



Standards Implementation Handbook

- Quality standards for computer-based career information, services, and systems
- Standards implementation checklists
- Instructions and benchmarks

Contact

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Foreword

The *ACRP Handbook of Standards* describes standards of quality for career information and services. The association originated the standards in 1981 and revised them in 1982, 1999, 2002, 2005, and 2008.

The standards address the growing industry that develops, distributes, and manages information tools for career development, irrespective of whether these products and services are delivered as part of a comprehensive system or as stand-alone components, and irrespective of the medium of delivery. The 2009 revision adds standards for national systems. The national systems standards address products that resemble comprehensive systems, except for the degree of localization and user support.

The association revised its **bylaws** in 2001, resulting in a major restructuring of the organization. In the new structure, the Alliance of Career Resource Professionals (ACRP) extends the opportunity of full membership status to an expanded range of participants that produce career information and services. Historically, the organization's full members were state operators of comprehensive career information delivery systems. The bylaw revision invites the entire industry, including those entities that produce single or multiple components as systems or stand-alone products, as well as those entities that operate comprehensive systems, to join the association as full members. The restructuring of the organization necessitated major revision of the association's standards.

It is our hope that the *ACRP Handbook of Standards* will prove useful to public and private entities that are concerned with providing high quality tools for career development and with meeting the highest standards of ethical practice. Comments regarding these standards and suggestions for improvement are welcome. Please direct any communication to ACRP.

Information contained herein concerning procedures, standards, organizational purposes, and membership is subject to change without notice. To be sure you have the most current edition of this handbook, please contact the ACRP Administrative Office.

2013 ACRP Standards Committee

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Introduction

Optimal career development, from youth through retirement, requires career information and services that are available to people when and where needed and that are relevant to their needs. The development of standards is a reflection of the need to define the meaning of quality and ethical practice as these relate to the industry that produces information tools and services for career development.

Computerized career information and services range from comprehensive systems to highly specific components aimed at a single career function. Comprehensive career information delivery systems provide work-related and educational information in an environment characterized by multiple audiences, accountability, user support, and training. All or most of the following standards will be relevant to comprehensive and national systems. For those who produce component and multi-component systems, the 2008 standards provide the following:

- Core standards, which apply to all career information and services;
- Component standards, which apply to specific content and process components; and
- Integration standards, which apply to multi-component systems with interrelated components.

Adopting ACRP standards is voluntary. It is a means for developers, managers, and distributors of career information and services to publicly declare that they subscribe to relevant measures of quality. These standards provide a basis for self-assessment, which encourages improvement of information and services, and thus serves the public interest. ACRP does not certify or audit compliance with the standards.

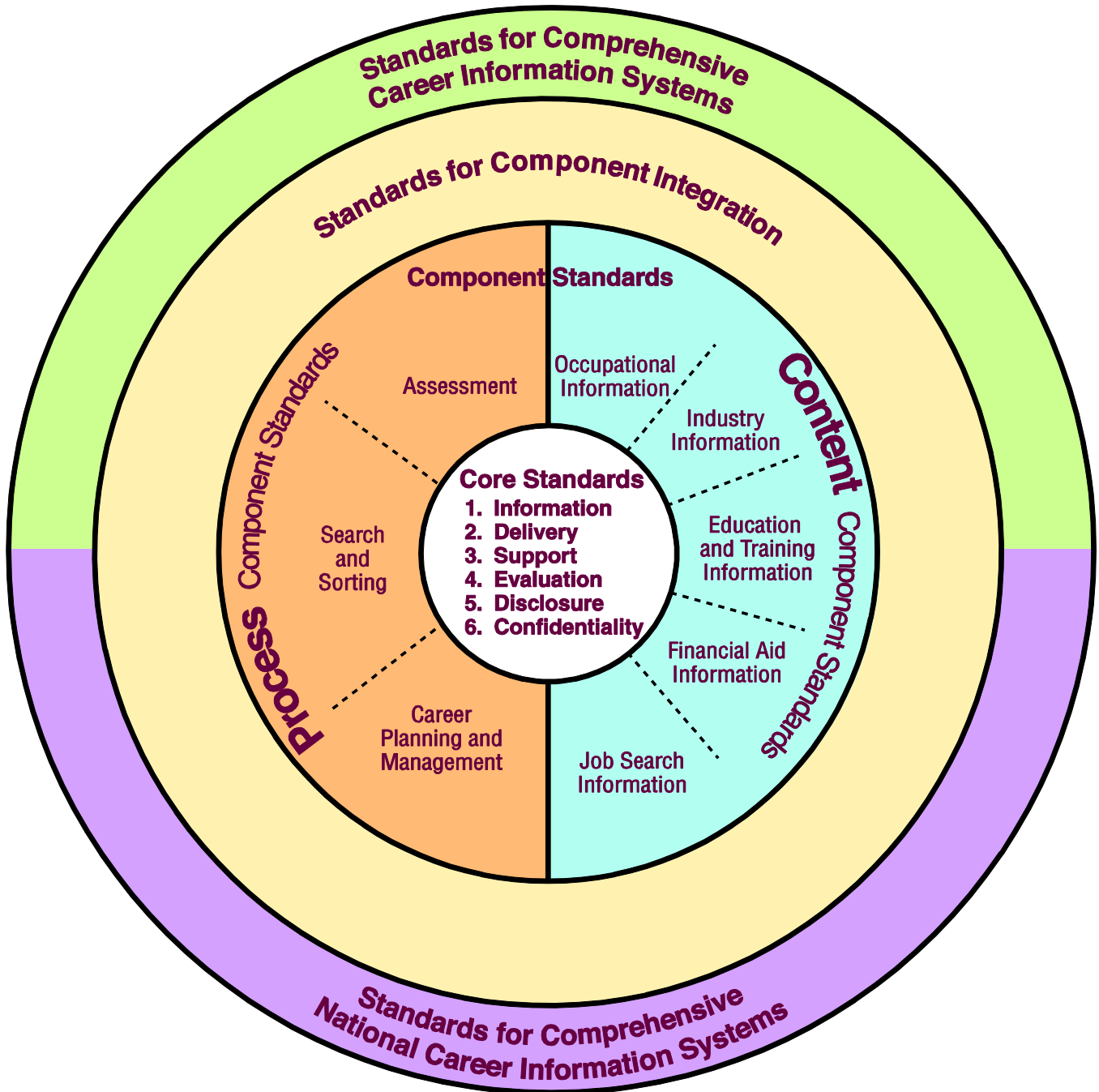
ACRP promotes the use of these standards for the following purposes:

- Fostering excellence in career information products and services;
- Encouraging improvement through continuous self-study and evaluation;
- Serving as a consumer evaluation tool for selecting career information products and services; and
- Assuring the public that member systems, products, and services have clearly defined and appropriate standards.

The standards in this manual provide a structure that the members believe is essential for developing, managing, and distributing career information and services. These standards serve the industry that produces information products and services for career development by providing practical measures that lead to higher quality products and ethical practices.

The ACRP Standards Committee recognizes the efforts of other professional organizations in the establishment of standards of professional practice. In the development of ACRP standards, committee members referenced the standards of professional practice of several organizations. These organizations and links to relevant documents are listed on page 33.

ACRP Standards Model



The ACRP Standards Model organizes applicable standards into four levels, depicted by the rings in the diagram above. In the center of the circle are core standards, which apply to all career products and services. Moving from the center outward, standards become applicable to *specific components*, as appropriate. The integration ring applies standards to *systems that relate two or more components*. The outer ring applies to comprehensive and national career information delivery system standards, which go beyond the component and integration standards. These outer-ring standards establish *higher expectations of comprehensiveness, accessibility, accountability, and user support*.

Definitions

1. **Core standards** are those standards that apply to all providers of information products and services for career development, irrespective of the tool, audience, or delivery mode.
2. **Component standards** apply to specific process components (assessment, search/sort, and career planning and management) or content components (occupational, industry, education and training, financial aid, and job search information) that advance career development.
3. **Component integration** standards apply to multi-component career information products and services in which components are interrelated.
4. **Comprehensive system standards** apply to career information delivery systems that provide integrated career development processes linked to work-related and educational information in an environment characterized by comprehensive information and services, multiple audiences, accountability, localization of information, and user support and training.
5. **National system standards** apply to career information delivery systems that provide integrated career development processes linked to work-related and educational information in an environment characterized by comprehensive information and services, multiple audiences, accountability, nationally organized user support and training, and nationally provided state and sub-state information.

Core Standards

1. Core *Information* Standards

Career information comprises educational, occupational, industry, financial aid, job search, and related information for career development. Career information should be accurate, current, developmentally appropriate, relevant, specific, understandable, and unbiased.

Core Standard 1.1 *Accurate*

Accurate career information is verifiable, and not deceptive. Accurate career information is based on empirical data that can be validated through expert judgment, analysis, and comparing sources or checking for internal consistency.

Core Standard 1.1.1 The entity that develops career information should disclose data sources and methodologies.

Core Standard 1.1.2 Information should be based on applicable taxonomies when they are available [e.g., Occupational Information Network (O*NET) for occupational information, North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) for industrial information, Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) for educational program information].

Core Standard 1.1.3 Career information should be developed from empirically-based data sources that are verifiable. Should anecdotal information or advice be presented, it should be clearly distinguished and identified.

Core Standard 1.1.4 Career information should be free from spelling and grammatical errors.

Core Standard 1.1.5 Career information that is emergent and based upon professional judgment should identify source materials and the basis of the professional judgment.

Core Standard 1.2 *Current*

Current career information is applicable to the present time. Some types of information are more perishable than others.

Core Standard 1.2.1 The entity should review information annually and update at an interval appropriate to ensure currency.

Core Standard 1.2.2 Data resources used for developing career information should be the most current data available.

Core Standard 1.2.3 The entity should purge or, at a minimum, identify information that is not current.

Core Standard 1.3 *Developmentally Appropriate and Relevant*

Career information and services should be developmentally appropriate and relevant.

Core Standard 1.3.1 The entity should identify the intended audience(s) and address its needs, interests, stages of development, and experience.

Core Standard 1.4 *Specific*

Specificity in career information provides concreteness, realism, and richness, which enable clarification, planning, and decision-making.

Core Standard 1.4.1 Career information should include concrete details.

Core Standard 1.4.2 Career information should be realistic.

Core Standard 1.5 *Understandable*

People using information must be able to comprehend it before they can use it. Communications should be unambiguous, provided in a meaningful form, and informative to the intended audience.

Core Standard 1.5.1 Career information should use language (for example, complexity, vocabulary, and reading level) appropriate for the intended audience.

Core Standard 1.5.2 Career information should avoid the use of jargon and technical terms that will not be understood by the intended audience unless the term is essential and defined.

Core Standard 1.5.3 The volume of detail should be appropriate to the intended audience.

Core Standard 1.6 *Unbiased*

Because we live in a complex multicultural society, career information should be non-discriminatory and unbiased. It should consider the broad range of audience subcultures and values in the marketplace and avoid guidance or other directives that assume group membership, beliefs, or subscription to a particular subset of values.

Core Standard 1.6.1 The content should be free from stereotypes relating to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, nationality, occupation, physical characteristics, poverty level, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class.

Core Standard 1.6.2 The entity should annually review career information and services to ensure that they are non-discriminatory, unbiased, and free from stereotypes.

Core Standard 1.6.3 Statements should be impartial (that is, free from evaluative terms, not biased toward or against one kind of work, education, or user).

Core Standard 1.6.4 Career information should serve the interests of end users in their individual career development and not include or omit information in order to serve the vested interests of the entity, its sponsors, its customers, or any party other than the end user.

2. Core *Delivery* Standards

For career information products and services to be useful, entities should deliver them in such a manner that users will be able to access the components, use or navigate them, and know when linked entities or third parties are providing content or processes to the user.

Core Standard 2.1 *User Support*

Core Standard 2.1.1 The entity should provide contextual guidance for users, especially for components and systems used in an unmediated environment such as the Internet.

Core Standard 2.1.2 The entity should indicate any components not appropriate for use without the assistance or supervision of a trained professional.

Core Standard 2.2 *User Interfaces*

Core Standard 2.2.1 The entity should provide interfaces appropriate to the ages and abilities of the intended audience(s).

Core Standard 2.2.2 The entity should provide interfaces accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with applicable laws.

Core Standard 2.3 *Links*

Core Standard 2.3.1 The entity should have a publicly stated policy for the inclusion of linked components and third-party components.

Core Standard 2.3.2 The entity should scrutinize linked sites to ensure that content is audience appropriate.

Core Standard 2.3.3 The entity should ensure that off-site links are in working order and continue to meet the criteria for inclusion.

Core Standard 2.3.4 Users should receive an indication upon leaving the system site and instructions or navigational aids for returning.

3. Core *Support* Standards

Entities should provide support, technical assistance, and a method of communicating with users to ensure that the needs and concerns of those using the component(s) are being met. Some examples of support methods include documentation, instructions, help files, e-mail, toll-free numbers, correspondence, and on-site support visits.

Core Standard 3.1 *Processes*

Documentation and methodology should be available upon request for assessment(s), planning, search/sort, and career management processes.

Core Standard 3.2 *Content*

Assistance should be available upon request to help users understand the information being provided.

Core Standard 3.3 *Technical Assistance*

Assistance should be available upon request to aid in the operation of any component(s).

Core Standard 3.4 *Access for Persons with Disabilities*

Assistance should be readily available to help users with disabilities to access the information or services being provided.

4. Core *Evaluation* Standards

Evaluation is the comparison of performance against standards to determine discrepancies between intended and actual results. The ongoing processes of review and revision should serve to improve career information and how it is delivered, methods of meeting customers' needs and organizational goals and objectives.

Core Standard 4.1 *Evaluation Plan*

The entity should have an evaluation plan for the component(s) it provides and should report findings to customers and users.

Core Standard 4.2 *Use of Feedback*

The entity should have a process for incorporating feedback from customers and users.

Core Standard 4.3 *Research*

The entity should validate the effectiveness of career information and services through ongoing research and evaluative functions that assess usability, navigability, and appropriateness for principal audiences.

5. Core *Disclosure* Standards

Many different entities develop, manage, and distribute career information components and systems. These entities should clearly and publicly disclose who they are, why they provide career information, for whom their information is intended, and what data sources they use.

Core Standard 5.1 *Purpose*

In a manner easily accessible to the user, the entity should identify itself and its purpose in providing career information.

Core Standard 5.2 *Vested Interests*

The entity should disclose any vested interest in the decisions or plans of the people who are receiving the information.

Core Standard 5.3 *Intended Audiences*

The entity should identify the intended audience(s) of its career information component or system. This identification should be easily accessible to the user.

Core Standard 5.4 *Provider Contact Information*

The entity should provide contact information to enable users to address questions and feedback to the entity.

Core Standard 5.5 *Major Sources of Information*

The entity should identify major sources used in preparing its career information.

Core Standard 5.6 *Appropriate Use*

The entity should describe appropriate use of its career information content and processes.

Core Standard 5.7 *Finances*

The entity should disclose major sources of financial support for its career information development, management, and distribution.

Core Standard 5.8 *Data Collection and Use*

The entity should disclose what data, if any, are collected about the user and how such data are used.

6. Core Confidentiality Standards

The entity should strive to maintain the utmost confidentiality and privacy of client data and records.

Core Standard 6.1 *Informed Consent for Data Collection and Release*

No data should be collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's explicit and informed consent. Consent is explicit when an end user gives permission by signature or other action or indication. Consent is informed when notice is given, prior to the collection of the personal information, regarding who is collecting the information, who will have access to it, what are the intended uses of the information, and whether the disclosure of such information by the client is voluntary or required in order to obtain the offered services.

Core Standard 6.2 *Rationale for Data Collection*

If any processing in the program is based on client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, personal preferences), the program should explain to the user how the data are being used.

Core Standard 6.3 *Data Security*

Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose should be secure and confidential. Furthermore, there should be provision for erasing client data after services are no longer being provided to that individual.

Core Standard 6.4 *Secure Processing of Confidential Data*

Any transmission of confidential data should be through a secure process that maintains the privacy of client data and protects such data from any unauthorized use.

Core Standard 6.5 *Research*

Any use of data for research purposes should exclude any personally identifiable data, except when clients authorize their data to be used for research purposes.

Component Standards

Component standards include many component products that entities might provide singly or as parts of a multi-component system. In accordance with the ACRP standards model, components may be either career development processes or content.

Process Component Standards

Process component standards apply to common information tools that facilitate the use of career information in career development. These tools may be provided as stand-alone products or as parts of multi-component systems.

7. Process Component *Assessment* Standards

Assessments provide measures of personal attributes, traits, interests, and other factors that relate to career decision-making. Whether formal or informal in nature, assessments should be accompanied by clear instructions, statements of appropriate use, necessary proscriptions, and disclosures of limitations. Technical information allowing judgment of the quality of the assessment should be available.

Process Component Standard 7.1 *Appropriate Use*

Assessments, both informal and formal, should disclose in clear terms appropriate uses and limitations of the assessment.

Process Component Standard 7.2 *Use and Audience*

The entity should indicate clearly the intended use of any assessment product and audiences for which the assessment is appropriate. The purposes should be disclosed to the individual beforehand, and the results and their significance should be disclosed to the assessed individual afterward.

Process Component Standard 7.3 *Gender-specific Language*

Career assessments should minimize sex bias through avoiding use of gender-specific language, except when such use serves to minimize bias. For example, women who have spent several years out of the labor force as homemakers might be prompted to inventory skills that are common to household and family responsibilities.

Process Component Standard 7.4 *Instructions*

The entity should provide clear instructions for using the assessment and interpreting its results.

Process Component Standard 7.5 *Need for Trained Professional*

The entity should advise whether an assessment should be administered, scored, or interpreted by a trained professional. If the participation of a trained person is needed, the entity should guard against use by untrained persons without adequate support. Such instruments should not be made available, except to qualified persons.

Process Component Standard 7.6 *Alternative Access*

The entity should advise persons with disabilities of any alternative modes or other appropriate accommodations for using the assessment.

Process Component Standard 7.7 *Retention and Disclosure of Results*

The entity should disclose policies governing retention and disclosure of results.

Process Component Standards 7.8 *Technical Data Disclosure*

The entity makes available or provides citations of relevant resources that provide reliability and validity data, interpretation guides, implementation instructions, appropriate use instructions, or other contextual information that enhances use of the instrument. For informal assessments, which do not have evidence of reliability and validity, the entity must clearly indicate that the instrument may produce results that have not been scientifically evaluated for accuracy or consistency. For standardized assessments, there should be citations of reliability and validity and identification of the groups for which reliability and validity measures are known. The entity should indicate citations of the assessment in publications such as *The Mental Measurements Yearbook* or *A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessments*.

Process Component Standard 7.9 *Costs*

The entity must indicate any and all costs associated with an assessment prior to delivering the assessment.

8. Process Component *Search and Sorting* Standards

Individuals need methods to find career opportunities and options in systematic ways. Entities delivering search and sort components should utilize mechanisms that are appropriate to the needs of the user. Searching/sorting processes should inform the user what the search/sort does and include a description of the logic and limitations of the process.

Process Component Standard 8.1 *Empirical Relationship*

A clear empirical relationship should exist between searching/sorting characteristics and the results set produced.

Process Component Standard 8.2 *Sufficiency of Search Characteristics*

The search/sort mechanism should use sufficient and pertinent characteristics to yield confidence in the results set.

Process Component Standard 8.3 *Relevant Characteristics*

Searching/sorting characteristics should be limited to those relevant characteristics required to produce the results set.

Process Component Standard 8.4 *Third-party Information Sources*

There should be clear disclosure when search/sort results link to information provided by other entities. The acknowledgment should advise the user that another entity has authored or delivered the information presented.

Process Component Standard 8.5 *Scope of Information Being Searched/Sorted*

There should be clear identification of search/sort processes that produce results from limited data sets. For example, if a result set of occupations is limited to one type of occupation (for example, high tech), or if results are appropriate for only one state or region of the country, these dimensions of scope should be clearly stated.

9. Process Component Career Planning and Management Standards

Career planning and management includes processes for discovering, reflecting on, and documenting career and educational/training plans, developing resumes, finding jobs, and providing evidence of work accomplishments and products.

Process Component Standard 9.1 *Informed Decision Making*

Career planning should be based upon a process that leads to informed decision making that is predicated upon self-knowledge and career exploration.

Process Component Standard 9.2 *Changes*

Career planning tools should include provision for adding, changing, and removing information.

Process Component Standard 9.3 *Access*

Career planning tools should indicate (assuming informed consent has been given) who has access to the planning document or results, the time period of access, and the access privileges.

Process Component Standard 9.4 *Conditions and Costs*

Career management services must delineate all user costs and conditions prior to use.

Process Component Standard 9.5 *Withdrawal*

Career management services should permit the client to withdraw from the service and to remove documents or other listings, postings, and artifacts upon request and in a timely fashion.

Process Component Standard 9.6 *Maintenance*

Career management services should disclose the maintenance policy of the service, including policies such as removal or modification of configuration settings or stored information, relocation of information, or lapse of subscription.

10. Process Component *Career Portfolio Standards*

Career portfolios are repositories of selected career information including occupational descriptions, career plans, career assessments, resumes or other depictions of education, training, and work experience, and other artifacts of learning and work. These materials are compiled for various purposes including career exploration, job search, competency evaluation, demonstration of achievement, and other career-related purposes. **[Effective date: January 1, 2015]**

Process Component Standard 10.1 *Portfolio Ownership*

Career portfolios are owned by the end user. The end user controls portfolio access, use, and removal. Entities must indicate the procedures for content removal by the owner and the definition of abandoned content and procedures for removal by the entity.

Process Component Standard 10.2 *Portfolio User Advisories*

Entities should advise users not to share or display information (home address, phone number, school name, etc.) that could enable unwanted contact.

Entities should advise users that content shared publicly is subject to copying, reposting, and uses not intended by the user or under the control or direction of the entity providing the portfolio service. When users transfer content to another site (sharing site or social media site), an advisory should indicate that users are transferring content outside the protected zone of the career resource.

Process Component Standard 10.3 *Portfolio Explicit Disclosures and Opt-in Provisions*

The entity clearly discloses any third-party access to portfolio contents, including sharing with sponsors, partners, clients, or customers and provides explicit opt-in opportunities for each sharable component in the portfolio prior to such sharing.

Portfolio disclosures should include the following:

- How long the portfolio is available to the end user (owner)
- How long the portfolio is available to viewers
- How personal data in the portfolio can be updated, transferred, or archived
- How the portfolio may be used outside the system in which it was developed
- How the end user can remove and delete the portfolio
- How archived portfolios may be restored, if possible

Opt-in permission should be discrete (not global). That is, the user may designate portfolio elements separately for identified user access, identified group access, or global access. Entities must enable the user to revoke or change access and provide clear instructions in how to do so.

Process Component Standard 10.4 *Portfolio Confidentiality and Privacy*

Entities that provide portfolio services should provide notice to all who access portfolio content that student content is subject to restrictions by privacy and confidentiality laws that govern student information and protection of minors and which limit further distribution of content for any purpose without the consent of the portfolio owner.

Process Component Standard 10.5 *Portfolio Access and Security*

The entity stores portfolio content using a secure process that maintains the privacy of client data and protects such data from any unauthorized use. Portfolio access, use, and removal require explicit permission or direction from the owner.

Process Component Standard 10.6 *Portfolio Portability*

The entity should provide end users with the capability to move portfolios between systems without loss of data, including evidence and review documents.

The entity provides end users the ability to export selected portfolio data to another system through printed output or electronic capabilities. See 10.2 for advisory about transfer of content outside the protected zone.

The entity provides end users the ability to import selected portfolio data from another system through a data re-entry process or electronic transfer.

Process Component Standard 10.7 *Portfolio Abandonment*

Entities may remove abandoned content (no owner access in a period of one year) by notifying the user that the content will be removed in xx days and providing instructions for keeping the content accessible or transferring the content.

Content Component Standards

Entities may provide content that facilitates career development as single components or as part of a multi-component system. Content component standards apply to common sets of information used in career development. These content sets may be provided as stand-alone products or as parts of multi-component systems.

11. Content Component *Occupational Information* Standards

Occupational information includes the basic characteristics of work being performed by individuals who hold jobs having similar duties, levels of responsibility, skills, knowledge, entry requirements, and physical demands.

Content Component Standard 11.1 *Scope*

The information providing entity should identify the scope of employment (for example, the military, the electronics industry, the state civilian labor force, 90 percent of employment in the United States) that the occupational information covers.

Content Component Standard 11.2 *Minimum Topics*

Information should adequately describe the occupation. At a minimum, occupational topics should include an overview or description of the occupation, work-related activities, and requirements for entering the occupation.

Content Component Standard 11.3 *Additional Topics*

Other topics may include tools used, working conditions, physical aspects, skills and abilities needed, knowledge requirements, preparation necessary for entry, typical hiring practices, licensing or certification required, wages paid, outlook for employment, relatedness to a career interest taxonomy, opportunities for advancement, and resources for obtaining additional information. Additional topics should have clear labels, should derive from reliable sources, and should be included for all relevant occupations.

Content Component Standard 11.4 *Consistency*

The entity should present occupational information consistently using uniform collection, content, analysis, and formatting in order to enable effective comparisons of occupations.

Content Component Standard 11.5 *Source Citation*

The entity should provide a means for indicating source materials for specific occupational information and the date of issuance or publication.

12. Content Component *Industry Information* Standards

Industry information includes characteristics of the labor market and economic conditions affecting employers who produce similar products or provide similar services.

Content Component Standard 12.1 *Basic Industry Information*

Industry information should provide a general description of the industry and describe the types of employers in the industry.

Content Component Standard 12.2 *Supplemental Industry Information*

Additionally, the information may include general working conditions, the products and services the industry provides, the number of workers, the location or areas of concentration of employers, types of work, current market considerations, outlook for future growth, sources of further information (such as related occupations), and other topics. Supplemental information topics should have clear labels, should derive from reliable sources, and should be included for all relevant industries.

Content Component Standard 12.3 *Consistency*

The entity should present information consistently so that users may compare industries.

Content Component Standard 12.4 *Sources*

The information provider should indicate source materials for industry information and the date of issuance or publication.

13. Content Component Education and Training Information Standards

Education/training information includes postsecondary educational programs and the schools or other providers offering them, including public and private colleges, universities, career schools, technical schools, and trade associations.

Content Component Standard 13.1 *Program and Training Information*

Program and training information should describe the basic characteristics of postsecondary education and training programs that are available to the public. Program and training information topics may include an overview, program admission requirements, typical course work, non-traditional alternatives, references for more information, recommendations regarding pre-enrollment preparation, and contact information for schools or other providers of the program.

Content Component Standard 13.2 *School Topics*

School information should adequately describe characteristics that may be of interest to users in choosing a school. At a minimum, school topics should include the name of the school, its location, its website, and the name of a contact (when possible) for information about the school. In addition, school topics may include type of school, degrees and certificates conferred, affiliation, accreditation, enrollment, course schedules and policies, admission requirements, housing availability, cost, financial aid available, any student services offered, job placement rates, and the programs offered.

Content Component Standard 13.3 *Criteria for Inclusion*

The entity should include a policy statement that describes criteria for inclusion or exclusion of schools and programs from listings.

Content Component Standard 13.4 *Consistency*

The entity should present education information consistently so that users may compare and contrast.

Content Component Standard 13.5 *Time Period of Applicability*

Education information, when appropriate, should specify the time period for which information is applicable.

14. Content Component *Financial Aid Standards*

Financial aid includes information about sources of college student financial aid, procedures for applying for aid, and the criteria for awarding such aid. Financial aid awards include grants, scholarships, loans, and employment. Currency is of the utmost importance in presenting financial aid information.

Content Component Standard 14.1 *Requisite Elements*

Financial aid information should include all eligibility, renewal, and repayment factors for each award and should clearly designate those awards that are based on financial need. The entity should provide definitions of financial-aid terminology.

Content Component Standard 14.2 *Rationale for Inclusion*

The entity should include a policy statement that describes the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of awards.

Content Component Standard 14.3 *Number of Awards and Applicants*

The entity should indicate for specific awards, when available, the number of awards given and the number of applicants for that award.

Content Component Standard 14.4 *Dates*

Financial aid information should specify the application deadline, renewal deadline, and, if applicable, expiration date of information.

Content Component Standard 14.5 *Annual Update*

At a minimum, in order to ensure currency, the entity should review and update financial aid information annually.

Content Component Standard 14.6 *Matching*

When matching criteria are used to link end users with relevant awards, the entity should indicate how such data are stored and the length of time that any personally identifiable data will be stored. The entity should collect only data relevant to and necessary for matching existing awards.

Component Standard 14.7 *Informed Consent*

Due to the especially sensitive nature of some of the data collected, there should be no release of any personally identifiable data gathered for the purpose of matching individuals with financial aid sources without the informed consent of the individual, or in the case of minors, the informed consent of the individual's parent or guardian.

Content Component Standard 14.8 *Consistency*

The entity should present financial aid award information consistently so that users may compare and contrast.

15. Content Component *Job Search Standards*

Job search information includes information about what employers seek in prospective employees, job vacancy listings, techniques for obtaining employment, and methods of documenting preparation, experience, and references.

Content Component Standard 15.1 *Appropriateness to Audience*

Job search information should be appropriate to the age and experience of the audience.

Content Component Standard 15.2 *Costs*

Any cost associated with provision of job search information or services must be clearly specified and agreed to in advance of service provision.

Content Component Standard 15.3 *Currency*

Methods for updating job vacancy listings or other time-sensitive content related to job search should be in place. Posting dates and the frequency of updating should be disclosed.

Integration Standards

Integrated products and services meaningfully relate or link career information content and processes using relationship frameworks that have integrity, quality, and transparency. They describe the relationships in understandable language and common terminology.

16. Integration Standards for *Component Relationship Integrity*

Integrated components must have a qualitative basis for defining, limiting, and characterizing the relationship(s).

Integration Standard 16.1 *Relationship Quality*

Relationships should be based upon professionally recognized taxonomies, crosswalks created by reputable sources, and logic that has validity and utility. The entity should disclose the logic or sources of relationships.

Integration Standard 16.2 *Relationship Limitations*

Integration logic establishes relatedness, not necessarily “rightness.” Computer-delivered career information and services sometimes acquire an aura of authority that unintentionally overstates the value of the information or services and leads to possible over-reliance upon or misapplication of the information or services. The entity should provide caveats and other statements that inform users of the appropriate use and limitations of integrated components.

17. Integration Standards for *Relationship Transparency*

The explanation of system component relationships provides transparency for users and educates users about the logic or connections among parts of the career information system or service.

Integration Standard 17.1 *Explaining Significant Relationships*

The entity should provide users with descriptions and explanations of significant relationships among system components.

18. Integration Standards for *Expressing Component Integration*

Integrated products and services may link assessment results with education, career, program of study, or other options. Some may relate education and training with occupations or other major sets of data. As these relationships range from highly probable to merely possible, entities should express the strengths and limitations of their component integration.

Integration Standard 18.1 *Need for Judgment and Personal Review and Confirmation*

When using assessment data to direct end users toward career, education, or training options, the entity should indicate that the options identified are subject to review and confirmation by the user through a process of personal investigation and exploration.

Integration Standard 18.2 *Disclosure of Linking Strategy*

The entity should disclose the component-to-component linking strategy or rationale.

19. Integration Standards for *Expressing Relatedness*

Entities should clearly define the meaning of results and relationships. For example, “The list of occupations represents those occupations that you might find interesting or satisfying.” Or “The occupations listed align most closely with your stated values and preferences.” Or “The following occupations most closely fit your work personality.” Or “The occupations below may warrant further exploration and investigation.” Assessments should avoid absolute reductions such as “Your ideal job.” Or “The best jobs for you.”

Integration Standard 19.1 *Degree of Relatedness*

The entity should provide end users with statements that characterize the degree or confidence level of relatedness between components.

Integration Standard 19.2 *Validity Parameters*

The entity should indicate circumstances and audiences for which the component linking produces valid results.

Integration Standard 19.3 *Additional Qualifications*

For occupations for which education and/or training is necessary but not sufficient for employment entry, the entity should indicate that additional qualifications exist and, when possible, should list these additional qualifications (for example, passing an examination or meeting standards for licensure).

Comprehensive System Standards

Comprehensive systems provide integrated components that are consistent with career development theory in their design and facilitate career development in their application. ACRP standards for comprehensive career information delivery systems exceed the core, component, and integration standards. Meeting Comprehensive System Standards signifies that a system qualifies to serve as a public or quasi-public utility. Comprehensive System Standards apply to systems that include information from all five ACRP content domains (education, occupations, industries, financial aid, and job search), enable systematic searching, sorting, and assessment, provide career planning and management processes, serve multiple audiences, are accessible to diverse end users, and offer substantial support services such as training, instruction manuals, and technical and product support. Comprehensive systems should regularly evaluate their products and services, have feedback processes that enable end users and key constituencies to exert influence on product development and improvement, and disclose documented measures of organizational accountability.

20. Comprehensive System Standards for *Accessibility*

The comprehensive system should be demonstrably effective with and accessible to people of varying ability, experience, and backgrounds.

Comprehensive System Standard 20.1 *Standard Equipment*

Comprehensive career information delivery systems should use equipment and technology that is reliable, widely available, cost effective, and appropriate for a wide variety of users.

Comprehensive System Standard 20.2 *Interface Design*

The comprehensive system should be sufficiently intuitive and attractive to enable and motivate a variety of users to explore options, make decisions, and create career and educational plans. The comprehensive system should be easy for people to use independently. Comprehensive systems should have interfaces that facilitate use by people with a wide range of abilities.

Comprehensive System Standard 20.3 *Use by Persons with Disabilities*

The comprehensive system should enable use by persons with disabilities through accommodations that make all components accessible. Comprehensive systems are expected to provide alternative interfaces and delivery modes to enable access to the largest degree practicable. Accommodations may include text enlargement, text interpretation, voice commands, keyboard commands, and multiple ways of accessing information and services.

21. Comprehensive System Standards for Privacy and Confidentiality

In their role as public or quasi-public utilities, comprehensive systems should conform to a high standard of privacy and confidentiality, a standard that faithfully embraces the principle of informed consent whenever sensitive or personal data are involved.

Comprehensive System Standard 21.1 *Saving and Storing Information*

Users should be able to save, store, or print information for future reference. Likewise, users should have the option to delete any stored information.

Comprehensive System Standard 21.2 *Data Collection, Storage, and Sharing*

No data should be collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's *informed* consent. If any processing in the system is based on personally identifiable client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, personal preferences, or family characteristics), the system should explain to the user how the data are being used and what personal data, if any, reside in the system.

21.2.1 Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose should be secure and confidential.

21.2.2 The entity should explain procedures for maintaining client data, how long such data will be maintained for use on the system, and how data will be disposed when the end user ceases to use the system for a defined period of time or requests personal data to be erased.

21.2.3 If non-aggregated client records or personal data are available to anyone other than the client, such availability should be based upon client knowledge and informed consent. Such records and data may not be sold or transferred without the client's legal consent. (In the case of minors, this would require the consent of a parent or guardian.)

22. Comprehensive System Standard *Services and Support*

Services and support include marketing, training, technical assistance, and customer support.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.1 *Marketing Plan*

An entity that provides comprehensive systems should have a plan that 1) describes methods for increasing awareness of system features and uses, 2) describes marketing and promotional activities and resources, and 3) identifies training objectives, audiences, and venues.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.2 *Systematic Audience Contact*

The entity should maintain records of service and support activities.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.3 *Public Information*

For end users and prospective end users, accurate and concise information that describes organizational activities, products and services, and the organizational mission should be available.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.4 *System Documentation*

System documentation should include details of major components, principal uses, theoretical underpinnings, and relevant research or empirical validation of the system.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.5 *Instructions and Help Files*

The delivery system should include instructions or on-line help for users to make appropriate use of various components and information modules. The entity should provide system documentation in print or on-line that explains how to use the system and how to get additional help.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.6 *Technical Assistance*

Technical assistance should be provided to users who need it. The method(s) of technical assistance should be stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.7 *Appropriate-use Assistance*

The entity should provide end users and practitioners with support in using the system appropriately. The method(s) of system support should be stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.8 *Staff Support and Consultation*

Comprehensive systems should have a staff member available to address questions and concerns of end users and practitioners.

23. Comprehensive System Standard *Localization of Key Information*

Comprehensive systems provide mechanisms that localize key information or present information in a localized context. Localized information may be included as part of a product or may be a feature that permits product users to add localized information.

Comprehensive System Standard 23.1 *Localization of Labor Market Information*

Labor market information, such as occupational outlook, wages, current employment, employers, industries, and licensing information, should be made available at the state level and, to the extent possible, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

Comprehensive System Standard 23.2 *Localization of Education and Training Information*

Education and training information, such as apprenticeship information and postsecondary program and institutional information, should be made available at the state level and, when possible, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

Comprehensive System Standard 23.3 *Customization for State Education and Workforce Initiatives*

Comprehensive systems serve state-based initiatives in education and workforce development by customizing and targeting relevant education and career information in ways that support these initiatives.

Comprehensive System Standard 23.4 *Local Data Input*

Comprehensive systems may provide methods for local administrators to add information that would be of interest to their clientele.

23.4.1 Information added by local administrators should be labeled clearly with a citation that distinguishes the added information from that provided by the system developer.

23.4.2 An explanation of differences between system information and locally added information should be available to users.

23.4.3 An entity that enables local administrators to add information to the system should advise local administrators of the ACRP standards and the importance of maintaining these standards when adding information to the system.

24. Comprehensive System Standard *Feedback and Evaluation*

Feedback includes all the methods available to end users and practitioners for communicating with the entity about the information and the effectiveness of the system in meeting their needs. Evaluation is the analysis of performance to determine discrepancies between intended results and actual results. Both feedback and evaluation are ongoing processes of review and revision that are necessary to improve career development outcomes.

Comprehensive System Standard 24.1 *Communication with Practitioners*

There should be an ongoing effort to inform practitioners who make the system available to end users about system changes, strategies for effectively using the system, and other matters that improve use of the system.

Comprehensive System Standard 24.2 *User Response Process*

A process should be in place for reporting delivery system problems and content errors and for resolving problems or issues identified by users. Users and site personnel should be able to contact and communicate with system staff directly via mail, telephone, e-mail, web form, or a combination of the above.

Comprehensive System Standard 24.3 *Advisory Group(s)*

Comprehensive systems should foster feedback through advisory groups that include representatives of users and key constituencies. Such groups should meet periodically, at least once per year.

25. Comprehensive System Standard *Accountability*

For comprehensive systems, accountability involves disclosure of the system purposes, funding sources, ownership, organizational structure, key constituencies, and intended audiences. In addition, accountability includes an expectation of measuring the degree to which the system accomplishes its intended purposes and an expectation of research and development efforts that seek to continuously improve the system over time.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.1 *Organizational Identity*

The organizing documents (for example, statute, executive order, charter, constitution, or bylaws) should be disclosed in order to identify ownership and organizational structure.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.2 *Mission and Goals*

The system's mission and goals should be disclosed and accessible by end users and prospective end users of the system.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.3 *Responsible Party*

The entity should identify the executive or manager who is responsible for the system.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.4 *Professional Standards*

The entity that develops the comprehensive system should employ professionals whose education, training, experience, and ethics are appropriate for the positions they occupy and ensure high-quality products and services.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.5 *Professional Development*

The entity that develops the comprehensive system should provide ongoing professional development activities to ensure that staff knowledge and skills keep pace with changes in the field.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.6 *Professional Involvement*

The entity that develops the comprehensive system should engage with professional organizations and provide its staff with opportunities for involvement in relevant professional organizations.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.7 *Identification of Vested Interest*

The entity should identify major sources of funding support and ownership interests and disclose this information publicly. The comprehensive system should identify the entity that maintains financial control of the system and provide information on where financial statements may be obtained.

Comprehensive System Standard 25.8 *Research and Development*

An ongoing research and development effort should be in place to ensure that the system meets the needs of its users and takes advantage of advances in technology, improved data and information content, and improved understanding of the career development process.

National System Standards

National systems provide integrated components that are consistent with career development theory in their design and facilitate career development in their application. ACRP standards for national career information delivery systems exceed the core, component, and integration standards. Meeting National System Standards signifies that a system qualifies to serve multiple states. National System Standards apply to systems that include information from all five ACRP content domains (education, occupations, industries, financial aid, and job search), enable systematic searching, sorting, and assessment, provide career planning and management processes, serve multiple audiences, are accessible to diverse end users, and offer support services such as training, instruction manuals, and technical and product support. National systems should regularly evaluate their products and services, have feedback processes that enable end users and key constituencies to exert influence on product development and improvement, and disclose documented measures of organizational accountability.

26. National System Standards for *Accessibility*

The national system should be demonstrably effective with and accessible to people of varying ability, experience, and backgrounds.

National System Standard 26.1 *Standard Equipment*

National career information delivery systems should use equipment and technology that is reliable, widely available, cost effective, and appropriate for a wide variety of users.

National System Standard 26.2 *Interface Design*

The national system should be sufficiently intuitive and attractive to enable and motivate a variety of users to explore options, make decisions, and create career and educational plans. The national system should be easy for people to use independently. National systems should have interfaces that facilitate use by people with a wide range of abilities.

National System Standard 26.3 *Use by Persons with Disabilities*

The national system should enable use by persons with disabilities through accommodations that make all components accessible. National systems are expected to provide alternative interfaces and delivery modes to enable access to the largest degree practicable. Accommodations may include text enlargement, text interpretation, voice commands, keyboard commands, and multiple ways of accessing information and services.

27. National System Standards for *Privacy and Confidentiality*

In their role as public or quasi-public utilities, national systems should conform to a high standard of privacy and confidentiality, a standard that faithfully embraces the principle of informed consent whenever sensitive or personal data are involved.

National System Standard 27.1 *Saving and Storing Information*

Users should be able to save, store, or print information for future reference. Likewise, users should have the option to delete any stored information.

National System Standard 27.2 *Data Collection, Storage, and Sharing*

No data should be collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's *informed* consent. If any processing in the system is based on personally identifiable client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, personal preferences, or family characteristics), the system should explain to the user how the data are being used and what personal data, if any, reside in the system.

27.2.1 Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose should be secure and confidential.

27.2.2 The entity should explain procedures for maintaining client data, how long such data will be maintained for use on the system, and how data will be disposed when the end user ceases to use the system for a defined period of time or requests personal data to be erased.

27.2.3 If non-aggregated client records or personal data are available to anyone other than the client, such availability should be based upon client knowledge and informed consent. Such records and data may not be sold or transferred without the client's legal consent. (In the case of minors, this would require the consent of a parent or guardian.)

28. National System Standard *Services and Support*

Services and support include marketing, training, technical assistance, and customer support.

National System Standard 28.1 *Marketing Plan*

An entity that provides national systems should have a plan that 1) describes methods for increasing awareness of system features and uses, 2) describes marketing and promotional activities and resources, and 3) identifies training objectives, audiences, and venues.

National System Standard 28.2 *Systematic Audience Contact*

The entity should maintain records of service and support activities.

National System Standard 28.3 *Public Information*

For end users and prospective end users, accurate and concise information that describes organizational activities, products and services, and the organizational mission should be available.

National System Standard 28.4 *System Documentation*

System documentation should include details of major components, principal uses, theoretical underpinnings, and relevant research or empirical validation of the system.

National System Standard 28.5 *Instructions and Help Files*

The delivery system should include instructions or on-line help for users to make appropriate use of various components and information modules. The entity should provide system documentation in print or on-line that explains how to use the system and how to get additional help.

National System Standard 28.6 *Technical Assistance*

Technical assistance should be provided to users who need it. The method(s) of technical assistance should be stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

National System Standard 28.7 *Appropriate-use Assistance*

The entity should provide end users and practitioners with support in using the system appropriately. The method(s) of system support should be stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

National System Standard 28.8 *Staff Support and Consultation*

National systems should have mechanisms (such as tutorials, FAQs, help files, and forms for requesting assistance or reporting concerns) available to address questions and concerns of end users, practitioners, and state-level providers. National systems must provide a real-time communication option (toll-free telephone or online chat) for support of and consultation with end-users.

29. National System Standard Provision of State-level Information

National systems should provide state-level and when reasonably possible, sub-state-level information about occupations, industries, and postsecondary education and training programs.

National System Standard 29.1 *Localization of Labor Market Information*

National systems that license state systems must provide mechanisms for further localization and customization that enable state-level providers to deliver more comprehensive local, regional, and state information.

National System Standard 29.2 *Localization of Education and Training Information*

National systems that license state systems must provide mechanisms for further localization and customization that enable state-level providers to deliver more comprehensive education and training information, such as state-level apprenticeship information, postsecondary program and institutional information, and, when possible, information at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

National System Standard 29.3 *Customization for State Education and Workforce Initiatives*

National systems that license state systems must provide mechanisms for further localization and customization that enable state-level providers to deliver more comprehensive information about state education and workforce initiatives in ways that support these initiatives.

National System Standard 29.4 *Local Data Input*

National systems that license state systems must provide methods for local administrators to add information that would be of interest to their clientele.

30. National System Standard *Feedback and Evaluation*

Feedback includes all the methods available to end users and practitioners for communicating with the entity about the information and the effectiveness of the system in meeting their needs. Evaluation is the analysis of performance to determine discrepancies between intended results and actual results. Both feedback and evaluation are ongoing processes of review and revision that are necessary to improve career development outcomes.

National System Standard 30.1 *Communication with Practitioners*

There should be an ongoing effort to inform practitioners who make the system available to end users about system changes, strategies for effectively using the system, and other matters that improve use of the system.

National System Standard 30.2 *User Response Process*

A process should be in place for reporting delivery system problems and content errors and for resolving problems or issues identified by users. Users and site personnel should be able to contact and communicate with system staff directly via mail, telephone, e-mail, web form, or a combination of the above.

National System Standard 30.3 *Advisory Group(s)*

National systems should foster feedback through advisory groups that include representatives of users and key constituencies. Such groups should meet periodically, at least once per year.

31. National System Standard *Accountability*

For national systems, accountability involves disclosure of the system purposes, funding sources, ownership, organizational structure, key constituencies, and intended audiences. In addition, accountability includes an expectation of measuring the degree to which the system accomplishes its intended purposes and an expectation of research and development efforts that seek to continuously improve the system over time.

National System Standard 31.1 *Organizational Identity*

The organizing documents (for example, statute, executive order, charter, constitution, or bylaws) should be disclosed in order to identify ownership and organizational structure.

National System Standard 31.2 *Mission and Goals*

The system's mission and goals should be disclosed and accessible by end users and prospective end users of the system.

National System Standard 31.3 *Responsible Party*

The entity should identify the executive or manager who is responsible for the system.

National System Standard 31.4 *Professional Standards*

The entity that develops the national system should employ professionals whose education, training, experience, and ethics are appropriate for the positions they occupy and ensure high-quality products and services.

National System Standard 31.5 *Professional Development*

The entity that develops the national system should provide ongoing professional development activities to ensure that staff knowledge and skills keep pace with changes in the field.

National System Standard 31.6 *Professional Involvement*

The entity that develops the national system should engage with professional organizations and provide its staff with opportunities for involvement in relevant professional organizations.

National System Standard 31.7 *Identification of Vested Interest*

The entity should identify major sources of funding support and ownership interests and disclose this information publicly. The national system should identify the entity that maintains financial control of the system and provide information on where financial statements may be obtained.

National System Standard 31.8 *Research and Development*

An ongoing research and development effort should be in place to ensure that the system meets the needs of its users and takes advantage of advances in technology, improved data and information content, and improved understanding of the career development process.

Glossary

Career – A lifestyle concept that involves a sequence of work and leisure activities in which one engages throughout a lifetime. A career is unique to each person and is dynamic and unfolding throughout life. A career includes pre-vocational and post-vocational activities and decisions. A career involves how a person integrates his/her work life with other life roles such as family, community, and leisure pursuits.

Career Development – Those aspects of an individual's experience that are relevant to personal choice, entry, and progress in educational, vocational, and avocational pursuits. It is a lifelong process through which individuals come to understand themselves in relationship to education and work.

Career Information – Synthesized data consisting of words, graphs, pictures, and numbers related to education and work. Career information also consists of personal/social and educational and occupational information emphasizing individual characteristics, attributes, skills, knowledge, interests, values, and aptitudes. Career decision makers and career guidance professionals generally use career information to discover and explore occupational opportunities, related educational programs of study and training, the institutions that offer the programs, and other related information.

Integration Standards – These ACRP standards apply to multi-component tools that advance career development.

Component Standards – These ACRP standards apply to specific process or content tools that advance career development.

Comprehensive System Standards – These ACRP standards apply to career information delivery systems that provide integrated career development processes linked to work-related and educational information in an environment characterized by comprehensiveness of information and services, multiple audiences, accountability, localization of information, and user support and training.

Core Standards – These ACRP standards apply to all providers of information tools for career development, irrespective of the tool, audience, or delivery mode.

Developmentally Appropriate – Developmentally appropriate career information is presented in contexts that consider the age, experience, maturity, or other significant characteristics of the intended audience(s).

Employer – Generally a single firm that has one or more worksites.

Industry – A collection of employers grouped according to product, service, and/or process. Examples of industries include entertainment, food, oil, production, and mining.

Informal Career Assessment -- An informal career assessment is an instrument or assessment process that has unknown validity and reliability measures. Informal career assessments may include occupational checklists, brief inventories of vocational interests, values, or abilities. While these may be useful tools, it is important that such measures be distinguished from standardized career assessments. Lacking such distinction, users may pursue careers upon a premise supplied by a measure of unknown quality or consistency.

Informed Consent – Consent is informed consent when notice is given, prior to the collection of the personal information, regarding who is collecting the information, who will have access to it, what are the intended uses

of the information, and whether the disclosure of such information by the client is voluntary or required in order to obtain the offered services.

Integration Standards – These ACRP standards apply to multi-component career information products and services that advance career development.

Job – Activities performed on a regular basis in exchange for payment. In contrast to an occupation, a job is a single position at one company.

Labor Market Information – Data about workers, jobs, industries, and employers, including employment, demographic, and economic data. Such data are generally used by administrators, planners, information analysts, policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

National system standards apply to career information delivery systems that provide integrated career development processes linked to work-related and educational information in an environment characterized by comprehensiveness of information and services, multiple audiences, accountability, nationally organized user support and training, and nationally provided state and sub-state information..

Occupation – A group of related jobs that have similar duties, levels of responsibility, skills, knowledge, entry requirements, and physical demands.

Program – A specified series of courses which, when taken collectively, presumes the development of some prescribed knowledge or competency, leading to a degree, diploma, or certificate.

School – A person, firm, or institution whose primary purpose is to provide education and/or training in one or more specified program areas of instruction.

Standardized Career Assessment -- A standardized career assessment is an instrument or process that has known validity and reliability measures for particular audiences. Typically, these assessments have a history of academic study and have been the subject of research studies published in peer-reviewed publications.

Glossary Acknowledgements: The definitions above owe much to the authors of *Improved Career Decision-Making in a Changing World* (Publication of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee), Idaho CIS, and to the many contributors to the ACRP standards over the past thirty years.

References and Related Documents

The ACRP Standards Committee used many resources in developing the current standards. ACRP standards touch upon the work of many organizations and professional groups. ACRP standards apply primarily to the developers and purchasers of computerized career information and services. Therefore, the committee recommends career development professionals who seek a larger view of standards of practice to consult the resources below:

American Counseling Association (ACA)

[ACA Standards for Internet Counseling](#)

http://www.counseling.org/Content/NavigationMenu/RESOURCES/ETHICS/EthicalStandardsforInternetOnlineCounseling/Ethical_Stand_Online.htm

Access Board

[Federal Standards for Accessibility of Information Technology](#)

<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm>

American Psychological Association (APA)

[The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing](#)

<http://www.apa.org/science/standards.html>

[Rights and Responsibilities of Test-takers](#)

<http://www.ipmaac.org/files/ttr0997.html>

[Standards for Telephone, Teleconferencing, and the Internet](#)

<http://www.apa.org/ethics/stmnt01.html>

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

[ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors](#)

<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/content.asp?contentid=173>

Association for Assessment in Counseling

[Code of Fair Testing Practice](#)

<http://aac.ncat.edu/Resources/documents/Code%20Final%20Edit%209-02revFINAL12Wall.pdf>

[Ethics in Assessment](#) [Schmeiser, C. B. (30 January 1995). *Ethics in assessment* (ERIC Digest ED391111)]

[Multicultural Assessment Standards](#) [Prediger, D. (1992). *Multicultural assessment standards*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.]

<http://aac.ncat.edu/Resources/documents/STANDARDS%20FOR%20MULTICULTURAL%20ASSESSMENT%20FINAL.pdf>

[Responsibilities of Users of Standardized Tests](#)

<http://aac.ncat.edu/Resources/documents/RUST2003%20v11%20Final.pdf>

[Standards for Assessment Training in School Counseling](#)

http://aac.ncat.edu/documents/atsc_cmptncy.htm

[Test Taker Rights and Responsibilities](#)

<http://aac.ncat.edu/documents/ttrr.html>

Canadian Labor Force Development Board

[Standards for Electronic Labor Market Information](#)

<http://workinfontet.bc.ca/lmisi/jointcom/LMISnds.htm>

Education Research Information Center (ERIC) Digests

[Locating and Evaluating Career Assessments](#)

<http://www.ericdigests.org/1996-4/career.htm>

International Personnel Management Association – Assessment Council

[Online Library of Assessment-Related Documents](#)

National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)

[NBCC Ethical Standards](#)

<http://www.nbcc.org/extras/pdfs/ethics/NBCC-CodeofEthics.pdf>

[NBCC Web Counseling Standards](#)

<http://www.nbcc.org/webethics2>

National Career Development Association (NCDA)

[NCDA Ethical Standards for Career Counselors](#)

<http://ncda.org/about/poles.html>

[NCDA Internet Delivery Standards](#)

<http://ncda.org/about/polnet.html>

National Employment Counseling Association

[Employment Assessment Guidelines](#)

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/6491/assess.html>

U.S. Department of the Interior

[Connecting Personality Types with Careers and Jobs](#)

<http://www.doi.gov/octc/typescar.html>

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)

[Testing and Assessment: An Employer's Guide to Good Practices](#)

<http://www.ipmaac.org/files/ONetasmtguide.pdf>

World Wide Web Consortium

[Internet Development Standards](#)

<http://www.w3.org/>

Meeting the ACRP Standards

The procedure for assessing compliance with ACRP standards is to apply the four checklists in succeeding order, as applicable, to the product for which you seek designation. Checklists are available on the ACRP website. Click on a link below to go to the checklist within this online document:

1. [Core Standards Checklist](#)
2. [Component Standards Checklist](#)
3. [Integration Standards Checklist](#)
4. [Comprehensive System Standards Checklist](#)
5. [National Comprehensive System Standards Checklist](#)

Additional information about the process follows on page 2 of this memo and is titled, “Meeting ACRP Standards.”

Submitting Compliance Checklists

Checklists for ACRP standards compliance may be submitted at any time. When you complete the checklists, send them to ACRP, c/o Meegan Isenhour, Encouragement Services, Inc., 5931 West State Road 46, Bloomington, Indiana 47404. Alternatively you may send them via email to meegan@esi.cc or fax them to 812 876-5055. We recommend keeping a copy of the completed checklists for your records.

Assertion of Compliance

Meeting ACRP Standards is a voluntary act and self-assertion by the developer or owner of a particular product. Neither the Standards Committee nor ACRP places its seal of approval on products that assert compliance.

Upon assertion of compliance with a particular level of ACRP standards, you will be entitled to use the ACRP logo (with verbiage indicating that the product meets ACRP Standards) until the certification period expires or until such time that the product developer is no longer a member of ACRP.

Your checklist information will be public information, subject to review by members of the organization, prospective consumers, and other audiences. The Standards Committee posts on the ACRP website a listing of standards-compliant products.

The Standards Committee will receive any standards-related dispute or challenge. The committee will review such challenge or dispute and recommend resolution to the ACRP Board of Directors, which will have final disposition of these matters.

How do products and services meet the ACRP Standards?

Products and services may meet one of four levels of standards. Those that meet one of these four levels may indicate compliance with ACRP standards by displaying an ACRP Standards logo with text stating, “Meets ACRP Standards.” On websites, this logo will hyperlink with a description of the highest level of standards met by the entity. For example, if a product meets the core, component, and integration standards, the logo statement would hyperlink with the description for **INTEGRATION STANDARDS**.

The component and integration standards are subject to a phase-in period in which organizations may assert compliance for meeting 70, 80, and 90 percent of the applicable standards during years 1, 2, and 3 respectively (of the standards process). During the phase-in period, entities must indicate that they support (“subscribe”) to those applicable standards that aren’t met.

Note: Only ACRP organizational members in good standing (for the entire duration of the approval period) may assert compliance with ACRP Standards.

Core Standards - These apply to all career information products and services. For products and services to meet the Core Standards, all of the standards in the checklist must be rated with an M for "Meets standard." The formal indicator is the ACRP Standards Logo with a hyperlink to the definition of Core Standards.

Component Standards - These apply to specific process or content components in career information products and services. Entities identify components of their product or service that are subject to the standards. They must evaluate all components for which there are related standards. In order to assert compliance with component standards, products and services must achieve the rating levels required in all components evaluated. For example, if a product or service meets Content Standards for Occupational Information but does not meet the Content Standards for Education/Training information, which is also part of the product or service, the product or service does not meet Component Standards. Products and services must meet the Core Standards to be eligible to meet the Component Standards.

For products and services to meet the Component Standards during the first submission year, all of the standards in the checklist must be rated with an M for "Meets standard," an S for "Subscribes to standard," or an NA for "Does not apply." For the first submission year at least 70 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 30 percent with an "S." For the second submission year, at least 80 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 20 percent with an "S," indicating progress toward full compliance. For the third submission year, at least 90 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 10 percent with an "S," indicating additional progress toward full compliance. After the third year, 100 percent must be rated with an "M". The formal indicator is the ACRP Standards Logo with a hyperlink to the definition of Component Standards.

Integration Standards - These standards apply to products and services with interrelated components, for example, an assessment instrument that links to occupational information or occupational information that links to education and training information. To comply with Integration Standards, products and services must first meet Core and Component Standards. Entities must evaluate all of the product's or service's interrelated components for which there are standards. To comply with Integration Standards, products and services must apply the standards to *all* interrelated components.

For products and services to meet the Integration Standards during the first submission year, all of the standards in the checklist must be rated with an M for "Meets standard," an S for "Subscribes to standard," or an NA for "Does not apply." For the first submission year, at least 70 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 30 percent with an "S." For the second submission year, at least 80 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 20 percent with an "S," indicating progress toward full compliance. For the third submission year, at least 90 percent of the applicable standards must be rated with an "M" and the remaining 10 percent with an "S," indicating additional progress toward full compliance. After the third year, 100 percent must be rated with an "M". The formal indicator is the ACRP Standards Logo with a hyperlink to the definition of Integration Standards.

Comprehensive System Standards - These standards apply to those systems that seek the comprehensive level of standards recognition. In order to assert compliance with Comprehensive System Standards, an entity must first meet Core Standards, Component Standards, and Integration Standards. To assert compliance with Comprehensive System Standards, entities must meet *all* Comprehensive Systems Standards. The formal indicator is the ACRP Standards Logo with a hyperlink to the definition of Comprehensive System Standards.

National Comprehensive Standards - These standards apply to those systems that serve a national audience and which seek the comprehensive level of standards recognition. In order to assert compliance with National Comprehensive System Standards, an entity must first meet Core Standards, Component Standards, and Integration Standards. To assert compliance with Comprehensive System Standards, entities must meet *all*

National Comprehensive Systems Standards. The formal indicator is the ACRP Standards Logo with a hyperlink to the definition of Comprehensive System Standards.

How often must an entity review its product for compliance?

During the phase-in period, entities review their products annually for compliance. Once a product meets all ACRP standards (100 percent of all applicable sets of standards), the review cycle is every three years.

Alliance of Career Resource Professionals

Core Standards Checklist

Entity Name _____ Product/Service Name _____

Name of Person Completing this Review _____ Date _____

Core standards apply to all information products and services for career development.

Rating System: using the following definitions, review the products or services for compliance with the ACRP standard. [Checklist numbering corresponds with numbering in the ACRP Standards document.]

M Meets standard (defined as *most knowledgeable reviewers would concur that the standard is substantially met in both letter and spirit*).

D Does not meet standard.

NA Does not apply. For any item that does not apply, please include a brief explanation on a separate sheet and refer to the item by number.

1. Core Information Standards

Career information comprises educational, occupational, industry, financial aid, job search, and related information for career development. Career information should be accurate, current, developmentally appropriate, relevant, specific, unbiased, understandable, and valid for intended audiences.

1.1 Accuracy

_____ Information is based upon empirical sources that can be validated or checked for consistency.

_____ Data resources and methodologies are available to users.

_____ Factual information is clearly distinguished from advice or information based on anecdotal reporting.

_____ Information is free from grammatical and spelling errors.

1.2 Currency

_____ Information is reviewed annually and updated at an interval appropriate to ensure currency.

_____ Data resources used are the most current available.

_____ Non-current data is purged or, at a minimum, identified as not current.

1.3 Developmentally Appropriate and Relevant

_____ Intended audiences are identified, and the information is developmentally appropriate and relevant.

1.4 Specificity

_____ Career information includes concrete details.

_____ Career information is realistic.

1.5 Understandable

_____ Information uses language appropriate for the intended audience(s).

_____ Information avoids, as much as possible, the use of jargon and technical language.

_____ The volume of detail is appropriate for the intended audience(s).

1.6 Unbiased

_____ The content is free from stereotypes relating to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, nationality, occupation, physical characteristics, poverty level, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class.

_____ The entity should annually review career information and services to ensure that they are non-discriminatory, unbiased, and free from stereotypes.

_____ Statements are impartial (that is, free from evaluative terms, not biased toward or against one kind of work, education, or user).

_____ The career information serves the interests of end users in their individual career development and does not include or omit information in order to serve the vested interests of the entity, its sponsors, its customers, or any party other than the end user.

2. Core Delivery Standards

For components to be useful, entities should deliver them in such a manner that users will be able to access the components, use or navigate them, and know when linked entities or third parties are providing content or processes to the user.

2.1 User Support

_____ Entities provide appropriate contextual guidance that enables use of the product.

_____ Entities identify components for which use requires the assistance or oversight of a trained professional.

2.2 User Interface

_____ The interface is appropriate for use by the intended audience.

_____ The interface is accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with applicable laws.

2.3 Links

_____ The entity has a publicly stated policy for the inclusion of linked components and third-party components.

_____ The entity scrutinizes linked sites to ensure that content is audience appropriate.

_____ The entity ensures that off-site links are in working order and continue to meet the criteria for inclusion.

_____ Users receive an indication upon leaving the system site and instructions or navigational aids for returning.

3. Core Support Standards

Entities should provide support, technical assistance, and a method of communicating with users to ensure that the needs and concerns of those using the component(s) are being met. Some examples of support methods include documentation, help files, e-mail, toll-free numbers, letters, and on-site support visits.

3.1 Processes

_____ Documentation and methodology is available for all major components of the product or system, including assessments, planning, search/sort, and career management processes.

3.2 Content

_____ Assistance is available upon request to help users understand the information being provided.

3.3 Technical Assistance

_____ Assistance is available upon request to aid in the operation of any component(s).

3.4 Access for Persons with Disabilities

_____ Assistance is available to help users with disabilities to access the information or services being provided.

4. Core Evaluation Standards

Evaluation is the comparison of performance against standards to determine discrepancies between intended and actual results. The ongoing processes of review and revision should serve to improve career information and how it is delivered, methods of meeting customers' needs and organizational goals and objectives.

4.1 Evaluation Plan

_____ The entity has an evaluation plan for the product(s) and service(s) it provides.

4.2 Use of Feedback

_____ The entity has a process for incorporating feedback from users.

4.3 Research

_____ The entity validates the effectiveness of career information and services through ongoing research and evaluative functions that assess usability, navigability, and appropriateness for specific audiences.

5. Core Disclosure Standards

A variety of entities develop, manage, and distribute career information components and systems. These entities should clearly and publicly disclose who they are, why they provide career information, for whom their information is intended, and what data sources they use.

5.1 Purpose

_____ The entity clearly identifies its purpose or mission in providing career information.

5.2 Vested Interests

_____ The entity discloses any vested interest in the decisions or plans of users.

5.3 Intended Audience(s)

_____ The entity clearly identifies intended audiences and makes this information easily available to users.

5.4 Provider Contact Information

_____ The entity provides contact information to enable users to address questions and feedback to the entity.

5.5 Major Sources of Information

_____ The entity identifies the major sources used in preparing its career information.

5.6 Appropriate Use

_____ The entity describes appropriate use of its career information content and processes.

5.7 Finances

_____ The entity discloses major sources of financial support for its career information development, management, and distribution.

5.8 Data Collection and Use

_____ The entity discloses what data, if any, are collected about the user and how such data are used.

6. Core Confidentiality Standards

The entity should strive to maintain the utmost confidentiality and privacy of client data and records.

6.1 Data Collection and Release

_____ No data is collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's informed and explicit consent.

6.2 Rationale for Data Collection

_____ For any processing in the program that is based on client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, and personal preferences), the program explains to the user how the data are being used.

6.3 Data Security

_____ Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose are secure and confidential. There is a provision for erasing client data after services are no longer being provided to that individual.

6.4 Secure Processing of Confidential Data

_____ All transmission and storage of confidential data are through secure processes that maintain the privacy of client data and protect such data from any unauthorized use.

6.5 Research

_____ Any use of data for research purposes excludes any personally identifiable data, except when clients authorize their data to be used for research purposes.

☐ Assertion of Compliance with ACRP Core Standards

By checking this box, I certify that the product or service identified at the top of this document complies with ACRP Core Standards (all relevant items rated M and no items rated D).

Name of Reviewer/Contact _____ Date of Review _____

Entity Name _____

Entity Address _____

E-mail address _____ Phone _____

Alliance of Career Resource Professionals Component Standards Checklist

Entity Name _____ Product/Service Name _____

Name of Person Completing this Review _____ Date _____

Component standards apply to specific **process** or **content** in information products and services that advance career development.

Instructions: Indicate the process and content components that the product/service provides. Place a check next to those components in the following list. For more information, refer to the ACRP Standards.

Process Components

_____ Assessment

_____ Search/Sort

_____ Career Management

Content Components

_____ Occupational Information

_____ Industry Information

_____ Education Information

_____ Financial Aid Information

_____ Job Search Information

Rating System: Using the following definitions, review the components checked above for compliance with the ACRP standard.

M Meets standard (defined as *most knowledgeable reviewers would concur that the standard is substantially met in both letter and spirit*).

S Subscribes to standard (defined as *in process of revision to meet standard -- either work has already commenced in revising to meet the standard or work is planned to revise to meet the standard but has not yet begun*).

D Does not meet or subscribe to standard.

NA Does not apply. For any item that does not apply, please include a brief explanation on a separate sheet and refer to the item by number.

7. Process Component Assessment Standards

Assessments provide measures of personal attributes, traits, interests, and other factors that relate to career decision-making. Whether formal or informal in nature, assessments should be accompanied by clear instructions, statements of appropriate use, necessary proscriptions, and disclosures of limitations. Technical information allowing judgment of the quality of the assessment should be available.

Indicate below the assessment(s) subject to review in this section

7.1 Appropriate Use

_____ The entity clearly states appropriate use and limitations of the assessment(s).

7.2 Use and Audience

_____ The entity clearly describes the intended purpose and audience of the assessment(s).

_____ The purposes are disclosed to the individual beforehand, and the results and their significance are disclosed to the assessed individual afterward.

7.3 Gender-specific Language

_____ Career assessments minimize sex bias through avoiding use of gender-specific language, unless such use serves to minimize bias.

7.4 Instructions

_____ The entity provides clear instructions on how to use the assessment(s).

7.5 Need for Trained Professional

_____ The entity indicates whether a trained professional is required for administering or interpreting the assessment(s).

_____ Assessments that require a trained professional are not made available, except to qualified persons.

7.6 Alternative Access

_____ The entity indicates how people with disabilities may access alternative modes of delivery of the assessment(s).

7.7 Retention and Disclosure of Results

_____ The entity discloses policies governing retention and disclosure of results.

7.8 Norms

_____ For standardized instruments, the entity provides practitioners with easily accessible details regarding technical specifications (reliability, validity, and the audiences for which these have been established).

_____ For informal assessments, the entity clearly identifies the instrument as a tool for which there is no scientific evidence of the accuracy or consistency of results.

7.9 Costs

_____ All costs associated with an assessment are stated in advance of the administration of the assessment.

8. Process Component *Search and Sorting* Standards

Individuals need methods to find career opportunities and options in systematic ways. Entities delivering search and sort components should utilize mechanisms that are appropriate to the needs of the user. Searching/sorting processes should inform the user what the search/sort does and include a description of the logic and limitations of the process.

Indicate below the search and sorting components subject to review in this section

8.1 Empirical Relationship

_____ A clear empirical relationship exists between the search or sorting criteria and the results set produced.

8.2 Sufficiency of Search Characteristics

____ The search/sort characteristics are sufficient and pertinent for producing result sets that are relevant, reasonable, and representative.

8.3 Relevance of Search Characteristics

____ The search/sort characteristics are limited to those necessary to produce the search results.

8.4 Third-Party Information Sources

____ There is clear disclosure when search/sort results link to information provided by other entities. The acknowledgment advises the user that another entity has authored or delivered the information presented.

8.5 Scope of Information Being Searched/Sorted

____ Results that derive from searches or sorts of limited data sets (for example, a single state or a specific set of occupations) are represented as deriving from a limited scope of information.

9. Process Component *Career Planning and Management Standards*

Career planning and management includes processes for discovering, reflecting on, and documenting career and educational/training plans, developing resumes, finding jobs, and providing evidence of work accomplishments and products.

Indicate below the career planning and management component(s) subject to review in this section

9.1 Informed Decision Making

____ Career planning and management tools and services support a process of informed decision making that is based upon career exploration and self-knowledge.

9.2 Changes

____ Career planning and management tools allow users to add, remove, or modify information.

9.3 Access

____ Career planning and management tools indicate who has access (and for how long) to user information stored or posted by the tools.

9.4 Costs

____ Career planning and management tools indicate up front any and all costs associated with use of the tools.

9.5 Withdrawal

____ Career planning and management tools permit withdrawal from a service and removal of any user data.

9.6 Maintenance Schedules and Policies

____ Career planning and management tools indicate policies for maintenance such as removal of information when x time since posting or when not accessed for x period of time.

Process Component *Career Portfolio Standards*

Career portfolios are repositories of selected career information including occupational descriptions, career plans, career assessments, resumes or other depictions of education, training, and work experience, and other artifacts of learning and work. These materials are compiled for various purposes including career exploration, job search, competency evaluation, demonstration of achievement, and other career-related purposes.

10.1 Portfolio Ownership

_____ Career portfolios are owned by the end user. The end user controls portfolio access, use, and removal.

10.2 Portfolio User Advisories

_____ The entity advises users not to share or display information (home address, phone number, school name, etc.) that could enable unwanted contact.

_____ The entity advises users that content shared publicly is subject to copying, reposting, and uses not intended by the user or under the control or direction of the entity providing the portfolio service.

_____ When users transfer content to another site (sharing site or social media site), the entity informs users that they are transferring content outside the protected zone of the career resource.

10.3 Portfolio Explicit Disclosures and Opt-in Provisions

_____ The entity clearly discloses any third-party access to portfolio contents, including sharing with sponsors, partners, clients, or customers.

_____ The entity provides explicit opt-in opportunities for each sharable component in the portfolio prior to such sharing.

_____ Portfolio disclosures should include the following, as appropriate:

- How long the portfolio is available to the end user (owner)
- How long the portfolio is available to viewers
- How personal data in the portfolio can be updated, transferred, or archived
- How the portfolio may be used outside the system in which it was developed
- How the end user can remove and delete the portfolio
- How archived portfolios may be restored, if possible

_____ Opt-in permission is discrete (not global). The user may designate portfolio elements separately for identified user access, identified group access, or global access.

_____ The entity permits the user to revoke or change access and provides clear instructions in how to do so.

10.4 Portfolio Confidentiality and Privacy

_____ The entity provides notice to all who access portfolio content that student content is subject to restrictions by privacy and confidentiality laws that govern student information and protection of minors and which limit further distribution of content for any purpose without the consent of the portfolio owner.

10.5 Portfolio Access and Security

_____ The entity stores portfolio content using a secure process that maintains the privacy of client data and protects such data from any unauthorized use.

_____ Portfolio access, use, and removal require explicit permission or direction from the owner.

10.6 Portfolio Portability

_____The entity provides end users with the capability to move portfolios between systems without loss of data, including evidence and review documents.

_____The entity provides end users the ability to export selected portfolio data to another system through printed output or electronic capabilities. See 10.2 for advisory about transfer of content outside the protected zone.

_____The entity provides end users the ability to import selected portfolio data from another system through a data re-entry process or electronic transfer.

10.7 Portfolio Abandonment

_____The entity provides advance notice to users prior to removing content that has been abandoned for one year or more.

11. Content Component *Occupational Information Standards*

Occupational information includes the basic characteristics of work being performed by individuals who hold jobs having similar duties, levels of responsibility, skills, knowledge, entry requirements, and physical demands.

11.1 Scope

_____The entity identifies the scope of employment (for example, the military, the electronics industry, the state civilian labor force, 90 percent of employment in the United States) that the occupational information covers.

11.2 Minimum Topics

_____Information adequately describes the occupation. At a minimum, occupational topics include an overview or description of the occupation, work-related activities, and requirements for entering the occupation.

11.3 Additional Topics

_____Additional topics have clear labels, derive from reliable sources, and are included for all relevant occupations.

11.4 Consistency

_____Occupational information is presented consistently using uniform collection, content, analysis, and formatting in order to enable effective comparisons of occupations.

11.5 Source Citation

_____The entity indicates source materials for occupational information and the date of issuance or publication.

12. Content Component *Industry Information Standards*

Industry information includes characteristics of the labor market and economic conditions affecting employers who produce similar products or provide similar services.

12.1 Basic Industry Information

_____Industry information provides a general description of the industry and describes the types of employers in the industry.

12.2 Supplemental Industry Information

_____Supplemental information topics have clear labels, derive from reliable sources, and are included for all relevant industries.

12.3 Consistency

_____ Entities present industry information consistently so that users may compare industries.

12.4 Sources

_____ The entity indicates source materials for industry information and the date of issuance or publication.

13. Content Component *Education and Training Information Standards*

Education/training information includes postsecondary educational programs and the schools or other providers offering them, including public and private colleges, universities, career schools, technical schools, and trade associations.

13.1 Program and Training Information

_____ Program and training information describes the basic characteristics of postsecondary education and training programs that are available to the public.

13.2 School Topics

_____ School information adequately describes characteristics that may be of interest to users in choosing a school. At a minimum, school topics include the name of the school, its location, its website, and the name of a contact (when possible) for information about the school.

13.3 Criteria for Inclusion

_____ The entity providing education information includes a policy statement that describes criteria for inclusion or exclusion of schools and programs from listings.

13.4 Consistency

_____ The entity providing education information presents education information consistently so that users may make comparisons.

13.5 Time Period of Applicability

_____ Education information, whenever appropriate, specifies the time period for which information is applicable.

14. Content Component *Financial Aid Standards*

Financial aid includes information about sources of college student financial aid, procedures for applying for aid, and the criteria for awarding such aid. Financial aid awards include grants, scholarships, loans, and employment. Currency is of the utmost importance in presenting financial aid information.

14.1 Requisite Elements

_____ Financial aid information includes all eligibility, renewal, and repayment factors for each award and clearly designates those awards that are based on financial need. The entity provides definitions of financial-aid terminology.

14.2 Rationale for Inclusion

_____ The entity includes a policy statement that describes the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of awards.

14.3 Number of Awards and Applicants

_____ The entity indicates the number of awards given and the number of applicants for the specific award, when the information is available.

14.4 Dates

_____ Financial aid information specifies the application deadline, renewal deadline, and, if applicable, expiration date of information.

14.5 Annual Update

_____ At a minimum, in order to ensure currency, entities review and update financial aid information annually.

14.6 Matching

_____ When matching criteria are used to link end users with relevant awards, the entity indicates how such data are stored and the length of time that any personally identifiable data will be stored. The entity collects only data relevant to and necessary for matching existing awards.

14.7 Informed Consent

_____ Due to the especially sensitive nature of some of the data collected, there is no release of any personally identifiable data gathered for the purpose of matching individuals with financial aid sources without the informed consent of the individual, or in the case of minors, the informed consent of the individual's parent or guardian.

14.8 Consistency

_____ The entity providing financial aid information presents financial aid award information consistently so that users may make comparisons.

15. Content Component *Job Search Standards*

Job search information includes information about what employers seek in prospective employees, job vacancy listings, techniques for obtaining employment, and methods of documenting preparation, experience, and references.

15.1 Appropriateness to Audience

_____ Job search information is appropriate to the age and experience of the audience.

15.2 Costs

_____ Any cost associated with provision of job search information or services is clearly specified and agreed to in advance of service provision.

15.3 Currency

_____ Methods for updating job vacancy listings or other time-sensitive content related to job search are in place. Posting dates and the frequency of updating are disclosed.

☐ **Assertion of *Compliance* with ACRP Component Standards** (all relevant items rated M and no items rated D).

OR

☐ **Assertion of *Subscription* to ACRP Component Standards** (all relevant items rated M or S and no items rated D).

Alliance of Career Resource Professionals Integration Standards Checklist

Entity Name _____ Product/Service Name _____

Name of Person Completing this Review _____ Date _____

Integrated products and services meaningfully relate or link career information content and processes using relationship frameworks that have integrity, quality, and transparency. They describe the relationships in understandable language and common terminology.

Instructions: Using component codes below, indicate the *integrated* components that the product/service provides. List components in Column A and the component(s) to which they relate in Column B. For more information, refer to the ACRP Standards.

Component Codes

Process Components

P1. Assessment

P2 Search/Sort

P3 Career Management

Content Components

C1 Occupational Information

C2 Industry Information

C3 Education Information

C4 Financial Aid Information

C5 Job Search Information

Column A	Column B

Rating System: using the following definitions, review the components checked above for compliance with the ACRP standard.

M Meets standard (defined as *most knowledgeable reviewers would concur that the standard is substantially met in both letter and spirit*).

S Subscribes to standard (defined as *in process of revision to meet standard -- either work has already commenced in revising to meet the standard or work is planned to revise to meet the standard but has not yet begun*).

D Does not meet or subscribe to standard.

NA Does not apply. For any item that does not apply, please include a brief explanation on a separate sheet and refer to the item by number.

16. Integration Standards for *Component Relationship Integrity*

Integrated components must have a qualitative basis for defining, limiting, and characterizing the relationship(s).

16.1 Relationship Quality

_____ Relationships are based upon professionally recognized taxonomies, crosswalks created by reputable sources, and logic that has validity and utility.

_____ The entity discloses the logic or sources of relationships.

16.2 Relationship Limitations

_____ The entity discloses appropriate uses and limitations of linked components.

17. Integration Standards for *Relationship Transparency*

The explanation of system component relationships provides transparency for users and educates users about the logic or connections among parts of the career information system or service.

17.1 Explaining Significant Relationships

_____ The entity provides users with descriptions and explanations of significant relationships among system components.

18. Integration Standards for *Expressing Component Integration*

Integrated products and services may link assessment results with education, career, program of study, or other options. Some may relate education and training with occupations or other major sets of data. As these relationships range from highly probable to merely possible, entities should express the strengths and limitations of their component integration.

18.1 Need for Judgment and Personal Review and Confirmation

_____ When using assessment data to direct end users toward career, education, or training options, the entity indicates that the options identified are subject to review and confirmation by the user through a process of personal investigation and exploration.

18.2 Disclosure of Linking Strategy

_____ The entity discloses the component-to-component linking strategy or rationale.

19. Integration Standards for *Expressing Relatedness*

Entities should clearly define the meaning of results and relationships. For example, “The list of occupations represents those occupations that you might find interesting or satisfying.” Or “The occupations listed align most closely with your stated values and preferences.” Or “The following occupations most closely fit your work personality.” Or “The occupations below may warrant further exploration and investigation.” Assessments should avoid absolute reductions such as “Your ideal job.” Or “The best jobs for you.”

19.1 Degree of Relatedness

_____ The entity provides end users with statements that characterize the degree or confidence level of relatedness between components.

19.2 Validity Parameters

_____ The entity indicates circumstances and audiences for which the component linking produces valid results.

19.3 Additional Qualifications

_____ For occupations for which education and/or training is necessary but not sufficient for employment entry, the entity indicates that additional qualifications exist and, when possible, should list these additional qualifications (for example, passing an examination or meeting standards for licensure).

☐ **Assertion of *Compliance* with ACRP Integration Standards** (all relevant items rated M and no items rated D).

OR

☐ **Assertion of *Subscription* to ACRP Integration Standards** (all relevant items rated M or S and no items rated D).

Alliance of Career Resource Professionals Comprehensive System Standards Checklist

Entity Name _____ Product/Service Name _____

Name of Person Completing this Review _____ Date _____

Comprehensive systems provide integrated components that are consistent with career development theory in their design and facilitate career development in their application. ACRP standards for comprehensive career information delivery systems exceed the core, component, and integration standards. Meeting comprehensive system standards signifies that a system qualifies to serve as a public or quasi-public utility. Comprehensive system standards apply to systems that serve multiple audiences, are accessible to diverse end users, and offer substantial support services such as training, instruction manuals, and technical and product support. Comprehensive systems should regularly evaluate their products and services, have feedback processes that enable end users and key constituencies to exert influence on product development and improvement, and disclose documented measures of organizational accountability.

Rating System: Using the following definitions, review the components checked above for compliance with the ACRP standard.

 M Meets standard (defined as *most knowledgeable reviewers would concur that the standard is substantially met in both letter and spirit*).

 S Subscribes to standard (defined as *in process of revision to meet standard -- either work has already commenced in revising to meet the standard or work is planned to revise to meet the standard but has not yet begun*).

 D Does not meet or subscribe to standard.

 NA Does not apply. For any item that does not apply, please include a brief explanation on a separate sheet and refer to the item by number.

20 Comprehensive Standards for Accessibility

The comprehensive system should be demonstrably effective with and accessible to people of varying abilities, experience, and backgrounds.

20.1 Standard Equipment

_____ The system uses equipment and technology that is reliable, widely available, cost effective, and appropriate for a wide variety of users.

20.2 Interface Design

_____ The system is sufficiently intuitive and attractive to enable and motivate a variety of users to explore options, make decisions, and create career and educational plans.

_____ The system is easy for people to use independently.

_____ The system has interface(s) that facilitate use by people with a wide range of abilities.

20.3 Use by Persons with Disabilities

_____ The system enables use by persons with disabilities through accommodations that make all components accessible.

_____ The system provides alternative interfaces and delivery modes to enable access to the largest degree practicable.

21. Comprehensive System Standards for *Privacy and Confidentiality*

In their role as public or quasi-public utilities, comprehensive systems should conform to a high standard of privacy and confidentiality, a standard that faithfully embraces the principle of informed consent whenever sensitive or personal data are involved.

21.1 Saving and Storing Information

_____ Users can save, store, or print information for future reference. Likewise, users have the option to delete any stored information.

21.2 Data Collection, Storage, and Sharing

_____ No data is collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's *informed* consent.

_____ If any processing in the system is based on personally identifiable client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, personal preferences, or family characteristics), the system explains to the user how the data are being used and what personal data, if any, reside in the system.

_____ **21.2.1** Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose are secure and confidential.

_____ **21.2.2** The entity explains procedures for maintaining client data, how long such data will be maintained for use on the system, and how data will be disposed when the end user ceases to use the system for a defined period of time or requests personal data to be erased.

_____ **21.2.3** If non-aggregated client records or personal data are available to anyone other than the client, such availability is based upon client knowledge and informed consent. Such records and data are not be sold or transferred without the client's legal consent (in the case of minors, this would require the consent of a parent).

22. Comprehensive System Standard *Services and Support*

Services and support include marketing, training, technical assistance, and customer support.

22.1 Marketing Plan

_____ The system has a plan that 1) describes methods for increasing awareness of system features and uses, 2) describes marketing and promotional activities and resources, and 3) identifies training objectives, audiences, and venues.

22.2 Systematic Audience Contact

_____ *The entity* maintains records of service and support activities.

22.3 Public Information

_____ Accurate and concise information that describes organizational activities, products, and services and the organizational mission is available to prospective and end users.

22.4 System Documentation

_____ System documentation includes details of major components, principal uses, theoretical underpinnings, and relevant research or empirical validation of the system.

22.5 Instructions and Help Files

_____ The system includes instructions or on-line help for users to make appropriate use of various components and information modules. The entity provides system documentation in print or on-line that explains how to use the system and how to get additional help.

22.6 Technical Assistance

_____ Technical assistance is provided to users who need it. The method(s) of technical assistance are stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

22.7 Appropriate-Use Assistance

_____ The entity provides end users and practitioners with support in using the system appropriately. The method(s) of system support are stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

22.8 Staff Support and Consultation

_____ The comprehensive system has a staff member available to address questions and concerns of end users and practitioners.

23. Comprehensive System Standard *Localization of Key Information*

Comprehensive systems provide mechanisms that localize key information or present information in a localized context. Localized information may be included as part of a product or may be a feature that permits product users to add localized information.

23.1 Localization of Labor Market Information

_____ Labor market information, including occupational outlook, wage, current employment, employers, industries, and licensing information, is made available at the state level and, to the extent possible, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

23.2 Localization of Education and Training Information

_____ Education and training information, including apprenticeship information, and postsecondary program and institutional information, is made available at the state level, and, when possible, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

23.3 Customization for State Education and Workforce Initiatives

_____ The comprehensive system serves state-based initiatives in education and workforce development by customizing and targeting relevant education and career information in ways that support these initiatives.

Comprehensive System Standard 22.4 *Local Data Input*

_____ The comprehensive system may provide methods for local administrators to add information that would be of interest to their clientele.

_____ **23.4.1** Information added by local administrators is labeled clearly with a citation that distinguishes the added information from that provided by the system developer.

_____ **23.4.2** An explanation of differences between system information and locally added information is available to users.

_____ **23.4.3** Entities that enable local administrators to add information to the system advise local administrators of the ACRP standards and the importance of maintaining these standards when adding information to the system.

24. Comprehensive System Standard *Feedback and Evaluation*

Feedback includes all the methods available to end users and practitioners for communicating with the entity about the information and the effectiveness of the system in meeting their needs. Evaluation is the analysis of performance to determine discrepancies between intended results and actual results. Both feedback and evaluation are ongoing processes of review and revision that are necessary to improve career development outcomes.

24.1 Communication with Practitioners

_____ There is an ongoing effort to communicate with practitioners who make the system available to end users about system changes, strategies for effectively using the system, and other matters that improve use of the system.

24.2 User Response Process

_____ A process is in place for reporting delivery system problems and content errors and for resolving problems or issues identified by users.

_____ Users and site personnel are able to directly contact and communicate with system staff via mail, telephone, e-mail, web form, or a combination of the above.

24.3 Advisory Group(s)

_____ The comprehensive system fosters feedback through advisory groups that include representatives of users and key constituencies. Such groups meet periodically, at least once per year.

25. Comprehensive System Standard *Accountability*

For comprehensive systems, accountability involves disclosure of the system's purposes, funding sources, ownership, organizational structure, key constituencies, and intended audiences. In addition, accountability includes an expectation of measuring the degree to which the system accomplishes its intended purposes and an expectation of research and development efforts that seek to continuously improve the system over time.

25.1 Organizational Identity

_____ The organizing documents (for example, statute, executive order, charter, constitution, or bylaws) are disclosed in order to identify ownership and organizational structure.

25.2 Mission and Goals

_____ The system's mission and goals are disclosed and accessible to end users and prospective end users of the system.

25.3 Responsible Party

_____ The entity identifies the executive or manager who is responsible for the system.

25.4 Professional Standards

_____ The entity that develops the system employs professionals whose education, training, experience, and ethics are appropriate for the positions they occupy and ensure high-quality products and services.

25.5 Professional Development

_____ The entity that develops the system provides ongoing professional development activities to ensure that staff knowledge and skills keep pace with changes in the field.

25.6 Professional Involvement

_____ The entity that develops the system engages with professional organizations and provides its staff with opportunities for assuming leadership roles in relevant professional organizations.

25.7 Identification of Vested Interest

_____ The entity identifies major sources of funding support and ownership interests and discloses this information publicly.

_____ The system identifies the entity that maintains financial control of the system and provides information on where financial statements may be obtained.

25.8 Research and Development

_____ An ongoing research and development effort is in place to ensure that the system meets the needs of its users and takes advantage of advances in technology, improved data and information content, and improved understanding of the career development process.

☐ **Assertion of *Compliance* with ACRP Comprehensive System Standards** (all relevant items rated M and no items rated D)

OR

☐ **Assertion of *Subscription* to ACRP Comprehensive System Standards** (all relevant items rated M or S and no items rated D)

Alliance of Career Resource Professionals National System Standards Checklist

Entity Name _____ Product/Service Name _____

Name of Person Completing this Review _____ Date _____

National systems provide integrated components that are consistent with career development theory in their design and facilitate career development in their application. ACRP standards for national career information delivery systems exceed the core, component, and integration standards. Meeting National System Standards signifies that a system qualifies to serve multiple states. National System Standards apply to systems that include information from all five ACRP content domains (education, occupations, industries, financial aid, and job search), enable systematic searching, sorting, and assessment, provide career planning and management processes, serve multiple audiences, are accessible to diverse end users, and offer support services such as training, instruction manuals, and technical and product support. National systems should regularly evaluate their products and services, have feedback processes that enable end users and key constituencies to exert influence on product development and improvement, and disclose documented measures of organizational accountability.

Rating System: Using the following definitions, review the components checked above for compliance with the ACRP standard.

M Meets standard (defined as *most knowledgeable reviewers would concur that the standard is substantially met in both letter and spirit*).

S Subscribes to standard (defined as *in process of revision to meet standard -- either work has already commenced in revising to meet the standard or work is planned to revise to meet the standard but has not yet begun*).

D Does not meet or subscribe to standard.

NA Does not apply. For any item that does not apply, please include a brief explanation on a separate sheet and refer to the item by number.

26. National System Standards for Accessibility

The national system should be demonstrably effective with and accessible to people of varying abilities, experience, and backgrounds.

26.1 Standard Equipment

_____ The system uses equipment and technology that is reliable, widely available, cost effective, and appropriate for a wide variety of users.

26.2 Interface Design

_____ The system is sufficiently intuitive and attractive to enable and motivate a variety of users to explore options, make decisions, and create career and educational plans.

_____ The system is easy for people to use independently.

_____ The system has interface(s) that facilitate use by people with a wide range of abilities.

26.3 Use by Persons with Disabilities

_____ The system enables use by persons with disabilities through accommodations that make all components accessible.

_____ The system provides alternative interfaces and delivery modes to enable access to the largest degree practicable.

27. National System Standards for *Privacy and Confidentiality*

In their role as public or quasi-public utilities, national systems should conform to a high standard of privacy and confidentiality, a standard that faithfully embraces the principle of informed consent whenever sensitive or personal data are involved.

27.1 Saving and Storing Information

_____ Users can save, store, or print information for future reference. Likewise, users have the option to delete any stored information.

27.2 Data Collection, Storage, and Sharing

_____ No data is collected on any individual or shared in any way without the individual's *informed* consent.

_____ If any processing in the system is based on personally identifiable client data (for example, name, address, test scores, interests, personal preferences, or family characteristics), the system explains to the user how the data are being used and what personal data, if any, reside in the system.

_____ **27.2.1** Client records, records of individual delivery system use, or any other personal data obtained or used by the system for whatever purpose are secure and confidential.

_____ **27.2.2** The entity explains procedures for maintaining client data, how long such data will be maintained for use on the system, and how data will be disposed when the end user ceases to use the system for a defined period of time or requests personal data to be erased.

_____ **27.2.3** If non-aggregated client records or personal data are available to anyone other than the client, such availability is based upon client knowledge and informed consent. Such records and data are not be sold or transferred without the client's legal consent (in the case of minors, this would require the consent of a parent).

28. National System Standard *Services and Support*

Services and support include marketing, training, technical assistance, and customer support.

28.1 Marketing Plan

_____ The system has a plan that 1) describes methods for increasing awareness of system features and uses, 2) describes marketing and promotional activities and resources, and 3) identifies training objectives, audiences, and venues.

28.2 Systematic Audience Contact

_____ *The entity* maintains records of service and support activities.

28.3 Public Information

_____ Accurate and concise information that describes organizational activities, products, and services and the organizational mission is available to prospective and end users.

28.4 System Documentation

_____ System documentation includes details of major components, principal uses, theoretical underpinnings, and relevant research or empirical validation of the system.

28.5 Instructions and Help Files

_____ The system includes instructions or on-line help for users to make appropriate use of various components and information modules. The entity provides system documentation in print or on-line that explains how to use the system and how to get additional help.

28.6 Technical Assistance

_____ Technical assistance is provided to users who need it. The method(s) of technical assistance are stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

28.7 *Appropriate-Use Assistance*

_____ The entity provides end users and practitioners with support in using the system appropriately. The method(s) of system support are stated clearly, prominently displayed, and easily accessed.

28.8 Staff Support and Consultation

_____ The national system has a staff member available to address questions and concerns of end users and practitioners.

29. National System Standard *Localization of Key Information*

National systems provide occupational and educational information at the state and sub-state (to the extent practicable) level.

29.1 Localization of Labor Market Information

_____ Labor market information, including occupational outlook, wage, current employment, employers, industries, and licensing information, is made available at the state level and, to the extent practicable, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

29.2 Localization of Education and Training Information

_____ Education and training information, including postsecondary program and institutional information, is made available at the state level, and, when practicable, at the level of sub-state regions or metropolitan areas.

29.3 Customization for State Education and Workforce Initiatives

_____ The national system serves state-based initiatives in education and workforce development by customizing and targeting relevant education and career information in ways that support these initiatives.

29.4 *Local Data Input*

_____ The national system provides methods for local administrators to add information that would be of interest to their clientele.

30. National system Standard *Feedback and Evaluation*

Feedback includes all the methods available to end users and practitioners for communicating with the entity about the information and the effectiveness of the system in meeting their needs. Evaluation is the analysis of performance to determine discrepancies between intended results and actual results. Both feedback and evaluation are ongoing processes of review and revision that are necessary to improve career development outcomes.

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_____ The national system fosters feedback through advisory groups that include representatives of users and key constituencies. Such groups meet periodically, at least once per year.

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For national systems, accountability involves disclosure of the system's purposes, funding sources, ownership, organizational structure, key constituencies, and intended audiences. In addition, accountability includes an expectation of measuring the degree to which the system accomplishes its intended purposes and an expectation of research and development efforts that seek to continuously improve the system over time.

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_____ The entity that develops the system employs professionals whose education, training, experience, and ethics are appropriate for the positions they occupy and ensure high-quality products and services.

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_____ The entity that develops the system provides ongoing professional development activities to ensure that staff knowledge and skills keep pace with changes in the field.

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_____ The entity that develops the system engages with professional organizations and provides its staff with opportunities for involvement in relevant professional organizations.

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_____ The entity identifies major sources of funding support and ownership interests and discloses this information publicly.

_____ The system identifies the entity that maintains financial control of the system and provides information on where financial statements may be obtained.

31.8 Research and Development

_____ An ongoing research and development effort is in place to ensure that the system meets the needs of its users and takes advantage of advances in technology, improved data and information content, and improved understanding of the career development process.

☐ **Assertion of *Compliance* with ACRP National system Standards** (all relevant items rated M and no items rated D) **OR**

☐ **Assertion of *Subscription* to ACRP National system Standards** (all relevant items rated M or S and no items rated D)