

## **STANDARDS ALIGNMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT GUIDELINES**

At least one time per year, the applicant will update the IAC (or AAC) on the progress it is making towards meeting the objectives and action plan items discussed in the Standards Alignment Plan. The original action plan summary table of the Standards Alignment Plan should be included, with the present status of each action item indicated. Action items that have fallen behind their scheduled completion dates should be discussed in the text of the progress report. Those action items that are no longer relevant, due to changes in either the internal or external environments of the applicant, also should be highlighted for discussion in the text of the report.

The report will be scheduled for review by the IAC (or AAC) at the Committee's meeting closest to the date of receipt of the report (all documentation for review by the Committee need to be received by the AACSB office no later than 6 weeks prior to the meeting date). The IAC normally meets in July, November, and March of each year. The AAC normally meets in August, December and March of each year.

The appropriate Committee will review the report to determine if acceptable progress is apparent. The progress report should:

1. Include a completed current- Applicant Profile Sheet and Tables 2-1, 2-2, 9-1, 10-1, and 10-2.
2. Respond to concerns, issues, and/or recommendations requested by the IAC (or AAC) in its most recent decision letter, if any.
3. Explain how the applicant has met the objectives established for the past year of the plan. If the objectives have not been met, provide details. (Attach a copy of the action plan time frame originally submitted and any subsequent revised time frames.) When outcomes or milestones are reported, applicants should support that these outcomes are the result of a continuous improvement process with appropriate stakeholder input. IAC (or AAC) review of progress reports will focus on progress of process development, implementation, and outcomes.
4. Report any changes in the environment (internal or external) that affect the Standards Alignment Plan (e.g., a new mission, new president, new dean, changes in enrollment, or deviations from the projected number of faculty as described in the Standards Alignment Plan).
5. Explain how existing strengths have been maintained or improved.
6. Report any new areas of necessary improvement that have emerged.
7. Report any other adjustments to the plan (e.g., changes in the time frame leading to the self-evaluation for accreditation).

8. Explain how the applicant will have the necessary continuing support and resources from the administration to meet the objectives outlined in the plan.
9. Include the signed approvals of the institution's chief executive officer (president), chief academic officer (vice president or provost), and business (and accounting, if applicable) academic unit head indicating their certification and continuing commitment.

Progress reports should be submitted electronically ([iac@aacsb.edu](mailto:iac@aacsb.edu)) for business PreAccreditation and/or [aac@aacsb.edu](mailto:aac@aacsb.edu) for accounting PreAccreditation); please contact the accreditation staff liaison for applicable guidelines.

### **Criteria for Evaluating the Progress Reports**

The progress report is stored on the secure committee resource site for review by the members of the applicable Committee. Prior to the Committee meeting, the liaison and reader, along with mentor input, develop perceptions and compare notes. If there are differences or if clarification is needed, the liaison will call the applicant Dean, Program Administrator or Mentor for more information. At the Committee meeting, both the liaison and reader will present their impressions. A discussion will focus on what the applicant has accomplished, as well as areas of concern. The key focus is on whether the applicant is making *acceptable progress* toward the accomplishment of its Standards Alignment Plan and preparation for accreditation. If an applicant is not making acceptable progress, the Committee will recommend that it withdraw from the process. This review process is depicted below.

The Committee decision will be one of four options:

1. Acceptance of the report without issues or concerns.
2. Acceptance of the report with issues to be addressed in the next progress report.
3. Non-acceptance of the report due to inadequacy of information provided or a determination that evidence of acceptable progress toward accreditation is not apparent. In such cases, the Committee will outline its concerns and will request a supplemental report.
4. Rejection of the report with a decision to remove the applicant from the process. This option would follow a prior warning that acceptable progress had not been made with the specific concerns to be addressed.

### **Validation of Progress**

Progress reports provide feedback to the Committee on the applicant's progress. Applicants should be clear and forthright so that the Committee can advise and assist. Representations of compliance by the applicant with the accreditation standards can be verified by the Mentor with subsequent on-site visits during the Standards Alignment Plan implementation phase. The Mentor will provide an evaluation of information and outcomes reported by the applicant in the form of updates on the applicant's progress reports to the IAC (or AAC)

liaison. This practice ensures a continuous dialogue and facilitates the flow of accurate information between the applicant and IAC (or AAC).

The accreditation decision will be based upon a direct assessment of continuous improvement and overall high quality. Therefore, the applicant must be in a position to justify its representations at the time of its self-evaluation and the Peer Review Team visit. Only by gaining confidence that the standards are being met, obtaining continuous Mentor input on questions and concerns, and being as realistic as possible when preparing its report will the applicant be best prepared for the self-evaluation and peer review visit for accreditation.