



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA


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## Item FR - 4.8.1

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#### Verification of Student Identity for Distance or Correspondence Education

An institution that offers distance or correspondence education demonstrates that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as (a) a secure login and pass code, (b) proctored examinations, or (c) new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification. **(Federal Requirement 4.8.1)**

#### Judgment

Compliant  Non-Compliant  Not Applicable

#### Narrative

The University of South Columbia has systems in place to verify that the student who registers for a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit. The University of South Columbia utilizes the USC system-wide login and pass code security system to verify that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program. Unique eight-character usernames are assigned to each student when they are accepted to the university. For security reasons, network username passwords expire every six months and must be renewed by the student. The University of South Carolina Columbia does not offer correspondence study courses.

The University of South Carolina Columbia's secure data management infrastructure is comprised of four main systems, each requiring independent login created and maintained by students. These systems consist of (a) network login (wired/wireless); (b) Banner® student intranet data system accessed through the One Carolina portal; (c) Blackboard® course content management system; and (d) Microsoft® Outlook Live student email system. Each of these systems, working in tandem, provides assurance of network security including student identity. Students can view their IDs and change passwords via the One Carolina portal only if they know their current password or identifying information.

The University Registrar is responsible for ensuring compliance with student identity security policies and procedures. The Honor Code Policy requires students to "adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program". This prohibits students from allowing another individual to access or complete their online coursework.

Blackboard®, the platform for delivering all University of South Carolina system course content material, meets or exceeds standard mass notification security requirements. Specifically, Blackboard® course access requires a unique login and password for all users, and only students registered for the course can access the content. The "Course Statistics" feature tracks when items are viewed.

The University of South Carolina-Columbia provides a test proctoring service for distance education courses. The services are provided through 1) a test proctoring center with individual testing stations and observation camera-support proctoring, 2) coordination and certification of test proctoring services throughout the state and nation, 3) online record and review test proctoring. With each service, students are required to provide government-issued photo identification.

#### Sources

 Blackboard Data Security