

**Top Ranked  
Practice Area  
in the United  
States**

Husch Blackwell is one of only four law firms ranked for its education practice in Legal 500's highest tier

# Higher Education Accreditation

## Supporting the organizations advancing higher education

At Husch Blackwell, we understand the higher education industry. With more than 40 attorneys, our Higher Education law group is one of the largest such practices in the United States, and more than 300 institutions trust our firm to handle their compliance, operations and litigation legal services. Our team has more than three decades of experience representing public and private colleges and universities, research institutions, community colleges, nursing and allied health institutions, proprietary schools, and publicly traded and non-profit education companies. It's a world we know firsthand, with several team members who have worked in-house at educational institutions, as well as entities such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office of General Counsel, Office for Civil Rights and Office of Federal Student Aid.

Within our Higher Education practice, we also represent several programmatic and institutional accreditors, including those formerly known as national and regional accrediting commissions. We have extensive experience serving accrediting agencies facing critical decisions that will shape their futures. With an eye towards the membership-specific and interwoven legal/regulatory, operational and aspirational considerations that impact these decisions, our team has deep knowledge of the criteria and standards for recognition of accrediting agencies. We understand accreditor authorizer regulations and requirements including the U.S. Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and the process and procedures for review before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Notably, our work includes supporting educational institutions and organizations in meeting accreditor concerns, including those linked to substantive changes and non-profit obligations.

## CLIENT SUCCESSES

Our Higher Education Accreditation Practice team has:

- Worked with accrediting bodies in planning for and seeking recognition before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) and the U.S. Department of Education and in responding to compliance reviews, inquiries and requests from these bodies.
  - Successfully represented multiple accreditors in extensive compliance reviews by the U.S. Department of Education, including by preparing detailed and persuasive narratives demonstrating compliance relating to the issues in question, preparing detailed evidentiary libraries in support of narrative responses, and participating in and preparing executives for presentations before NACIQI.
  - Analyzed accreditor compliance with applicable regulations and requirements; prepared and revised policies, procedures and governance documents to align with applicable requirements.
  - Analyzed, redacted and compiled voluminous materials for multiple accreditors in response to requests from the U.S. Department of Education to facilitate compliance with extensive Freedom of Information Act requests relating to membership institutions.
  - Successfully prepared accreditor's executives for recognition review presentation before NACIQI, including in responding to novel questions relating to dashboard data, controversies involving membership institutions, and emerging policy goals of NACIQI members; accreditor received full recognition.
- Successfully prepared accreditor's executives for recognition review presentation before NACIQI, including in responding to controversies involving membership institutions and issues relating to academic outcomes; accreditor received full recognition.
  - Worked with accreditor on self-assessment compliance review, ongoing governance issues and restructuring of board and bylaws.
  - Worked with accreditor on governance restructuring and separate independent incorporation.
  - Assisted organization that recognizes institutional and programmatic accrediting organizations with review of its governing documents and the standards for recognition that it applies to accrediting agencies.

Few law firms can match Husch Blackwell's resources, legal team or combined expertise in serving higher education.

## Uncommon For Good Reason

Husch Blackwell is a different kind of law firm, structured to align with client industries. With more than 20 offices across the United States, including our virtual office, The Link, our diverse teams of attorneys can tap an ever-expanding collective knowledge base to quickly solve our clients' biggest challenges.