

Standards Alignment Plan Progress Report Guidelines

Following the acceptance of the Eligibility Application, the applicant is assigned a mentor who assists the school with the development of a Standards Alignment Plan (SAP). The SAP should describe how current activities are aligned with the standards and the gaps that exist that will need to be closed in order to achieve total alignment. The SAP is generally completed in one year or less, however it may take a maximum of two years. If the plan is not completed within one year, the school must submit a report to the PreAccreditation Committee (PAC) or the Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC) to provide information regarding the progress of the school towards the development of the SAP. This document provides guidance and an outline for applicants who are in the process of developing the progress report to be submitted if the SAP is not completed within the one-year timeframe.

The progress report will be scheduled for review by the PAC or AAC at the committee meeting that is closest to the one year anniversary of the acceptance of the applicant's Eligibility Application (all documentation for review by the committee needs to be received by AACSB no later than six weeks prior to the meeting date). The PAC normally meets in September, January, and June of each year. The AAC normally meets in August, December, and March of each year.

The appropriate committee will review the report, along with mentor visit report(s), to determine:

- 1) If the school is likely to achieve initial AACSB Accreditation in the maximum allotted time, and
- 2) If acceptable progress has been made towards the development of the SAP.

This report should include the following sections:

1. The present status towards the development of the SAP and the reason for the delay (e.g., not started, in process or in final stages).
2. The interaction with the mentor during this development stage. Regular communication with the mentor is a critical part of the process and the applicant should outline how they have been engaged with the mentor since the acceptance of the Eligibility Application.
3. An update on the progress of addressing the concerns raised by the PreAccreditation Committee in the most recent decision letter.
4. Any changes in the environment (internal or external) that have arisen since the submission of the Eligibility Application.
5. The expected date of completion of the SAP.

Additionally, the following items should be included as appendices:

1. Signed approvals of the institution's chief executive officer, chief academic officer and business (and accounting, if application) academic head indicating their certification and continuing commitment to accreditation.
2. A draft gap analysis providing a preliminary action plan to address weaknesses and achieve alignment with the standards.
3. Tables 2-1, 9-1, 10-1 and 10-2.

The SAP progress report should not exceed 15 pages (exclusive of appendices) and should be submitted electronically to PAC@aacsb.edu for business PreAccreditation and/or AAC@aacsb.edu for accounting

PreAccreditation. Additionally, one hard copy should be mailed to AACSB's World Headquarters in Tampa, Florida, USA.

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 contact the mentor for more information. At the committee meeting, both the liaison and reader will present their impressions on the report. The discussion at the meeting will focus on the status of the SAP development, whether it is reasonable to expect the school to complete the SAP within the two year maximum, and if it is likely that the school will be successful in achieving initial accreditation. If it is unreasonable to believe that the applicant will be able to complete the SAP within the two year time, or if the committee sees no chance that the school will be in alignment with the standards in the allotted time frame, the committee can recommend that the school withdraw from the process. Extensions of submission of the SAP are normally not approved; however, revisions to the plan as per the request of the committee are not time sensitive.

The committee decision will be one of three options:

1. Acceptance of the progress report.
2. Non-acceptance of the report due to inadequacy of information provided. In such cases the committee will outline its concerns and will request an updated report for the next PAC meeting.
3. Non-acceptance of the report with a recommendation for withdrawal from the process based on insufficient progress towards the development of a SAP or expected inability to align with the standards in general.

The applicant will be notified shortly after the meeting regarding the outcome.