

# Programs Offered Through Contractual Arrangements

Substantive Change Application

Institution:       City, State:

Name of person completing this application:

Title:       Phone:       Email:

Date Submitted:

*When to Apply for Approval of a Contractual Arrangement*

HLC’s policy on approval of contractual arrangements requires an accredited institution to *notify* HLC before collaborating in or outsourcing certain aspects of an educational program through a contractual arrangement with another party or parties and to seek *approval* for certain substantive involvement by another entity in one or more of the institution’s academic programs. This application should be used once the institution has submitted its contractual arrangement to HLC for screening via the [Screening Form](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/contractual-arrangements-screening-form.html) and has been advised that the contractual arrangement requires HLC approval. (See [Substantive Change: Contractual Arrangements](http://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/contractual-arrangements.html) for further information.)   
  
  Attach to this application a PDF of the email response received after completing Screening Form.  
  
Any addendum, modification or renewal of a contract for a contractual arrangement that was previously reviewed by HLC is considered to be a new contractual arrangement. The institution must initiate the substantive change process for the contractual arrangement to determine whether approval is required.

*General Instructions*

This completed form will constitute your request for approval of a substantive change. This form will be the basis for review of this application. The questions are designed to elicit brief, succinct, detailed information, rather than a narrative or references to extensive supporting documents. Do not attach other documents unless they are specifically requested in the questions and are germane to the request. Excluding attachments, the completed application form should be no more than 12–15 pages on a single classification of change. The total submission, including attachments, should not exceed 200 pages.  
  
**Important:** In order for HLC to comply with federal mandates to take final action on contractual arrangements within 90 days of receipt of a materially complete application, please ensure that all fields in this form are complete and the necessary supporting documents (approvals and contract) and Contractual Screening Form email are included. Once the complete application and all necessary documents are received, the application is considered complete and ready for review.  
  
If the person completing this application is not the CEO, CAO or the Accreditation Liaison Officer of the institution, it is understood that the person completing and submitting this application has consulted with and informed those individuals and has been authorized to submit this form on the institution’s behalf.  
  
Please note: HLC plans to update its application forms annually, on or about September 1 of each year. However, if an application form was accessed more than 90 days prior to filing, please visit [hlcommission.org/change](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) to ensure that there have been no changes to the form in the intervening time.  
  
Submit the completed application as a single PDF file at [hlcommission.org/upload](https://www.hlcommission.org/upload). Select “Change Requests” from the list of submission options to ensure the application is sent to the correct HLC staff member.

## Part 1: General Questions

1. **Requested Change(s).** Concisely describe the change for which the institution is seeking approval.
2. **Does another characteristic of the change requested in this application also require prior HLC approval?** (Example: contractual arrangement, new academic program, new additional location, etc.)

No

Yes

If yes, please briefly explain the second type of substantive change requiring prior HLC approval and submit the relevant application form separately (or indicate the date on which it was submitted):

1. **Classification of Change Request.***Note: not every substantive change requires prior review and approval. Visit* [*hlcommission.org/change*](https://www.hlcommission.org/change) *to make certain that current HLC policy requires the institution to seek approval.*

An institution submitting more than one change request should complete multiple applications, one for each type of change. Change requests may be related to the following topics:

• [New academic programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-academic-programs.html), including degree and certificate programs

• [New Pell-eligible prison education programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-pell-eligible-prison-education-programs.html) (also referred to as PEPs)

• [Changes to existing academic programs](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-clock-credit-hours-program-content-and-length-of-term.html) involving credit/clock hours, method of delivery

or length of term

• Opening or closing [additional locations or branch campuses](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-off-campus-activities.html)

• [Provisional Plans](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/provisional-plans-and-teach-outs.html) (with or without Teach-Out Agreements, as applicable)

• [Teach-Out Agreement](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/provisional-plans-and-teach-outs.html) if closing a campus or additional location that provides 100% of at least   
 one program

• Access to HLC’s [Notification Program for Additional Locations](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-off-campus-activities.html)

• Initiating or expanding [distance education offerings](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-distance-or-correspondence-education.html)

• Initiating or expanding [correspondence education offerings](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-distance-or-correspondence-education.html)

• Offering programs through [competency-based education](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-competency-based-education.html) (credit-based, direct assessment

or hybrid)

• Initiating or modifying [contractual arrangements](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-contractual-arrangements.html)

• Change in [mission](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-mission-or-student-body.html)

• Change in [student body](https://www.hlcommission.org/Accreditation/substantive-change-mission-or-student-body.html)

1. **Special conditions.** Indicate whether any of the conditions identified below fit the institution (Yes or No). If Yes, explain the situation in the space provided.
2. Is the institution, in its relations with other institutional or specialized accrediting agencies, currently under or recommended for a negative status or action (e.g., withdrawal, probation, sanction, warning, show-cause, etc.)?
3. Is the institution now undergoing or facing substantial monitoring, special review, or financial restrictions from the U.S. Dept. of Education or other federal or state government agencies?
4. Has the institution’s senior leadership or board membership experienced substantial resignations or removals in the past year?
5. Is the institution experiencing other pressures that might affect its ability to implement the proposal (e.g., a collective bargaining dispute or a significant lawsuit)?
6. **Internal Approvals.** Attach documentation of internal (faculty, board) approvals that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC**. If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute, or correspondence).
7. **State Approvals.** Attach documentation of state approvals that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC**. If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute, or correspondence).
8. **System Approvals.** If applicable, attach documentation of system approval that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC**. If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed (e.g. applicable regulation, statute or correspondence). Check the box below if the institution is not part of a system.

Not Applicable

1. **Foreign Country Approval(s).** If applicable, attach documentation of foreign country approval(s) that the institution has obtained for the proposed change. Documentation must be written in or translated to English. **All required approvals must be obtained before submitting the application to HLC**. If no approval is required, attach evidence that approval is not needed. Check the box below if the proposed change is not related to offerings in a foreign country.

Not Applicable

1. **Specialized Accreditation.** Complete this section only if specialized accreditation is required for licensure or practice in program(s) covered by this change application.

The institution has already obtained the appropriate specialized accreditation. Attach a copy of the letter from the agency granting accreditation.

The institution has begun the process of seeking or plans to seek specialized accreditation. Specify the name of the agency and the timeline for completing the process in the space below. (If approval is a multi-stage process, the institution should contact the HLC staff liaison to discuss the timeline before submitting this change application form.)

The institution does not plan to seek specialized accreditation. Provide a rationale for not seeking this accreditation in the space below.

1. **Changes Requiring Visits.** This section is not for HLC-mandated visits such as additional location confirmation visits or campus evaluation visits.

Complete this section only if the institution is already aware that the proposed change will need to be reviewed through a visit. The institution may submit Part 1 of the change request application to begin the process of scheduling a Change Visit or adding the proposed change to an already scheduled visit. The full application must be submitted at a later date. (If the institution is unsure whether a visit is required, leave this section blank and submit the full change application. HLC will advise the institution based on the information provided.)

1. Select the type of visit the institution is requesting:

Request to schedule a Change Visit.

Change Visits typically are scheduled approximately four months from the date an institution submits its change request. The full change application and other required materials will be due to HLC and the peer review team eight weeks before the visit date. See [Change Visit: Required Materials and Submission Procedures](https://www.hlcommission.org/change-visit) for more information.

Request to embed a Change Visit into an already scheduled visit.

**Note:** Such requests must be submitted at least six months before the visit date. HLC staff will determine whether to embed a Change Visit based on peer reviewer availability and the complexity of the scheduled visit, among other factors. HLC may not be able to accommodate all requests.

Specify type of visit and date scheduled:

The institution’s full change application should be submitted along with other materials required for the already scheduled visit.

1. Provide URLs to the institution’s Faculty/Staff Handbook and Catalog below. If the URLs are not available, please provide PDF versions of these documents when submitting other required materials prior to the visit.

Faculty/Staff Handbook URL:

Catalog URL:

## Part 2: Topic-Specific Questions

### Section A. Characteristics of the Contractual Arrangement

1. Check one:

New contractual arrangement  Renewal of existing contractual arrangement   
  
Effective date:

Attach to this application a copy of the contract in its final form. HLC approval of this contractual arrangement is predicated on the assumption that the material terms of this contract will not change subsequent to HLC approval.

1. Participating entities: Provide the names and locations (complete address and phone number)

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| --- | --- |
| **Institution or Organization** | **Location (Complete address and phone number)** |
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1. List the certificates or degree programs affected by this contractual arrangement.

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| **Certificate and degree programs  affected by the contractual arrangement** Provide the program name, 2020 CIP code  and program level. | **If applicable, is the program included in the accredited status of all parties in the contractual arrangement?** |
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1. List the goods and services provided by each party related to the academic programs listed above. Identify related pages in the contract. This could include, for example, instruction, student support (such as tutoring or coaching), curriculum design, curriculum review, assessment, etc.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Parties to the contractual arrangement** | **Goods and services provided in the contractual arrangement to certificate and degree programs.** | **Pages and contract links** |
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1. How will the parties to the contractual arrangement be identified on the specific credential documents (degrees, certificates, transcripts, etc.) awarded to students at the completion of their studies?
2. What due diligence process did the institution undertake with regard to the contractual arrangement, particularly if the institution had no previous experience with the other entity? What institutional representatives were involved in negotiating and vetting the agreement? Who provided the final approval?
3. How will the accredited institution evaluate the effectiveness of the relationship and the need for adjustments in that relationship?

### Section B. History With Similar Contractual Arrangements

1. Have any of the partners engaged in similar contractual arrangements before? For example, has the institution contracted with this entity with regard to other programs? Has the entity contracted with other institutions to provide similar goods or services?
2. If yes, briefly describe these contractual arrangements.
3. If yes, what is the evidence of the effectiveness of these contractual arrangements?

### Section C. Planning for Contractual Arrangements

1. What impact might the contractual arrangement have on challenges identified as part of or subsequent to the last HLC review, and how has the institution addressed the challenges?
2. What future growth in enrollment is anticipated (e.g., in the next six months, three years) as related to the contractual arrangement and how will that growth be managed?

### Section D. Curriculum and Instructional Design

1. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, which entity is responsible for establishing requirements for the programs and its courses?
2. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, how is the curriculum developed? For any curricula developed and provided by the other entity, what processes does the institution have for approval of the curricula? Can the institution make changes to curricula that is developed and provided by the other entity?

### Section E. Instructional Staffing, Faculty and Student Support

1. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, which parts of the curriculum are delivered by each party? What is the distribution of instruction of credit hours among the parties? If an “instructor of record” model is used, please explain.
2. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, what reasonable policies and procedures does the institution have to determine faculty qualifications, and what is the extent of involvement of each party in that determination?
3. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, how are faculty recruited and hired, and what is the extent of involvement of each party in that process?
4. Which entity(ies) are the legal employer(s) of record for the faculty for each program covered by the contractual arrangement? Are these faculty members full-time, part-time, or independent contractors using standard Internal Revenue Service definitions? For any faculty that are employees of the institution, are these individuals indirectly compensated by the other entity (for example, the other entity reimburses the institution for the faculty members’ compensation)?
5. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, how are the faculty workloads determined and how is teaching supervised and evaluated? What is the involvement of each party?
6. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, how are students recruited and admitted? What is the extent of involvement of each party?
7. How are students advised under the contractual arrangement and what is the extent of the involvement of each party?
8. What structures are in place to ensure that promised faculty and student support are provided by the parties? How will the needs of students be met if a party cancels, delays, or otherwise fails to provide promised services?

### Section F. Assessment and Evaluation

1. For each program covered by the contractual arrangement, how is the curriculum overseen?
2. Describe the process for monitoring, evaluating and improving the overall effectiveness and quality of the offerings. Describe each party’s responsibilities with respect to assessment of student learning.