

**Interpretations to the *Principles of Accreditation***  
**Approved by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees in June 2009**

**Application of the Policy Statement**  
**in the Prefaces of Sections 2, 3, and 4**  
**of the *Principles of Accreditation***

The policy implementation statement in the prefaces of Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the *Principles* reads as follows:

Implicit in every standard mandating a policy or procedure is the expectation that the policy or procedure is in writing and has been approved through appropriate institutional processes, published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution.

This statement was transferred from the *Criteria for Accreditation* to the *Principles* at the time of the adoption of the *Principles*. The standards in the *Criteria* were more prescriptive; those in the *Principles* more flexible by intention. Consequently, the prescriptive policy implementation statement above does not always “fit” when a standard in the *Principles* requires an institutional policy. Off-site review committees have struggled with this when reviewing Compliance Certifications especially as it pertains to the expectation for documentation of implementation in all occasions.

***Interpretation:***

1. In all cases when an institution is required to have a policy, it means that the policy is published in the appropriate institutional documents.
2. There are some cases where documentation of implementation of the policy is evident and very little support documentation is necessary.
3. For the four designated standards listed below, the institution must demonstrate that the policy has been implemented and enforced:

Comprehensive Standard 3.2.3 (Board conflict of interest)  
Comprehensive Standard 3.2.5 (Board dismissal)  
Comprehensive Standard 3.7.5 (Faculty role in governance)  
Federal Requirement 4.5 (Student complaints)