Accreditation is the recognition that an educational institution and its programs meet acceptable levels of quality, which are set by independent bodies called accrediting agencies. During the accreditation process, an agency evaluates faculty and staff credentials, program curricula, financial stability and learning environment. If the institution meets the agency’s standards, the agency grants the institution an accredited status.

You should know the definition of accreditation and understand its impact on your choices as you investigate careers, identify schools and select a program of study. Choosing to attend an accredited school or program to obtain your degree or certificate will increase your credibility when you apply for graduate school, employment or a license.

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes two types of accreditation:

Regional: grants approval to both brick-and-mortar and online schools

National: grants approval to distance learning schools throughout the country

For more information, visit https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/
Accrediting agencies can grant two kinds of accreditation:

- **Institutional**: applies to an entire institution
- **Specialized or programmatic**: applies to specific programs, departments or schools within the institution

**Why Accreditation is Important**

The U.S. Department of Education does not accredit educational institutions or programs. However, the Secretary of Education publishes a list of nationally and regionally recognized accrediting agencies determined to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training they provide and education programs they accredit.

*Attending an accredited institution may increase your chances of:*

- Receiving federal or state financial aid
- Gaining admission to other institutions should you wish to earn a postgraduate degree
- Easing the transfer of credits to another institution
- Being accepted into a higher-level program with an accreditation prerequisite
- Having more marketable credentials when you complete your education and seek employment
- Showing you’ve met the standards for your career field licensure or certification

**Identifying Accredited Institutions**

Use the [U.S. Department of Education accreditation search](https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/) to determine a school’s accreditation and its accreditation history. Schools with multiple campuses will have listings for each campus. If you are just starting your search, a query by state will provide a list of all accredited institutions within that state.

For more information on selecting a school or program, or learning more about accreditation, speak with a Spouse Education and Career Opportunities career coach at 800-342-9647.

For more information, visit [https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/](https://mycaa.militaryonesource.mil/)