

Approval Process for Academic Associate Degrees

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Academic Associate Degree

A type of degree program generally intended to transfer to an upper-level baccalaureate program that will satisfy the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific discipline.

The academic associate degree includes, the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degrees.

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Embedded Associate Degree

The proposed rules include the option of an embedded associate degree for public universities and public health-related institutions. An embedded associate degree aligns with the definition of an embedded credential and must be wholly embedded within a bachelor's degree program.

Students may only be awarded an associate degree in the same or related academic field of the bachelor's degree in which a student is currently or has been enrolled.

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Public Comment

The agency received comments from five entities including a public university and university system, two community colleges, and the Texas Association of Community Colleges.

Comments received focused almost exclusively on the approval process and criteria for awarding embedded associate degrees.

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Subchapter D. Approval Process for New Associate Degrees

Rule 2.54 (b), Approval Required for Academic Associate Degrees and Rule 2.58 (b), Embedded Credential: Academic Associate Degrees

§2.54(b) Embedded--an institution of higher education may offer an associate degree as an embedded credential to a student enrolled in an approved baccalaureate degree program. Approval of a proposed embedded associate degree program is subject to the Assistant Commissioner Expedited Review Notification Only approval process under 19 TAC §2.4(2)(b) (B) (ii).

§2.58(b) may request the embedded associate degree program subject to Assistant Commissioner Expedited Review Notification Only under subchapter A, §2.4 (2) (B) (ii), of this chapter., if the institution already offers an approved bachelor's degree in the same CIP Code.

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Subchapter D. Approval Process for New Associate Degrees

Rule 2.53, Academic Associate Degree Titles, Length, and Program Content

(4) An institution may offer an embedded associate degree as outlined in §2.58 that does not include the full 42 SCH required core curriculum except for a Multidisciplinary studies degree as required by §2.57(b).

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Effective Dates

The new rule regarding preliminary planning takes effect June 1, 2023, and for those proposed programs not requiring preliminary planning the rules apply beginning September 1, 2023.

The rule 2.58 Embedded Credential: Academic Associate Degrees takes effect immediately.