, no notification is necessary.

If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant may bring the matter directly to the EAC, by addressing the complaint to:

Chairman of Executive Accreditation Council
AIJS

500 W. Kennedy Boulevard

Lakewood, NJ 08701-2620

732.363.7300

Email: cstern@theaijs.com

RECORDS MAINTENANCE POLICY:

AIJS maintains complete and accurate records of its review and decision-making activities concerning the institutions it accredits. There is a file for each institution that has applied for accreditation that contains all current activity as well as the complete official record of the last accreditation review of an institution. These documents would include the institution's application for accreditation, the institution's ISA and related documents, the report of the site visit team, the institution's response to the site visit report, the accreditation or denial letter and the record of any institutional appeal.

Also part of the institutional file are a record of all complaints received by AIJS against the institution and their resolution, periodic AIJS review reports of the institution, institutional annual reports, special reviews conducted by AIJS and any other pertinent correspondence relating to the accreditation of the institution.

Applications and institutional requests requiring an official action or EAC consideration, such as applications for approval of a Substantive Change, and their disposition, are kept on file going back to the institution's last accreditation cycle.

AIJS maintains recorded minutes of its EAC meetings and membership meetings. AIJS retains the resumes of AIJS EAC members, and the personnel records of the AIJS staff. AIJS financial records including income and expense ledgers, bank statements, payroll registers, tax related documents, insurance related documents, and other agency related paperwork are kept on file, along with copies of AIJS's own annual external audits.

Also on file is all formal correspondence relevant to AIJS's Standards, all correspondence and submissions regarding AIJS's recognition status with the US

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Department of Education, and all complaints received against AIJS and their resolution.

The AIJS Bylaws is the legal document of the agency, and is kept on file. The AIJS Handbook is the definitive document of AIJS accreditation procedures. A current copy is on file and available in both hard copy and electronic formats for distribution to interested parties. Also on file and available are the Site Visitor guide, the Guide to Completing the ISA and other policy statements.

The general policy of AIJS is to keep records for a period of five years, except records relating to an institution's accreditation, which must be kept for a period that includes the last full accreditation cycle. Physical records are kept in a locked office. Electronic records are secure and only accessible to AIJS staff members. They are backed up on a remote server.

POLICY ON PUBLIC NOTICE OF ACCREDITATION ACTIONS:

AIJS provides public notice that an institution is being considered for accreditation by the Executive Accreditation Council. The notice, which gives the public an opportunity for third-party comment, is placed in a general circulation newspaper that has a wide and broad national readership with readers who are likely to be concerned with the quality and offerings of post-secondary institutions with programs in traditional Jewish Studies. AIJS likewise places a prominent public notice on its website and in a newspaper with wide circulation when an institution is being considered for accreditation, and invites third-party comment.

AIJS will provide special written notice, within 30 days of the decision, of its accrediting decisions to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, appropriate state licensing or authorizing agencies, and other appropriate accrediting agencies. AIJS provides notice to the public of its accrediting decisions by posting the actions on a special notice on the AIJS website *www.theaijs.com*.

AIJS will provide special written notice to the US Department of Education and the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency and appropriate accrediting agencies of a final decision to place an institution on probation, to deny, withdraw, suspend, or terminate an institution's accreditation, or any other adverse action, at the same time that it notifies the institution, but no later than 30 days after the final decision.

AIJS will provide special written notice to the US Department of Education and the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency and appropriate accrediting agencies when an appeal panel upholds an adverse decision, thereby making it a final adverse

decision, at the same time that it notifies the institution, but no later than 30 days after the final decision.

AIJS will provide the public with written notice of a final decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, revoke or terminate the accreditation of an institution, or other adverse action, within 24 hours of its notification to the institution. The agency will provide written notice to the public via its website and by placing a prominent notice in a newspaper that has widespread circulation in the Jewish community and in a newspaper that has widespread circulation in the location(s) of the relevant institution(s).

AIJS will make available to the Secretary, the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, appropriate accrediting agencies and the public, no later than 60 days after the decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, revoke or terminate the accreditation of an institution, or other adverse action, a statement summarizing the reasons for AIJS's decision, including the official comments by the affected institution in response to agency's decision. If the institution has not commented, AIJS will bring evidence that the affected institution has been offered the opportunity to comment.

POLICY ON NOTIFICATION OF VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL

If an institution voluntarily decides to withdraw from AIJS accreditation, the agency will notify the Secretary, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency and, upon request, the public, that the institution is withdrawing voluntarily from AIJS accreditation within 30 days of receiving notification from the institution that is withdrawing voluntarily from AIJS accreditation.

POLICY ON NOTIFICATION OF LAPSED ACCREDITATION

If an institution lets its accreditation lapse, AIJS will notify the Secretary, the appropriate State licensing or authorizing agency, the appropriate accrediting agencies, and upon request, the public within 30 days of the date on which its accreditation lapses.

POLICY ON ENFORCEMENT OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

AIJS continually monitors its accredited institutions to ensure that they remain in compliance with its accreditation standards. When an institution is found to be out of compliance with one or more Standards, AIJS will take an enforcement action.

Procedures to Monitor and Enforce Accreditation Standards

Accredited institutions are required to submit annual reports to AIJS. These annual reports provide the agency with current information relating to AIJS accreditation standards. The annual reports are due to the agency each year by the last day of February of that year. The annual reports are reviewed, analyzed and compared to previous reports to ascertain if there are any areas of concern that requires follow-up.

Monitoring on-site visits are held midway through the school's accreditation cycle. A member of AIJS administrative staff, possibly accompanied by a site visitor with particular expertise in areas relating to the mission and type of institution, will visit each accredited institution to 'take the pulse' of compliance to accreditation standards, and get the 'feel' of the vibrancy and viability of the institution. They will review the last site visit report to see first-hand how recommendations were attended to. A general walk around, meetings with key institutional academic and administrative personnel, a sample review of students' records, and examination of the institution's measures of student outcomes, will generally be the focus of this visit.

It is the current AIJS practice, in addition to mid-cycle reviews, for a staff member to make a brief visit to each institution periodically to view a snapshot of the institution, and AIJS will continue this practice as long as is practically feasible.

AIJS always reserves the right to make unannounced visits to its accredited institutions at any point during the accrediting cycle to check or confirm compliance with any of the

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standards.

Following a site visit a staff analysis of the findings will be conducted to ascertain if any follow-up is required by the institution.

In sum, these monitoring tools afford AIJS the opportunity to monitor accredited institutions at frequent intervals. In this way, AIJS assures that its grant of accreditation is not a one-time action and provides ongoing assurance to the students of AIJS accredited institutions, as well as other stakeholders and the public, of the ongoing high quality of AIJS accredited institutions.

If information results in a concern related to an institution's compliance with the agency's standards during a site visit, monitoring visit, other kind of visit to the institution, review of institution's Annual Report, document review, or communication with the institution, AIJS staff will follow-up as follows:

Staff Follow Up

1. Concern phase – Staff will discuss the concern with the institution and develop a corrective action plan and time frame for implementation. During this period guidance (verbal and/or written) will be provided by agency staff and the institution will be monitored for progress in the implementation of the corrective action plan.
2. Notification phase – If the institution is still not able to satisfactorily address the concern during the time frame suggested by staff, a written memo of Notification of Non-compliance with AIJS Standards is issued to the school.
3. Formal Warning phase – If the institution is still not able to satisfactorily address the concern, a Warning of Non-Compliance with Standards is issued to the

school by staff and the issue is formally referred to the EAC for possible adverse action.

EAC Adverse Action

If an institution accredited by AIJS is still found to be out of compliance with one or more of its accreditation standards, the AIJS Executive Action Council (EAC) will determine if an Adverse Action is warranted, and its effective date.

An Adverse Action is a punitive action taken against an institution for non-compliance with an AIJS Accreditation Standard. It modifies the status of an institutions accreditation and consists of one of the following, in ascending order of severity:

1. Conditional Accreditation – This status modifies an institution’s accreditation by attaching a condition or restriction that the accreditation. Generally, this means that the accreditation is only operative if the conditions or restrictions placed on the institution are strictly followed by the institution.
2. Probationary Accreditation – Impose or continue Probation status, generally for a fixed term not exceeding one year. Should the non-compliance not be resolved during the probation period the institution’s accreditation will immediately lapse.
3. Termination – This action will revoke the institution’s accreditation.

By federal regulation all adverse actions must be reported to the US Department and Education and the State Higher Education Agency.

The Institution will be notified in advance of any proposed adverse action and of the effective date. The imposition of an adverse action will follow due process of law procedures, and the Institution will be given opportunity to formally respond, including the right to legal counsel.

While AIJS is not responsible for enforcing federal requirements in 34 CFR 668.14, 668.15, 668.16, 668.41, or 668.46, if, in the course of its work, AIJS identifies instances or potential instances of noncompliance with any of these requirements, it must notify the US Department of Education.

AIJS will immediately initiate adverse action if it is deemed to be necessary to protect educational quality and/or to protect Title IV funds. If it is not deemed to be necessary to take immediate action to protect educational quality or Title IV funds, the institution will be given a deadline by which it must come into compliance.

AIJS may limit the adverse or other action to particular programs that are offered by the institution or to particular additional locations of an institution, without necessarily taking action against the entire institution and all of its programs, provided the noncompliance was limited to that particular program or location.

Returning to Full Compliance

The maximum time frame that can be given to come into compliance is based on the length of its longest program. If the longest program is less than one year, the maximum time frame that the institution will be given to come into compliance is 12 months. (At this time, AIJS does not accredit an institution whose longest program is less than one year). If the longest program offered by the institution is at least one year, but less than two years, the maximum time that the institution will be given to come into compliance is 18 months. If the longest program offered by the institution is at least two years in length, the maximum time that the institution will be given to come into compliance is two years. The time period to come into compliance begins on the date that the institution was notified that it is out of compliance with an AIJS accreditation standard.

This time period is known as the corrective period.

If the institution does not come into compliance by the end of the corrective period, AIJS will take immediate adverse action. AIJS can extend the period allowed for achieving compliance, but only for a good cause. Such determinations will only be made for extraordinary situations. Criteria for determining whether or not to grant an extension include circumstances beyond the institution's control such as natural disaster, death or tragedy. Extensions for good cause may not exceed 12 months from the end of the corrective period. In the event that AIJS grants an extension for good cause to an institution, AIJS will require the institution to provide a plan of action listing the various steps that the institution is taking to come into compliance and to provide quarterly progress reports. AIJS will review the progress reports and evaluate the institution's progress in resolving the non-compliance and will provide a report of its findings to the institution and assessment of approval or disapproval of the progress reports.

POLICY ON MAKING ACCREDITATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

AIJS will maintain and make available to the public written materials describing:

- (1) Each type of accreditation it grants;
- (2) The procedures that institutions must follow in applying for accreditation;
- (3) The standards and procedures it uses to determine whether to grant, reaffirm, reinstate, restrict, deny, revoke, terminate, or take any other action related to each type of accreditation that it grants;
- (4) The institutions that AIJS currently accredits and, for each institution, the year the agency will next review or reconsider it for accreditation.

(5) The names, academic and professional qualifications, and relevant employment and organizational affiliations of the members of the agency's policy and decision-making bodies; members of any appeals panel, and the agency's principal administrative staff.

The AIJS Handbook is the primary document that outlines the entire scope of AIJS activities. The AIJS Handbook is available to the public on the AIJS website – theaijs.com. The Handbook is also available by written request to AIJS, 500 West Kennedy Blvd, Lakewood, NJ 08701. The AIJS Handbook may also be obtained by contacting AIJS staff at (732) 363-7330.

The AIJS website contains the names of the members of the agency's policy and decision-making bodies, the Executive Accrediting Council. It also lists the agency's principal administrative staff and any appeal panel members, and provides information on how to obtain information regarding the academic and professional qualifications, and relevant employment and organizational affiliations of the members of the EAC, members of any appeals panel, and the agency's principal administrative staff.

Resumes of members of the EAC and members of any appeal panel and the principal administrative staff are on file at the AIJS office and available by written request to AIJS, 500 West Kennedy Boulevard, Lakewood, NJ 08701.

POLICY REGARDING DECISIONS OF STATES AND OTHER AGENCIES

AIJS will not accredit an institution that lacks the legal authority under state law to offer post-secondary education.

In addition, the agency may not grant initial or renewed accreditation to any institution if the agency knows or has reasonable cause to know that the institution is the subject of any of the following actions:

- A pending or final action brought by a state agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide post-secondary education in the state.
- A decision by another recognized agency to deny accreditation.
- A pending or final action brought by a recognized accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation.
- Probation or an equivalent status imposed by a recognized agency.

In special circumstances, AIJS may grant accreditation to an institution that is or was the subject of a decision by a recognized agency to deny accreditation or the subject of a pending or final action brought by a recognized accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation, or the subject of a probation or an equivalent status imposed by a recognized agency, if it provides AIJS with a thorough and reasonable explanation, consistent with its Standards, why the action of the other body does not preclude the agency's grant of accreditation.

In the event that AIJS accepts the explanation and decides to grant accreditation it will

provide the Secretary within 30 days of the agency's action with a thorough and reasonable explanation, consistent with its standards, why the action of the other body does not preclude the agency's grant of accreditation.

If AIJS learns that an institution it accredits is the subject of an adverse action by another recognized accrediting agency, or has been placed on probation or an equivalent status by another recognized agency, it will promptly conduct a comprehensive review of its accreditation of the institution to determine if it too should take adverse action or place the institution on warning or show cause.

Procedures for conducting this comprehensive review are an unannounced visit or a request for documentation regarding the standard for which another agency determined that the institution was not in compliance. AIJS will conduct a comprehensive review of the material and might require a focused site visit to determine if it too should take adverse action or place the institution on warning or show cause.

AIJS will, upon request, share with other appropriate, recognized accrediting agencies, and recognized state approval agencies, information about the accreditation status of an institution and any adverse actions it has taken against an accredited institution.

POLICIES RELATED TO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES:

Whenever an institution plans to adopt a substantive change in its governance or academic program, the agency must make a determination whether the change will have a significant effect on the quality, integrity and effectiveness of the institution. Specifically, the institution must demonstrate that it has the programmatic, fiscal and administrative capacity to incorporate the Substantive Change into its current operation while still meeting all of the AIJS Standards for accreditation. After the institution determines it can successfully implement a proposed Substantive Change it must seek AIJS approval to implement the change.

Procedurally, an institution must submit an Application for Substantive Change, along with documentation supporting the application and appropriate fees, and wait for a formal written approval from AIJS.

Once the application is received, AIJS will evaluate the application to determine whether the requested change is minor (Category One), significant (Category Two) or so fundamental as to question the continued validity of the agency's grant of accreditation (Category Three). Category One changes may be approved based on the initial application and the documentation provided; Category Two changes normally require a focused staff visit; and Category Three changes generally require a focused self-study along with a focused site team visit to the institution.

The definition of substantive change shall include the following types of change:

1. Any change in the established mission or objective of the institution. (Category 3)
2. Any change in legal status, control or ownership of the institution. (Category 3)
3. The addition of courses or programs of study, which represent a significant departure from existing offerings of educational programs or methods of delivery from those that were offered when AIJS last evaluated the institution. (Category 3)

4. The addition of programs of study at a degree or credential level different from that which is included in the institution's current accreditation. (Category 3)
5. A change from clock hours to credit hours. (Category 2)
6. A substantial increase in number of clock or credit hours awarded for successful completion of a program. (Category 2)
7. An additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of the educational program. (Category 1, 2, or 3 depending on the circumstances.)
8. The acquisition of another institution or any program or location of another institution. (Category 3)
9. If an institution enters into a written agreement with a non-Title IV eligible institution to provide more than 25%, but less than 50% of a Title IV eligible institution's educational program. (Category 2). Under no circumstances will AIJS approve a written agreement with a non-Title IV eligible institution to provide more than 50% of a Title IV eligible institution's educational program as this would disqualify the program from being Title IV eligible.
10. The addition of a permanent location at a site at which the institution is conducting a teach-out for students of another institution that has ceased operating before all students have completed their course of study. (Category 2)

AIJS may determine that other substantive changes, not listed above, significantly affect the operation of the institution and should be added to the list above. Institutions will be notified and given appropriate time to comment, before any such addition will go into effect.

The categories recognize that different levels of evaluation may be appropriate for different types of Substantive Changes. Yet all categories share the requirement that the institution must demonstrate that it has the programmatic, fiscal and administrative capacity to implement the

proposed change, while still meeting the AIJS standards for accreditation. Once an Application for a Substantive Change is received and reviewed, the EAC will determine to which category it will be assigned following the guidelines below.

Category One – A minor change is where the institution’s proposed change does not significantly affect the institution’s accreditation. In this case, AIJS will so advise the institution and approve the substantive change. An example of this category is where the institution requests to expand classroom space to another local geographic area, with no requested changes to the actual program offered.

Category Two – If the proposed change is more significant, it will require further steps before the application can be approved. These steps include a staff site visit focused on the proposed substantial change, and a possible request for additional documentation. A business plan may also be requested if significant resources are involved. The staff site visitor(s) will visit the institution and prepare an evaluation report detailing how the proposed substantial change may affect the institution’s compliance with AIJS standards. The Institution's Application for Substantive Change and AIJS Staff visit report are forwarded to the EAC. The EAC will evaluate the staff report and any additional documentation submitted and make a determination as whether to approve the substantive change. An example of this type of substantive change may be the addition of a new program of study which is closely related to current offerings and only requires modest institutional change to implement.

Category Three – A Substantial Change application that is judged to be a fundamental change, such as adding a higher-level degree offering in an existing discipline or a new degree program in a new discipline, will require a focused ISA (Institutional Self Appraisal) which systematically describes how the institution will continue to meet all of AIJS’ Standards after the addition of the Substantive Change. After the submission of the focused ISA, a site team will visit the institution in a manner similar to a full accreditation review, albeit with its scope limited to evaluate compliance with all of AIJS Standards as they may be affected by the proposed

Substantial Change and prepare an evaluation report detailing how the proposed substantial change may affect the institution's compliance with AIJS standards. The Institution's Application for Substantive Change and evaluation report are forwarded to the EAC. The EAC will evaluate the staff report and any additional documentation submitted and make a determination as whether to approve the substantive change. The EAC may also defer a decision and require further steps before the application can be considered for approval.

While the procedures above serve as general guidelines for categorizing Substantive Change applications, the EAC may modify the above protocols in specific cases where the EAC feels it would be more appropriate for a particular Substantive Change requested.

In certain rare instances, a proposed Substantial Change is deemed to be so fundamental and comprehensive as to question whether the entire current institutional accreditation is still relevant. In such cases AIJS will require a full reevaluation of the institution, similar to a new application for accreditation, before the Substantive Change application can be approved. Examples of this might include: a change of mission that results in significant changes to other accreditation standards, such as curriculum, faculty, and credentials or, the relocation of an institution to a different state that results in significant change to a number of other accreditation standards such as administration, degrees and credentials (due to state licensing regulations), student body, faculty, and fiscal operation. The relocation of an institution does not automatically require a complete re-evaluation of the institution.

Additional Requirements:

Change of Ownership – The institution must notify the agency of a change in ownership before the transaction goes into effect, and must submit documentation describing the new ownership, and provide documentation of the transfer such as signed contracts or option agreements. In all cases of change in ownership, the agency will conduct a site visit as soon as practical but not later than 6 months after the change in ownership took place.

Additional Location – If the Substantive Change application is for an Additional Location offering more than 50% of a program, then the location must be visited before the EAC will grant approval for the additional location (for Categories Two and Three), and, for Category One - the location must be visited within six months after approval; to determine that the additional location has the fiscal and administrative capability to operate the location. The visit will verify that academic control is clearly identified by the institution, the institution has adequate faculty, facilities, resources, and academic and student support systems in place, the institution is financially stable, and that the institution had engaged in long-range planning for expansion.

Determination of which category Additional Locations are assigned to will generally be based on the extent the Additional Location places a strain on existing resources and the geographic and programmatic scope of the additional locations. AIJS has not established a process for the pre-approval of additional locations. Therefore, no additional locations will be pre-approved by AIJS. AIJS monitors the number of additional locations that an institution has to ensure that the quality of the education is not being compromised by the rapid growth of the institution. During an institution's re-accreditation cycle, AIJS will visit a representative sampling of the additional locations at which 50% or more of a program is offered to ensure that the quality of the education offered at each additional location. AIJS will make periodic monitoring visits to each of the locations of any institution that has multiple additional locations, to ensure that educational quality of the programs or portion of offered at the additional locations continue to meet AIJS standards and that the location has the personnel, facilities and resources described in the institution's application for approval of the additional location. In addition, when an institution is requesting approval for more than three additional locations, such requests for additional locations are classified as Category 2 or 3 substantive changes requiring approval from the Executive Accreditation Council.

BRANCH CAMPUS

A Branch Campus is a location of an institution that is geographically apart and

independent of the main campus of that institution. A location is considered to be independent of the main campus if the location -- (1) Is permanent in nature; (2) Offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential; (3) Has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and (4) Has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Institutions seeking to establish a branch campus must inform AIJS and must undergo a full review for the branch campus which includes an application, a comprehensive business plan, similar to the ISA, that describes the educational program(s) the institution plans to offer; a budget projecting the revenues and expenditures as well as the expected cash flow at the site; and a description of the operation, management, and physical resources to operate at the branch campus, before the institution is permitted to establish the branch campus. AIJS will review the application and business plan and will give the institution initial approval to establish the branch campus if it determines that the institution has the necessary resources and procedures to operate the branch campus. A follow up comprehensive site visit to the branch campus must take place within six months of the establishment of the branch campus to determine if the institution substantially followed its business plan. A site report from the visit will be forwarded to the Executive Accrediting Council at least 30 days in advance of the next regularly scheduled EAC meeting. The EAC will determine institutional compliance with its business plan as confirmed at the site visit. At the institution's next regularly scheduled accreditation review, the institution must incorporate in its ISA the activities of the branch campus and must demonstrate how those activities and operations comply with AIJS standards.

POLICY ON TIME FRAME FOR SITE VISIT REPORT TO BE SENT TO AN INSTITUTION:

The chair of the site visit team submits a written report of the site visit to the agency, along with the completed score sheet for each of the ten standards. This report includes the site visit team's observations and recommendations regarding each of the ten Accreditation Standards. The observations in the report must be supported by factual information. The site visit report indicates the program's strengths and limitations and provides explanatory information. The agency forwards a copy of the site visit report to the institution within 45-60 days of the site visit.

The institution is given the opportunity to respond in writing within 14 days of receipt of the site visit report before it is submitted to the EAC for an accrediting decision. The EAC is given a copy of any institutional response to the site visit report to review and consider when making an accreditation decision.

POLICY ON TEACH-OUT PLANS AND TEACH-OUT AGREEMENTS:

AIJS will require an institution it accredits to submit a teach-out plan to the agency for approval, upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- The Secretary notifies AIJS that the Secretary has initiated an emergency action against an institution has initiated an emergency action against the institution
- The Secretary notifies AIJS that the Secretary has initiated an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any title IV, HEA program
- AIJS has withdrawn, terminated or suspended its accreditation of the institution;
- The institution has notified AIJS that it plans to cease operations or close a location;
- A state licensing or authorizing body notifies AIJS that the institution's license or legal authorization has been, or will be, revoked.

AIJS may find other reasons to require the institution to submit a teach out plan and to enter into a teach-out agreement with another institution.

AIJS will evaluate the teach-out plan to ensure that it provides for fair and equitable treatment of students who will be affected by the termination of the institution's programs, including notification to students of any additional charges.

If AIJS approves a teach-out plan that includes a program that is accredited by another recognized accrediting agency, it will notify that accrediting agency of its approval.

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AIJS may require the institution to enter into a teach-out agreement with another similar institution as part of its teach-out plan.

Any institution accredited by AIJS that enters into a teach-out agreement, either on its own or at the request of the agency, must submit that teach-out agreement to the agency for approval.

AIJS will only approve an institution's teach-out agreement, if the agreement is with an institution which is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency. It must also provide for the equitable treatment of students by ensuring that the teach-out institution has the necessary experience, stability, resources and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure and scheduling to that provided by the institution that is ceasing operations. In addition, AIJS will only approve an institution's teach-out agreement if the agreement is with an institution that has a publicly disclosed transfer of credit policy that includes a statement of the criteria established by the institution for the transfer of credits earned at another institution, and a list of institutions with which the institution has established an articulation agreement.

The teach-out institution must demonstrate that it can provide students access to the program and services without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances, and that it will provide students with information about additional charges, if any.

If an institution accredited by AIJS closes without a teach-out plan, or agreement, the agency will work with the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate state agency, to the extent feasible, to assist students in finding reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge.

POLICY FOR REVIEW OF AIJS STANDARDS:

AIJS conducts a periodic and systematic review that demonstrates that its accreditation Standards are adequate to evaluate the quality of higher education provided by the institutions it accredits, and relevant to the educational needs of students. This review is conducted at least once every five years, or in response to new federal or state regulations, changing demographics, or some other pressing development. This program of review is comprehensive and examines each of the agency's accreditation Standards and the Standards as a whole.

The review must include all of the agency's relevant constituencies – students, faculty and administration at member institutions, as well as graduates of member institution and employers of graduates of member institutions, and afford them a meaningful opportunity to provide input into the review. Members of the EAC and site visit teams, member institutions, and outside experts and consultants are invited to take part in the review. The information and insights gathered in the review will determine if any modifications of the Standards are needed for measuring the quality of institutions accredited by AIJS.

If at any point during the review of AIJS Standards, the agency determines that it needs to make changes to its Standards, the agency will initiate action within 12 months to make the changes, and will complete that action within a reasonable period of time, generally within 24 months.

Before finalizing any changes to its Standards, AIJS will provide notice of the proposed changes to all of its relevant constituencies and other parties that have made their interest in accreditation known to the agency. The agency's relevant constituencies, students, members of the faculty and members of the administration at member

institutions, as well as graduates of member institution and employers of graduates of member institutions and other interested parties will be given 30 days to comment on the proposed changes, and AIJS will take into account any comments on the proposed changes that are submitted on a timely basis by the relevant constituencies and other interested parties. The proposed revised standards will then be presented to the Executive Accreditation Council for discussion and vote. The revised standards that have been accepted by the EAC will be included in the Handbook which shall then be published and posted on the AIJS website. All subsequent accreditation activities will be conducted in accordance with the revised Standards.

POLICY FOR REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF CREDIT HOUR ASSIGNMENTS:

Institutions that are accredited and those that are seeking accreditation by AIJS must assign credit hours for courses offered that conform to the commonly accepted practice of institutions of higher education, as described in Standard 2 of the AIJS Accreditation Standards. Institutions that offer specialized coursework such as Talmudic and Rabbinical Studies or courses that offer training in religious instruction would have to conform to the norms of that type of specialized coursework, as described in Standard 2 of the AIJS Accreditation Standards.

The length of the program and each individual course within that program requires an appropriate number of hours to earn credit. The generally accepted calculation for a credit hour is referred to as the “Carnegie Unit,” wherein one credit is awarded for a three-hour cluster which generally contains one hour of instructional time and presumes two hours of outside classroom work in the form of preparation, study, research, or writing. AIJS will be looking to see that the institution uses the standardized Carnegie definition or an alternative appropriate measure.

Alternative appropriate measures will be considered when the coursework is more suited to an alternative framework. For instance, in *Bais Medrash* study for Talmudic and Rabbinical subjects, *Chavrusa Study* (structured and supervised sessions with a study partner), and *Chabura studies* (several students studying in a cluster with a team leader), are the primary method of learning. Generally, augmented by formal lectures, these sessions contain a balanced mix of joint study of primary texts, followed by research of related sources, critical textual analysis of these sources, formulating hypothesis to address seeming contradictions and inconsistencies, peer review of conclusions, and development of original presentations in a group setting. In this context, AIJS will be

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looking to see that there is a minimum of three hours of such learning activities for each credit in the Chavrusa/Chabura modes. Another example of an alternative framework would include a Practicum learning experience. This includes students working in fields related to their course of studies and benefitting from supervision or mentorship. (See memo.) AIJS will review course syllabi to see how many hours per week the course meets and how many credits will be awarded for that course over the semester period. The daily schedule and academic calendar will be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with credit hour assignments and to ensure that the minimum number of hours per credit is fulfilled.

An alternative measure would also be required for programs that do not lead to an Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree or Professional Degree or Associate level or Bachelor level degree, unless each course within a program is acceptable for full credit toward completion of a single program offered by the school that does lead to one of these degrees. For these programs, there is a mandated credit hour to clock hour conversion that requires 30 clock hours per credit.

When reviewing an institution's credit hour measures, AIJS will be looking to see that the institution uses the standardized Carnegie definition or alternative appropriate measures that meet the federal definition of a credit hour. AIJS will use the sampling method to do the review and evaluation of an institution's credit hour assignments.

If deficiencies are identified in the institution's determination of credit hours, the following actions will take place:

The institution will be advised that its credit hour assignments appear to be deficient and that it must submit an action plan, within a designated time frame, to review and correct

said deficiencies to bring the institution in full compliance with agency standards for credit assignment. The institution should note that reassigning credit hour values may affect eligibility for HEA Programs. Failure of the institution to take the actions described above may result in adverse action by the agency, as per AIJS's Enforcement of Standards Policies and Procedures.

PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPING AND APPROVING THE AIJS ANNUAL BUDGET:

The AIJS budget is to be developed internally, by the agency, with no outside influence or involvement. Procedures for developing the budget are as follows:

In the late summer of each year, the executive director of AIJS, with guidance and assistance from the agency's accountant, develops a draft of the budget for the forthcoming fiscal year that will begin January 1. The proposed budget takes into account the historical day to day expenses of the agency, such as salaries of staff members, payroll taxes, travel expenses, insurance, standard operating expenses and other projected needs. Projected expansion in any area of the agency as well as all anticipated or scheduled accreditation activities for the coming year are also taken into consideration. The proposed budget reflects income and revenue from regular fees and dues that will be paid by member institutions. The proposed budget is then circulated to the members of the EAC for review and comment and voted upon year end. Once the proposed budget is ratified by the EAC it is implemented. The executive director regularly performs a budget vs. actual analysis of revenue and expenses and reports any material variances to the EAC.