

What is “AQIP”?

AQIP stands for Academic Quality Improvement Program. It is one of three pathways to accreditation for colleges in the North Central region of the United States. HCC is an AQIP institution.

Why does accreditation matter?

Colleges which have regional accreditation can:

- a) Offer federal financial aid
- b) Receive federal grants
- c) Allow credits to transfer and receive credits from other accredited colleges
- d) Show students, parents, community members, and legislators that they meet strict quality standards
- e) Participate in sanctioned college athletic competition
- f) Provide students with other benefits that unaccredited colleges can't offer

When our students apply for jobs, the employer's first question may be “is this college or program accredited?”

What happens next?

In November, Highland will submit a report to the Higher Learning Commission to provide evidence that we are meeting certain requirements in these areas:

1. Helping Students Learn
2. Meeting Student and Stakeholder Needs
3. Valuing Employees
4. Planning and Leading
5. Knowledge Management (IT) and Resource Stewardship (Finance)
6. Quality Overview

In short, we are required to show the areas where we are doing very well. For example, HCC has beautiful, well-maintained, safe facilities. Students score well and earn credentials, excel in extracurricular activities, and transfer successfully. We also need to study the areas where we could improve our programs and services.

We are all in this together. That's why it's important for each of us to share our successes and contribute ideas for improvement!