

Frequently Asked Questions: Date of Initial Accreditation (Retroactive Accreditation)

Can you give an example of an initial accreditation date based on the acceptance date of an application?

- ABC University's MPH program enrolled its first cohort of students in Fall 2014.
- The program's application for accreditation was accepted on June 15, 2015.
- ABC University must submit an acceptable self-study document by June 15, 2017 and undertake a site visit in Fall 2017.
- ABC University's first graduating class was in May 2016.
- ABC University is accredited on June 23, 2018 for a five-year term, extending to July 1, 2023.
- Its date of initial accreditation would be June 15, 2015.

Can you give an example of an initial accreditation date based on the most recent extension of applicant status granted?

- XYZ University's MPH program enrolled its first cohort of students in Fall 2014.
- The program's application for accreditation was accepted on June 15, 2015.
- ABC University must submit an acceptable self-study document by June 15, 2017 and undertake a site visit in Fall 2017.
- During the program's required consultation visit, the CEPH staff consultant observed that the program had been giving students the option of completing a practicum and planned to require a practicum beginning with students who enrolled in Fall 2016. Thus, the first two cohorts of students were not completing an "accreditable" program.
- XYZ University reluctantly requested an extension of its applicant status, which was granted on June 10, 2017.
- The program must now submit an acceptable self-study document by June 10, 2019 and undertake a site visit in Fall 2019.
- XYZ University's first graduating class was in May 2016.
- XYZ University is accredited on June 20, 2020 for a five-year term, extending to July 1, 2025.
- Its date of initial accreditation would be June 10, 2017.

My school/program is already accredited. Can we go back and change our date of initial accreditation based on the acceptance date of our application?

No. Only schools/programs that get accredited for the first time after September 2014 are eligible. The initial date of accreditation will not change for those schools/programs already accredited.

Is it now possible to have all students graduate from an accredited school/program?

Yes, it is technically possible. The school/program would have to plan carefully and be on a very specific timeline. CEPH staff can help you plan your timeline, if needed.

How far back could the date of initial accreditation go?

Three years. The examples provided above illustrate the possible scenarios.

Does the date of initial accreditation impact the length of our accreditation term?

No. Accreditation units seeking initial accreditation are eligible for a maximum term of five years that extends from the date on which the Council makes the accreditation decision. The examples provided above illustrate the possible scenarios.

Can we tell our prospective students that they will graduate from an accredited school/program if we've been accepted as an applicant?

No. Acceptance as an applicant does not guarantee that a school/program will get accredited. The applicant period can also be extended, which would impact the date of initial accreditation.

A school/program may say the following:

The date of initial accreditation will be either 1) the date on which our application was accepted by the Council or 2) the date on which the most recent extension of applicant status was granted. The Council assigns the date of initial accreditation during the Council meeting at which the accreditation decision is made.

Is there somewhere that students and other constituents can see the date that our application was accepted and/or the date that our application status was extended?

Yes, the CEPH website contains a page about [applicants](#) that includes important dates. Be sure to check the Notes column to see whether an extension has been granted.