



Approach[®]
International Student Center

STUDENT HANDBOOK

YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME GUIDE

WWW.APPROACHUSA.ORG





Dear Student

We welcome you as the newest member of the APPROACH community and thank you for choosing to study with us!

Language is a practical skill which requires constant use in order to maintain it. Making the commitment to speak ONLY English, as much as possible, at the school and at home will make a huge difference in the quality of your English skills and the rate of the progress you will make.

At APPROACH, students and faculty work together with mutual respect and adhere to high standards of personal conduct. We want to help you improve your English and prepare you to meet your academic and professional goals. We want every student to succeed.

We hope to make your experience at APPROACH one you will always remember. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions please feel free to speak to me or to any member of our staff.

Very truly yours,

*Executive Director
mfernandes@approachusa.com*

WELCOME TO APPROACH!



Our mission is “to provide high-quality, flexible, and affordable English, Test preparation and Business programs to students from all over the world.”

Accreditations & Memberships:





2022 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Student Orientation

Midterm and Final Exams

- Jan 1** New Year's day
- Jan 3** First day of class for students & teachers
- Jan 3-4** ESL Conversation Classes
- Jan 5-7** 3rd International Student Conference
- Jan 15-20** February tuition instalment due
- Jan 17** Martin Luther King Jr. birthday
- Feb 15-20** March tuition instalment due
- Feb 21** Presidents' day
- Mar 15-20** April tuition instalment due
- Mar 20-Apr 2** Spring Break (no classes)
- Mar 20** Final grades due
- Mar 23-25** Professional development/TESOL
- Mar 28-Apr 1** Faculty break

WINTER QUARTER	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
January	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
February	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
March	27	28	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Spring Vacation	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	1	2

SUMMER QUARTER	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
July	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
August	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
September	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Fall Vacation	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	1

- Jul 4** Independence day
- Jul 15-20** August tuition instalment due
- Aug 15-20** September tuition instalment due
- Sep 5** Labor day
- Sep 15-20** October tuition instalment due
- Sep 18-Oct 1** Fall Break (no classes)
- Sep 18** Final grades due
- Sep 21-27** Faculty break
- Sep 28-30** Professional development

- Apr 15-20** May tuition instalment due
- Apr 18** Patriots day/Boston Marathon
- May 15-20** June tuition instalment due
- May 30** Memorial Day
- Jun 15-20** July tuition instalment due
- Jun 19-Jul 2** Summer Break (no classes)
- Jun 19** Final grades due
- Jun 22-28** Faculty break
- Jul 29-Jul 1** Professional development

SPRING QUARTER	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
April	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
May	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
June	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Summer Vacation	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	1	2

FALL QUARTER	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
October	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
November	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	1	2	3
December	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Winter Vacation	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- Oct 10** Columbus day
- Oct 15-20** November tuition instalment due
- Nov 11** Veterans day
- Nov 15-20** December tuition instalment due
- Nov 24-26** Thanksgiving Holiday
- Dec 15-20** January tuition instalment due
- Dec 18** Final grades due
- Dec 18-Jan 1** Winter Break (no classes)
- Dec 24-25** Christmas Holiday
- Dec 26 - Jan 1** School is closed for students

Our office is open Monday-Friday from 10.30AM-6.30PM.

The school is closed during Federal holidays, Thanksgiving week and Christmas week. During break weeks, the school is open for tutoring, testing, and registration. For the safety of our students and staff, the school might close during severe weather. School closings are posted on the APPROACH Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ApproachUSA>. If the school is open during a snowstorm or whenever public transportation is limited, you can make your own decision about safety. You should not come to school if you feel it is not safe to do so. No tuition refund is provided as a result of Federal Holidays or emergency closings.

ACADEMICS

YOUR ROAD TO LEARNING ENGLISH

English as a Second Language program and proficiency levels

There are 8 ESL general levels of instruction in the ESL program covering all subjects: **grammar, writing, reading, vocabulary, speaking, listening and pronunciation.** The ESL curriculum correlates to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) – a standard for grading an individual's language proficiency around the world and our ESL levels correlate to major proficiency tests such as TOEFL, IELTS and Cambridge examinations among others.

ESL PROGRAM								1	2
1A PRE-BEGINNER	1B BEGINNER	2A ELEMENTARY	2B UPPER-ELEMENTARY	3A PRE-INTERMEDIATE	3B LOWER-INTERMEDIATE	4A INTERMEDIATE	4B UPPER-INTERMEDIATE	FRESHMAN	SOPHOMORE
You have no previous experience or never studied English.	You can deal with very basic day-to-day activities and make simple plans with others.	You can communicate in simple routine tasks, deal with predictable day-to-day activities and solve basic problems.	You can communicate in simple tasks, deal with daily activities and solve basic problems effectively.	You can describe your experiences and events, deal with familiar everyday activities, and handle situations when traveling.	You can describe your experiences and events in detail, deal with everyday activities, and handle situations when traveling.	You can deal with simple key tasks at school and at work, give presentations, write essays, and interact with native speakers.	You can deal with tasks at school and at work, give complex presentations, write complex essays, and interact easily with native speakers.	Introductory courses corresponding to the beginning of college work in a major or in General Education and which require no previous college experience.	Lower division courses at freshman and sophomore level. Constitute intermediate step between beginning and advanced work in a given field;
CEFR PRE-A1	CEFR A1	CEFR A2	CEFR A2+	CEFR B1	CEFR B1+	CEFR B2-	CEFR B2-/B2+	B2+	C1/ C2
						SAT	TOEFL	AAP & BP PROGRAMS	
								GMAT - GRE	
								ESL TI	

CORRESPONDING TEST SCORES										
Evolve Placement	1-5	6-11	12-17	18-23	24-30	31-36	37-42	43-49	50-61	62-70
Oxford testing	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-45	46-50	51-60	61-70	71-80	81-100
Toefl ibt					57-63	64-71	72-78	79-86	87-109	110-120
IELTS					4		4.5	5	5.5-6.5	7-8
Cambridge			Key (KET)	Key (KET)	Preliminary	Preliminary	Preliminary	Preliminary	First (FCE)	Advanced
PTE General			Level 1	Level 1	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3	Level 4

Program and course placement

Before your first day of classes, you will take an ESL placement test with a writing component and undergo an oral interview. This comprehensive assessment will determine your starting ESL level, and eligibility to register for one of our higher-level programs. (Advanced Academic Preparation, Business Program, ESL Teaching Internship, TOEFL, GMAT, GRE, and SAT).

Although you may not retake the placement test, you may petition to have your level adjusted by the end of your first week of classes. To do so, you will need to get the approval of your teachers and email the Academic Advisor at help@approchusa.com explaining why you believe your level should be adjusted.

Students who leave the school for more than one quarter, need to take a new placement test upon return to be placed into their current ESL level.

Student Orientation

You are required to attend the mandatory new student orientation session. Please refer to our Academic calendar for available dates. During orientation, we will be talking about many topics of interest:

- School information;
- Academics and student progress;
- F1 student rights and responsibilities;
- American culture and customs;
- Practical issues while living in the US.

You will also receive your books, materials, I-20 package (F1 students only) and a "welcome to level" outline containing course details, learner outcomes, class requirements and grading procedures. On the first day of classes, you will be able to access the course syllabus online. The syllabus is your guide to each course and describes what will be expected of you during the course.

Course enrollment and course schedules

On the first day of classes, you will receive a course outline (syllabus) containing course details, learner outcomes, class requirements, and grading procedures. Teachers are always available during breaks to answer any questions you may have about course requirements, assignments, tests, and course progress.

Once we know your ESL level and the programs you qualify to enroll in, you will be able to enroll and choose your class schedule for the quarter. To enroll as a part-time student you don't need to bring any documents. As a full-time F1 student, you should bring your passport, I-20 form, and a credit card or cash to pay for any remaining dues.

Classes are offered Monday-Saturday, in a variety of schedule combinations, and availability is on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please refer to the course listing to see available course sessions each quarter. Students who take a leave of absence are subject to schedule availability upon return.

Class sizes and class conversion

The maximum number of students per class is 24 for the ESL and test preparation programs and 40 for AAP and BP programs. In the event that a group class has 8 students or less, APPROACH may cancel the class or convert 4 group classes to 2 semi-private classes (with 2-8 students) or 4 group classes to 1 private class. Whenever a reduced course load is applied, you will have the option to change your schedule depending upon availability.

Attending classes online

To make the best of your program, you need a computer to attend classes. Oftentimes, teachers will share documents and you will need to be on camera while reading or watching something on the screen, which requires a laptop or a desktop. You also need a quiet study area where you can focus on classes. Be mindful to be fully clothed (shirts, pants, skirt, etc) and to be respectful to your teachers and classmates. Last but not least, **SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH IN CLASS AND BREAKOUT ROOMS.**

Books, materials and supplies

Students receive the materials (books, handouts, PDFs, copyrighted materials electronic or printed) required for each course/ level during the first week of each quarter. The full quarter tuition includes books, materials, and supplies necessary for each program limited to one set per level/ quarter.

If you change your program or program levels in the middle of a quarter, you can exchange your materials (in "like new" condition) for the materials necessary for your new classes or you can purchase new materials at \$150. If you withdraw from classes in the middle of the quarter, you can return "like new" books and materials or you will be charged a pro-rated amount for books and materials received for that quarter.

Understanding the US Classroom

In many countries, classroom activity is focused on the teacher. Most of the learning takes place through lectures and the instructor is considered the expert source of knowledge who should clarify and interpret all texts. In these settings, the classroom is a very formal place in which teachers are addressed by their title, and silence is the most common way to demonstrate respect. Student participation is rarely encouraged.

In US classrooms, the approach is student-centered. While teachers may sometimes lecture, classroom discussions are often led by students. The atmosphere is relatively informal and teachers often encourage students to address them by their first name. Students are encouraged to ask questions and express their own opinions and this participation often plays a significant role in the evaluation process. Finally, in many countries, evaluation is based almost exclusively on exam scores. In the US classroom, however, student evaluation will include other criteria such as completion of homework, class participation, attendance, writing assignments, personal reflections and group projects.

Attendance policy

The cumulative attendance is checked every week. You are required to attend a minimum of 80% of the classes each quarter.

- Teachers take attendance for **each 45-minute class period**;
- To be marked **PRESENT at in-person classes**, you cannot **miss over 10 minutes** on each class period;
- To be marked **PRESENT at online classes**, you cannot turn off your camera and stop actively participating in a class **for over 10 minutes**.
- There is no excused absence or attendance make-up;
- Students who are below the 80% cumulative attendance without an approved leave of absence and will not be able to attain 80% by the end of the quarter are **DISMISSED** by the school.
- Students who miss 20 consecutive calendar days (excluding any scheduled breaks) without an approved leave of absence are **DISMISSED** by the school.
- F1 students **DISMISSED** by the school due to poor unjustified attendance are **TERMINATED** on SEVIS for "unauthorized drop below full course of study".



TALK
TO US!

If you get sick and can't attend 80% of your classes at any given week, please email a doctor's note to help@approachusa.com immediately.

In serious cases of unplanned medical emergencies where you will miss over 20% of your classes, the DSO may be able to authorize a medical leave or a reduced course load.

Attendance is very important to comply with immigration regulations. A student can get terminated at the school and lose the F1 status when...

- The student is **ABSENT** for 20 consecutive calendar days;
- The student's attendance falls below 80% without an approved RCL or NCL;

Attendance policy

A DISMISSED student has **7 calendar days to appeal the dismissal decision:**
The appeal must be emailed to **help@approachusa.com**, and must

- (1) explain why the student missed classes;
- (2) failed to communicate with the student advisor in advance, and,
- (3) include supporting documentation to justify the absences.

During the appeal review process, the student should continue to attend classes, unless there is a documented reason physically preventing the student to do so.

Within 7 days of the appeal submission, the student advisor will email a final decision allowing or not the student to continue classes at Approach. Part-time and full-time students not holding the F1 status will be automatically re-enrolled.

F1 students who were terminated on SEVIS for "unauthorized drop below a full course of study", and:

- are allowed to continue studying at Approach will need to **file a reinstatement process with USCIS.**
- are NOT allowed to continue studying at Approach and will need to depart from the U.S. immediately to avoid accruing illegal presence or find a school willing to file a reinstatement process to transfer to immediately.

The reinstatement process is a costly and difficult process where the student has to explain to immigration, why the student failed to maintain the F1 status and wait months for approval.

ALWAYS COMMUNICATE WITH THE STUDENT ADVISOR IN ADVANCE OF BEING ABSENT.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Observance of religious holidays

Massachusetts law requires faculty and staff to accommodate students who are absent due to religious observance. This means that we must provide you with a reasonable opportunity to make up a test, or missed assignments due to a religious observance if such accommodation does not create an unreasonable burden.

Approach's Policy on Religious Observance gives students the right to miss class and make up the work for religious reasons. Students are required to inform instructors, in writing, of conflicts with the course schedule and requirements due to their religious observance as early as possible in the quarter, and no later than one week before the conflict so that accommodations can be made. Students are marked absent for any classes missed due to religious holidays as the attendance policy allows for students to miss up to 20% of the classes and still successfully complete the course.

Class conduct, etiquette and participation

Class conduct is an important component of our program. Students receive a 1-4 rating on each point below. This rating helps us with the selection of student ambassadors, decisions on scholarships, on-campus employment, and evaluating situations of conflict. The highest rating is given to our star students who:

1. Arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class;
2. Speak only ENGLISH in the classroom;
3. Respect teachers and classmates, pay attention and be supportive of a great learning environment.
4. Put the cell phone away and focus on the lesson;
5. Come prepared, bring completed homework and materials, and actively participate in-class activities.

Students are expected to maintain a class conduct rating between 16-20 at all times to continue enrollment at Approach.

Grading policy

Each week you will need to complete graded assignments. For each course, you will have a midterm test at the end of 6 weeks and a final test at the end of 11-weeks to evaluate how well you are doing in your classes. The grading policy is as follows:

Assignments	Homework, in-class assignments, quizzes and group projects	30% of final grade
Midterm Exam	Summative test or project given half way through the quarter	30% of final grade
Final Exam	Summative test or project given at the end of the quarter	40% of final grade

If you experience difficulties in class, make sure to speak to your teacher and share your concerns. Your teacher will make every effort to help you understand the materials.

Progress reports

Progress reports are issued on a quarter basis and are available at the student portal. You may request a general progress report at the main office any time you need. This report includes your grades, which show how well you are meeting the learner outcomes for each class, your attendance record and your session GPA. The equivalent percentage, letter and GPA are:

%Grade	Letter grade	GPA	Explanation
94-100	A	4.0	Excellent
90-93	A-	3.7	Excellent
87-89	B+	3.3	Good
83-86	B	3.0	Good
80-82	B-	2.7	Good
77-79	C+	2.3	Average
73-76	C	2.0	Average
70-72	C-	1.7	Average
67-69	D+	1.3	Poor
63-66	D	1.0	Poor
60-62	D-	0.7	Poor
<60	F	0.0	Failure
W	--	0.0	Withdrew

Graduating from your program

Students can petition to graduate at the end of each quarter. To graduate from a program, you must be a student in good academic standing (see page 10), must complete your last quarter at Approach with a minimum of 80% attendance, a minimum 2.7 GPA, and must fulfill the program requirements as follows:

- **ESL:** successfully complete the ESL level 4B, and pass the CEFR test to C1 (“Use of English”, listening, writing, and speaking assessments).
- **TOEFL, GMAT, GRE, and SAT:** successfully complete two-quarters of the program and show final score improvement from first full test simulation to last full test simulation.
- **ADVANCED ACADEMIC PREPARATION:** successfully complete the two levels of the program (4 quarters).
- **BUSINESS PROGRAM:** successfully complete the two levels of the program (4 quarters).
- **ESL TI:** successfully complete the program (two quarters).

Certificates and transcripts

Depending upon your program, you may receive a certificate of participation or a certificate of completion. All students may receive a transcript reflecting the final attendance and grades achieved for each course taken.



Satisfactory progress and good academic standing

The Academic team evaluates students' satisfactory progress at the end of each quarter throughout the program. Students are considered to be making normal progress towards the course of study when meeting the satisfactory progress qualitative and quantitative standards as outlined below:

- 1. Qualitative Standard:** Students must meet the requirements of the attendance policy and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 through the course enrollment period.
- 2. Quantitative Standard:** APPROACH students are considered to be making normal quantitative progress toward program completion when systematically improving one's proficiency in a timely manner as follows:

Program of study	Hours/ Week	# levels	#weeks per level	Total instructional hours per level
ESL Super Intensive (ESL30)	22.5	8	9	1620
ESL Intensive Plus (ESL24)	18.0	8	12	1728
ESL Semi Intensive (ESL16)	12.0	8	18	1728
ESL Semi Intensive (ESL12)	9.0	8	24	1728
ESL Semi Intensive (ESL08)	6.0	8	36	1728
ESL Semi Intensive (ESL04)	3.0	8	72	1728
ESL Study Group (ESL SG)	18.0	8	18	2592
Advanced Academic Preparation (AAP)	18.0	2	24	864
ESL Teaching Internship (ESL TI)	18.0	1	24	432
Business Program	18.0	2	24	864
ESL Teen Cultural (ESL TC)	12.0	1	24	288
TOEFL	18.0	1	24	432
GMAT	18.0	1	24	432
GRE	18.0	1	24	432
SAT	18.0	1	24	432
Private	varies	varies	2	varies

Progressing through program levels

You will be evaluated for level promotion at the end of each academic quarter (refer to the academic calendar). To be promoted to the next program level you must attain a minimum of 80% attendance and a minimum 2.7 GPA for the current quarter.

You can appeal a promotion decision before the first day of the quarter. To appeal a promotion decision, you must take a CEFR test (Oxford or track test) scoring in the next level in all four skills assessed:

- **Use of English:** Pass the Reading and Grammar portion of the CEFR computer-based test.
- **Listening:** Pass the "Listening" portion of the CEFR computer-based test.
- **Speaking:** Pass a formal CEFR speaking assessment with a member of the academic team.
- **Writing:** Pass a formal CEFR writing assessment with a member of the academic team.

Consequences of Failure to Meet Satisfactory Progress Standards

At the end of the quarter, if you fail to meet the qualitative standard you will repeat the level.

- Students **repeating a level for the first time**, are informed in writing and are invited to meet with the academic advisor to discuss the concerns that are impacting their academic performance.
- Students **repeating a level for the second time** will receive an Academic Learning Plan outlining the necessary steps for achieving academic success. All tasks outlined in the learning plan must be completed by predetermined deadlines.
- Students **not eligible for level promotion** after repeating a level twice will be **DISMISSED** by the school.

A student's maximum cumulative total length of the language training is no more than 36 months at Approach.



Academic Probation

Students, whose GPA falls below 2.7 at the end of a quarter and are repeating a level are considered at risk of not meeting the satisfactory progress standard and are placed on PROBATION.

Students placed on probation, receive a written notice and are given a probationary period of two quarters to progress to the next level. During the probationary period, the student must:

1. have a consistent conduct rating between 16-20;
2. maintain minimum attendance equal to or above 80%;
3. submit all classwork and homework assignments and take tests on time;
4. attain a B- or higher final grade, the equivalent to a 2.7 GPA;

F1 students placed on probation, are considered to be maintaining the F1 status during the probationary period and may request to transfer to another institution in SEVIS ACTIVE status.

Students who fail to meet the requirements by the end of the probationary period will be withdrawn from the school.

Students placed on probation may appeal a determination within 7 days of receiving a probation or withdrawal notice. A written appeal should be emailed to the Academic team at help@approachusa.com. The academic team will respond to any appeals within 7 days of receiving the appeal.

STUDENT SERVICES

THE HELP YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

Housing

APPROACH encourages ESL students to participate in the homestay program. Through this program, APPROACH arranges housing with a family, giving you an excellent opportunity to practice English and learn about American culture. Our families are carefully selected and most of them provide the student with a furnished room near the school or with access to the school via public transportation. Once the housing placement fee is submitted, please allow at least two weeks for APPROACH to make arrangements with the host family. Housing preferences are met according to availability, and prices vary according to the number of meals included. Below are some housing resources you may also want to check while making permanent arrangements:

AT HOME IN BOSTON (Agent)

15 Cedar Rd.
Chestnut Hill, MA 02167
Contact: Joan Cohen
(617) 277-6444
www.athomeinboston.org

ANTHONY'S TOWN HOUSE (Rooms)

1085 Beacon Street
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 566-3972
Daily, weekly and monthly rates.
www.anthonystownhouse.com
\$60-100 per night

BOSTON HOMESTAY INC. (Agent)

Contact: Nancy Pongratz
nancy@bostonhomestay.com
www.bostonhomestay.com

GLOBAL IMMERSIONS INC. (Agent)

102 Marshall Street
Watertown, MA 02472
(617) 924-2712
www.globalimmersions.com

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP HOUSE (Dorm)

386 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 267-0877
www.ifhboston.org
Men only.
\$500-600/month shared room

THE BOSTON INT'L HOSTEL (Dorm)

12 Hemingway Street
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 536-9455
Daily rentals with a fourteen-day limit.
www.bostonhostel.org

Academic activities

Learning English should be fun and rewarding. During your program, the ESL teachers will plan various indoors and outdoors class activities so that you can practice the skills you are learning in real settings. Teachers will take you to volunteer at community events, visit the library for research, tour museums and participate in university lectures and events so that you have the opportunity to interact and communicate with native speakers. Students from other classes are welcome to join in activities happening outside of their regular class schedule.

Throughout the year, APPROACH hosts parties and events to ensure you will make friendships that will last a lifetime. Keep an eye out and don't miss Valentines week, the Annual Summer Barbecue in July, the Halloween festival in October, the Thanksgiving dinner in November and, the holiday celebration in December. The monthly activities calendar is available at the main office. You should sign up for activities in advance to guarantee availability.

Our Activities calendar includes all academic activities scheduled for each month as well as some fun and more relaxed outings including excursions around the Boston area, movie sessions, graduation parties and our traditional International Lunch where students bring a dish from their country to share with friends and teachers.

Student clubs

Students who wish to form theater groups, chorales, sports teams, book clubs or other student clubs are encouraged to consult with the Activities Coordinator for guidance in forming a new club. Great club ideas are:

- Conversation partner meet-ups
- Toastmasters (public speaking)
- Model UN
- Beantown gamers
- Music Madness
- Flash Mobbers
- Running for health
- Soccer (spring and summer)
- Salsa dancing
- Wine tasting

Academic & career Advising

When you first join classes at APPROACH, you can schedule an interview with our Academic & Career Advisor to help you plan and decide on deadlines to successfully achieve your academic goals. Some of the reasons a student may stop by to speak to the Advisor:



- Ask questions about university partnerships and university admissions
- Inquire about scholarships available to international students
- Discuss academic and career goals
- Clarify a student's academic status (the requirements to be in "good academic standing")
- Discuss possibilities of applying for H1B sponsored jobs
- Inquire about transfer credits to prospective universities (from other colleges, AP, CLEP, etc.)
- Discuss any problems encountered with classes and/or instructors

Advising process

Advising is a collaborative process between student and the Academic and Career Advisor . At APPROACH, it is a shared responsibility for a coherent educational plan that incorporates academic, career, and personal goals. Your advisor will look at students holistically to facilitate access to services and resources and to encourage student engagement in the campus life.

Student responsibilities

- Be involved in the advising process by being prepared to discuss your goals and educational plans during meetings.
- Review your program audit each month and track your progress toward completing your graduation requirements.
- Take primary responsibility for your educational plans and achievements.
- Be open and willing to consider recommendations from counselors, faculty, and other mentors.
- Understand school programs, policies, procedures, and opportunities as appropriate.
- Schedule and attend appointments with your counselor regularly.
- Be courteous and call to cancel or reschedule your appointment if necessary.

Advisor responsibilities

- Assist you in gaining decision-making skills and in assuming responsibility for your educational plans and achievements.
- Understand and effectively communicate degree requirements, academic policies and procedures.
- Encourage, support, and advocate for you as you gain the skills and knowledge necessary for success.
- Educate and refer you to educational, institutional, and community resources and services.
- Provide an environment in which you can share your aspirations, concerns, and interests.

How can the Academic Advisor help you?

ESL LEVELS 1A, 1B, 2A and 2B

- Explore your academic and career interests.
- Assess your skills and strengths.
- Become familiar with school rules and requirements.
- Learn about other academic programs available.
- Use multiple resources to maximize your experience, for example, student organizations, study groups, volunteering etc.
- Explore connections between your interests and strengths and potential schools/programs or careers.

ESL LEVELS 3A, 3B and 4A

- Arrange for experiences that will help you clarify your goals and interests, including cooperative education, meeting with faculty and staff, shadowing a professional in a field of interest to you, or volunteering.
- Research multiple schools/programs or career options to find the best fit for you.
- Identify education and/or additional skills you'll need to get accepted at the schools of your choice or to attain employment or training in your field.

ESL LEVEL 4B and Advanced Programs

- Be able to market your skills and education to schools/programs and/or employers.
- Network with at least three people who study or work in a field of interest to you;
- Research employment or undergraduate/graduate school options and start applying.
- Make sure you have met all course requirements and take final achievement/proficiency tests.

Student Success Workshops

APPROACH'S student success workshops are offered through each quarter. The success of our students represents our success and the workshops offered aim at helping you be as successful as you can possibly be. The workshops below are offered on demand at no extra cost and participation is optional:

Effective study strategies

This interactive session will provide you with proofreading, studying, note-taking strategies and effective study skills for optimal performance in class and during exams. Increase your retention and recall of information using a variety of study tools and techniques.

Test-taking strategies

Students often experience anxiety and frustration when preparing for and taking exams. This workshop presents strategies for exam preparation and exam-taking that can minimize anxiety and allow for greater success.

Exploring careers and choosing a pathway program

Are you exploring undergraduate and graduate programs, but still uncertain of the right direction? Thinking of switching careers? Join us for a lively discussion on the common myths and realities that often shape students' decisions when choosing a school or a career. Come and gain valuable tips on how to make good choices about majors, minors, and careers.

Writing an effective resume and cover letter

First impressions do count! Learn how to market yourself on paper by writing an effective résumé and cover letter.

Cross cultural seminars

The cross cultural seminars bring an opportunity for you to share and learn about the culture, customs and traditions of countries from all over the world.

Well-being seminars

Navigating culture shock, language barriers and homesickness can be a challenge for every international student. In the well-being seminars, you will learn how to adjust to culture and life in the U.S. as well as how to navigate the medical care system.

University Placement

APPROACH has unparalleled expertise in placing international students in institutions of higher education. Our knowledgeable placement specialists work with the full range of U.S. colleges and universities and a select number of institutions and training providers worldwide. Our placement services are dedicated to matching each student with the best possible program.

Our Academic and Career Adviser has strong relationships with admissions offices, faculty and staff in academic departments as well as training providers. Our experts are well-informed of recent trends as well as program offerings, new initiatives and interdisciplinary research centers within U.S. institutions and at universities worldwide. Through close research of academic options, we are able to match each candidate with the best possible programs to fit their study goals. We have a proven track record of:

- Working with a full range of fields of study as well as training providers and higher education institutions.
- Selecting programs that provide a strong academic fit for each individual and showcase a range of educational and training offerings.
- Gaining admissions into degree, non-degree or certificate programs.
- Acquiring significant cost-sharing when necessary.
- Handling off-cycle placements for those seeking winter, spring or summer admissions or programs.
- Conducting fast-tracked placements for those candidates identified late in the admission season.
- Arranging consortium agreements, both soliciting interests, and building consortia.
- Contracting for customized programs.
- Advising on pre-academic interventions—additional English language study or content-based or skills coursework.

College & University partnerships



Upon graduating from our ESL program, you may benefit from joining one of our partner universities without having to submit TOEFL scores. The process is simple and our Academic and Career Adviser will help you every step of the way.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

DETAILS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Parking and public transportation

Allston: Local on-street parking is available for two hours at a time and all day on Commonwealth Avenue.

The closest subway stop to the school is at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Harvard Avenue across the street on the B Line (Green Line). The closest bus routes are the #57 Watertown/Kenmore and the #66 Cambridge/Brookline. You may pay for parking online using the “Park Boston” app available in the Apple store and Google Play.

Marlborough: Parking is available on site.

Enrollment agreement, program and course changes

All current enrollment policies including registration, cancellation, withdrawal and refund policies are stated in the enrollment agreement section of the application and registration form. Please review the enrollment agreement and let us know if you have any questions or concerns as it applies to all students enrolled at Approach.

Document requests

To request a document, certificate, or any other form from APPROACH, visit the main office. Please allow at least 48 hours for APPROACH to process any request.

- Current I-20 and letters verifying your student status
- Copies of your immigration documents on file
- Student I.D. cards
- Attendance data
- Progress reports
- Payment statements
- Course certificates
- Transcripts

Main office supporting services

You may request any of the services below at the main office:

- Photocopies: \$0.10 a page;
- Second copy of certificates and transcripts: \$15.00

Student ID discount program

APPROACH students enjoy several discounts from local businesses and online stores. To receive a discount, present your valid APPROACH student ID to any participating merchant.

Technology & Mobile Services

- Apple Store, Dell and HP: student discount and special pricing
- AT&T: Select students may qualify for a student discount
- Microsoft: Special deals and discounts for students (the Prudential Center Microsoft location offers 10% discount for students, educators, and staff on select products)
- Adobe: Special deals and discounts for students

Retail & Miscellaneous

- Banana Republic: 15% discount
- Club Monaco (Prudential Center): 20% discount
- H&M: 15% discount
- J. Crew: 15% discount
- LOFT (Prudential Center): 15% off full-price purchase, cannot be combined with other offers
- Juicy Couture: 15% discount
- Steve Madden: 10% discount from in-store purchases
- Prudential Center: Visit prudential website to see all stores with discounts.

Wicked Cheap Fun

- Regal Fenway 13: \$2.50 off any movie after 4 pm
- Brattle Theatre: Student discount with valid student ID
- Museum of Fine Art: Free with student ID on Wednesday nights
- New England Aquarium: Discount admission for \$24.95, \$7.95 for Simons IMAX Theatre & \$29.95 for combo admission/IMAX ticket
- Skywalk Observatory: \$3.00 off an adult admission
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum: \$5 admission
- Wrentham Village Outlets: Free VIP coupon book
- Boston Library Discounts for Boston Attractions: If you have a Boston library card, you can find discounts to free events and discounts for attractions like the Aquarium, Museum of Science, Boston on Foot, ICA, Zoo New England, J.F.K. Library & more. The Boston public library is free, so go get yours!

F1 visa and F1 status

The **F1 visa** is issued at the Consulate and allows you to enter the US. Each time you travel abroad and return to the US, you have to go through immigration (port of entry at the airport). To be admitted to the US, you need to have a visa - and in the case of International students, an F1 student visa and an I-20 form (issued by the school after your acceptance into a program).

Once you are admitted, you will have the **F1 status** for the duration of your studies. As long as you continue maintaining your F1 non-immigrant status, you will be able to continue attending school and will enjoy all the benefits of being a student in the US, even if your visa (in the passport) expires.

It is important to have the correct visa and status corresponding to your plans while in the US and it is possible to change your status without leaving the country if your plan changes. It is not possible to renew a visa or receive a new visa while in the US - to do that, you must go to a consulate abroad, preferably in your home country.

Finding the correct information about visa benefits and requirements

The United States welcomes international students coming to study in the US on an F1 status. The F1 status is a non-immigrant status, therefore it is extremely important that you understand the benefits and comply with the requirements governing your stay. Failure to maintain your non-immigrant status could result in serious consequences and may affect your ability to remain in or return to the United States. The Study in the States website has a special section dedicated to international students and it is an excellent source of information.



Please check <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students>

Filing taxes

If you are an international student who was present in the U.S. in the past tax year, you may be required by law to file one or more U.S. Federal and State Tax forms even if you have had no U.S. source of income.

The U.S. tax year runs from January 1st to December 31st, with a filing deadline of April 15th. A tax return is filed with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), an agency of the U.S. government.

For help with federal income tax return or to order federal tax forms, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or go to www.irs.gov. For help with your state income tax return, call the Massachusetts Department of Revenue at 617-887-6367 or go to: www.mass.gov/dor. In person tax help is offered at: IRS Boston Office (JFK Federal Building - 15 New Sudbury Street - 617-316-2850)

Social security information

A Social Security card provides an individual with a unique identification number assigned by the U.S. federal government to monitor and tax wages earned by employees in the U.S. It does not grant employment authorization. A Social Security number is required for all individuals who are employed in the U.S. It is not required to obtain a drivers' license, nor should it be required to open a bank account, rent a car, purchase a cell phone or file federal tax forms.

ESL students in F1 status are eligible to obtain a Social Security number ONLY if they have been offered an on-campus job. For more information about social security numbers you may check International Students and Social Security Numbers at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10181.html



Health Insurance

Since September of 1989, Massachusetts law, G.L. c.15A, § 18, has required every full-time and part-time student enrolled in an institution of higher learning in Massachusetts to participate in a qualifying student health insurance program or in a health benefit plan with comparable coverage.

A part-time student is defined as a student participating in at least 73% of the full-time curriculum. Given the high cost of health care in the United States, APPROACH International Student Center students and their accompanying dependents are responsible for acquiring a valid health and accident insurance.

A few companies offer affordable plans meeting the minimum acceptable coverage. You may google "International Student Health Insurance" to find a comprehensive list of providers or look at:

- www.isoa.org
- www.cignaglobal.com
- www.internationalstudentinsurance.com

Mental Health and resources

Adjusting to a new country and living in a new culture can be both exciting and difficult. Often the differences are interesting and fun at first, but over time having to adjust to so many new things can be exhausting. Transitions can be especially challenging when you are far away from people who usually support you. We understand that problems in your personal life can impact your ability to learn, so we aim to be your home away from home and help you adjust to the extent we can.

It is not unusual to:

- miss home or feel "like" you do not want to go back home
- be misunderstood when you express yourself in your usual way
- feel conflicted between values at home and in the US
- have difficulties making American friends at first or understanding dating in the US
- deal with roommate conflict

- find out that some people are prejudiced against others from different cultures
- deal with others' misperceptions about your culture or country
- experience difficulties understanding people when speaking English
- not understand major differences in the educational system
- feel fear in getting help for physical illness due to difference in the medical system
- face problems interacting with professors, advisors, or employers
- be concerned about family reactions to choices you make while in the US
- find that things that were a problem at home are still a problem even though you are in a new environment

Dealing with these issues can lead to: feeling sad, worried, lonely, confused, frustrated or angry, overwhelmed, helpless or stuck, lacking on self confidence, feeling fearful of the unknown and unfamiliar leading up to problems with sleeping, problems concentrating, problems with academic performance and even physical illnesses. It is important to talk about it and make sure you get the support you need to face these challenges.

Beyond our staff at Approach, there are several organizations in Massachusetts that offer linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health and related services:

Please look at the 2019 Multicultural Mental Health Resource Directory created by the MA department of mental health below:

https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/02/19/MBoston_2019%20Multicultural%20Mental%20Health%20v2.pdf

You may download this guide for a complete list of service providers at

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/printable-dmh-multicultural-resource-directory-complete/download>

SCHOOL POLICIES

APPROACH publishes rules and regulations to help maintain the highest standards in its programs. Acceptance and compliance with these rules and regulations and with all appropriate federal and state laws are contractual obligations on the part of the student. Failure to comply with any of these rules may result in termination from the program and/or withholding of program certificates.

Student misconduct

Attitudes and policies regarding academic misconduct vary from culture to culture, and it is important that students are aware of the attitudes toward and consequences of academic misconduct in the U.S. Instances of academic misconduct at APPROACH are initially handled by the student's instructor, with assistance from the Academic Coordinator as needed.

APPROACH's policy on student conduct and dismissal are based on the standards of good behavior in the community and society at large. Offensive actions or language toward a teacher, staff member, or other students are considered unacceptable behavior. Although APPROACH has no special dress code for students, dressing in a way that would be unacceptable in public is also grounds for dismissal from the school. If a violation of general and/or legal standards of behavior is sufficiently severe, the student is warned or, in some cases, dismissed immediately.

Re-admission is possible upon evidence that the behavior has been corrected and, in the judgment of the Director, will not re-occur. Dismissal for possession, distribution, or use of illegal drugs is final and not open to re-admission. The following is a general listing of offenses that require immediate disciplinary actions:

- Behavior that threatens or endangers the mental and physical health or safety of any person or persons, or causes actual harm, including: physical harm or threat of physical harm, such as physical abuse, sexual assault or coercion, harassment and intimidation, whether physical, verbal (oral or written) or nonverbal;

- Dishonest conduct, including plagiarism, forgery, alteration, fabrication or misuse of identification cards, records, grades, diplomas, college documents, or misrepresentation of any kind to the school;
- Disorderly conduct that interferes with the rights of others;
- Intentional or reckless disruption or interference with the activities of the school or its members;
- Theft of personal or school property or services, or illegal possession or use of stolen property;
- Vandalism or intentional or reckless damage to personal or school property;
- Unauthorized entry, use, or occupation of school facilities or the unauthorized use or possession of school equipment;
- Illegal purchase, use, possession or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or other controlled substances;
- Failure/refusal to comply with a reasonable request from school staff acting within the scope of his/her duties;
- Unauthorized possession or use of firearms, explosive devices, fireworks, dangerous or illegal weapons, or hazardous materials;
- Interference with or misuse of fire alarms or other safety and security equipment or programs, including but not limited to initiating, or causing to be initiated, any false report, warning or threat of fire, explosion or other emergency;
- Violation of a condition or sanction imposed (or agreed upon) due to a violation of the policy on student conduct;
- Violation of any federal, state or local law that poses a threat to the health, safety or well-being of the school or its individual members.

Grievances

If students are having a disagreement between one another, the school encourages them to attempt resolving it inoffensively between themselves. If the school's involvement is required to mediate, students should seek assistance from any staff member in the main office.

Academic dishonesty

Maintaining the highest level of academic integrity is the concern of every student and teacher at APPROACH. Academic dishonesty is unacceptable in all forms. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to the following:

- cheating on tests;
- copying another's work or allowing your work to be copied;
- use of unauthorized notes and/or materials during an exam;
- plagiarism: presenting the work of another as your own in a paper, exam, or other assignment;

Explicit acknowledgment (meaning footnotes or end notes) must be given for the use of another person's ideas or language. The instructors determine whether an act of academic dishonesty or misconduct has occurred and also decides what penalty to impose. The instructor may simply give a zero grade for the assignment or exam. Repeated or serious misconduct may be referred to the Director, who may impose additional sanctions, including failing the course or expulsion from the school.

Student suspension

Suspension is used in the following circumstances:

- To ensure the safety and well-being of members of the community or preservation of school property;
- To ensure the student's own physical or emotional safety and well-being;
- If the student poses a definite threat of disruption of, or interference with, the normal operations of the school.

The Director and/or International Student Advisor may place a student on suspension upon making a determination that such an action is necessary to maintain safety and order. The interim suspension remains in effect until responsibility and sanctions have been determined and any appeals have been resolved. A student placed on suspension may request reconsideration in writing to the Director. The student must provide evidence that she/he is not a risk to safety and order.

Student expulsion

In addition to discipline at school, a student is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and or expulsion, for misconduct away from school if the school administration determines the student's presence to be detrimental to the best interest of the school. Students who engage in an ongoing pattern of behavior that is disruptive to the orderly operations of the school will be referred for immediate expulsion depending on the frequency, severity, and seriousness of the act.

Student appeals

The student has the right to appeal a decision by management to the Directors. Such appeals are not a rehearing of the complaint; rather, they provide a safeguard against errors or unfairness. The student may appeal the determination of responsibility, the sanction or both. Appeals are considered on one or more of the following grounds:

1. Significant new information not available at the time of the decision
2. Imposition of an unreasonable sanction

The student must submit any appeal in writing to the Director within seven (7) calendar days of transmittal of the decision and must include an explanation or justification for the appeal. The Director will notify other parties in the case and will provide a written decision and rationale within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of responses to the appeal. The Director's decision is final. If the student files a timely appeal, no sanction is imposed until the Director renders a decision, except when an interim suspension has been imposed, to maintain safety and order, remains in effect.

Non-discrimination of students

No student or applicant for admission shall on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, language spoken, homelessness, disability, marital status, age, religion, or any other basis prohibited by law be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination/harassment under any educational programs, activities, services, or in any employment conditions, policies or practices conducted by APPROACH.

Notice to students: ACCET complaint procedure

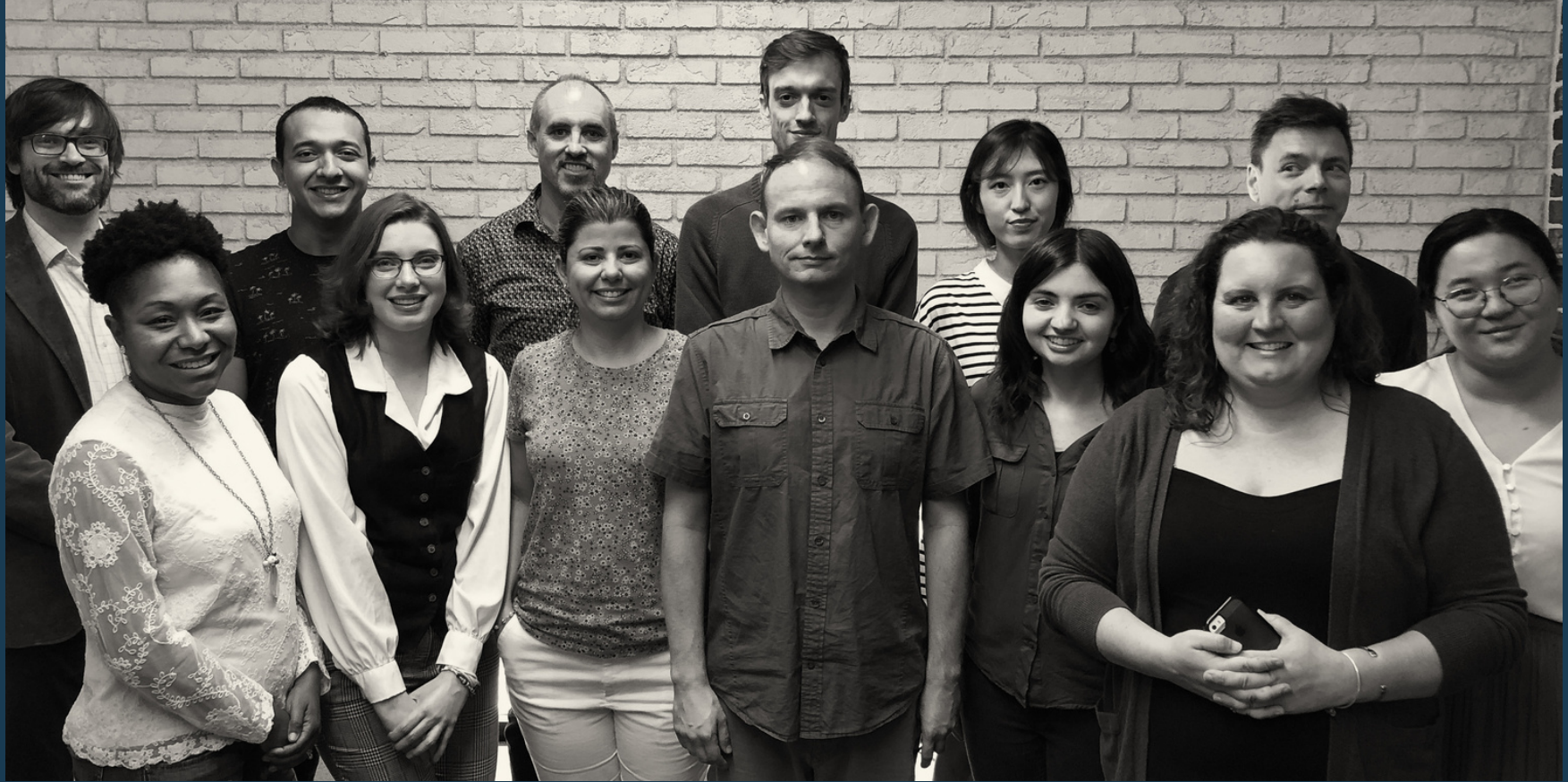
In the event that a student has exercised the institution's formal student complaint procedure, and the problem(s) have not been resolved, the student has the right and is encouraged to take the following steps:

1. Complaints should be submitted in writing and mailed, or emailed to the ACCET office.
2. Complaints received by phone will be documented, but the complainant will be requested to submit the complaint in writing.
3. The letter of complaint must contain the following:
 - Name and location of the ACCET institution
 - A detailed description of the alleged problem(s)
 - The approximate date(s) that the problem(s) occurred
 - The names and titles/positions of all individual(s) involved in the problem(s), including faculty, staff, and/or other students
 - What was previously done to resolve the complaint, along with evidence demonstrating that the institution's complaint procedure was followed prior to contacting ACCET
 - The name, email address, telephone number, and mailing address of the complainant. If the complainant specifically requests that anonymity be maintained, ACCET will not reveal his or her name to the institution involved
 - The status of the complainant with the institution (e.g. current student, former student, etc.)

In addition to the letter of complaint, copies of any relevant supporting documentation should be forwarded to ACCET (e.g. student's enrollment agreement, syllabus or course outline, correspondence between the student and the institution).

SEND TO: ACCET - CHAIR, COMPLAINT REVIEW COMMITTEE
1722 N Street, NW - Washington, DC 20036 -
Telephone: (202) 955-1113 - Fax: (202) 955-1118 or (202) 955-5306
Email: complaints@accet.org - Website: www.accet.org

Note: Complainants will receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 15 days.



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