



Early Childhood Higher Education Programs

New Look, New Name, Same Commitment to High-Quality Early Childhood Professional Preparation!

It's an exciting time for professional preparation at NAEYC! The higher education accreditation system has expanded beyond accrediting associate degree programs to now include programs at the baccalaureate and master's degree levels. This expansion includes a new name and logo for the accreditation system. Welcome to the new NAEYC Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs!

	Previously	Now
Name	NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (ECADA)	NAEYC Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs
Eligible programs	Associate degree programs	Associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree programs
Accreditation system logo		
Accredited program seal		

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What prompted NAEYC to expand the accreditation system?

A: There are many early childhood degree programs that did not previously have a mechanism for validating the quality of their program through accreditation. NAEYC's previous accreditation model was only open to associate degree programs, while the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) only accredits licensure and advanced programs at the baccalaureate and graduate degree levels. Expanding the system provides a path to accreditation that did not previously exist for non-licensure baccalaureate and master's degree programs, as well as an alternate option for CAEP-eligible programs whose institutions or states choose not to participate in the CAEP process.

Q: Is the accreditation process for the baccalaureate and master's degree programs different from the process for the associate degree programs?

A: No. The accreditation process will remain the same for programs at all degree levels, and all programs seeking and maintaining accreditation will abide by the NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards. In conjunction with this expansion, the Commission on the Accreditation for Early Childhood Higher Education Programs is currently updating the Accreditation Policy and Procedures Handbook and many of the accreditation templates. Stay tuned for more updates this fall!

Q: How can my program apply for accreditation?

A: Faculty in programs that are interested in pursuing NAEYC's higher education accreditation can learn more and download an application by visiting www.naeyc.org/highered/accreditation/overview.

Q: Does the expanded accreditation system impact the status of my accredited program(s)?

A: No. All programs that are currently accredited—or accredited with conditions—will maintain their accreditation status.

Q: When can my accredited program start using the new logo on our marketing materials?

A: Programs receiving their first accreditation decision after January 1, 2017, will be emailed copies of the new logo and usage guidelines shortly after receiving their decision letter. Primary contacts at programs currently accredited by the ECADA system will receive an email with the new logo and usage guidelines to use in marketing materials by January 1, 2017, and may then choose to use the new logo or continue using the ECADA logo until their next renewal accreditation decision.

Q: How does this change or impact my accreditation certificate?

A: Certificates for programs receiving their first accreditation decision after January 1, 2017, will include the new name and logo. Accredited programs that received their current accreditation decision under the ECADA system may request a replacement certificate with the new name and logo for a \$25 fee by emailing highered@naeyc.org or they may continue displaying their ECADA certificate until their next positive renewal accreditation decision. At that time, the renewal program will receive an accreditation certificate that will include the new name and logo.

Q: Who can display the accreditation logo?

A: Only currently accredited higher education programs may display the logo or claim to be aligned with the NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards. Institutions must clearly indicate which program(s) have earned accreditation. Programs in Self-Study or Candidacy may not display the logo or claim to be aligned with the standards until they have been granted a positive accreditation decision. However, these programs may indicate that they are pursuing accreditation by sharing the following statement on marketing materials such as course catalogs or department web pages: "The [program name, e.g., "A.A.S. Early Childhood Education degree program"] at [institution name] is currently in the process of seeking NAEYC Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs."