

Types of Accrediting Organizations

Accreditation is carried out by two basic types of organizations:

- **Institutional accreditors** – Institutional accreditors—regional, national faith-related and national career-related accrediting organizations that review entire institutions; and
- **Programmatic accreditors** – accrediting organizations that review specific programs or subject area offerings.

Regional, national faith-related and national career-related institutional accreditors review public and private four-year institutions, public and private two-year institutions, complex professional and vocational institutions, institutions offering graduate education and research, national career-related institutions and a large sector of training institutions. Institutional accreditors reported that they accredited 4,784 institutions in 2022-2023.

Programmatic accreditors review specialized and professional programs in a range of fields and disciplines within institutions, as well as single-purpose freestanding institutions. These organizations reported that they accredited 23,164 programs and freestanding institutions in 2022-2023.

Accreditation in the United States is more than 100 years old, emerging from concerns to protect public health and safety and to serve the public interest.

As of 2022, 17 institutional accreditors and 71 programmatic accreditors were “recognized” or undergoing a periodic external review of the accrediting body itself.

Next:

- **Regional Accrediting Organizations**
- **National Faith-Related Accrediting Organizations**
- **National Career-Related Accrediting Organizations**
- **Programmatic Accrediting Organizations**