



MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK



Updated October, 2010

<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/business/default.asp>

AACSB International Maintenance of Accreditation Handbook

PREFACE

The *Maintenance of Accreditation Handbook* is designed to provide assistance and essential information regarding the maintenance process to applicant institutions and Peer Review Teams. It describes the philosophy, procedures, and guidelines for the maintenance of accreditation process, as well as the duties and responsibilities of Peer Review Team members in conducting a thorough and complete maintenance of accreditation review.

AACSB International has also developed an online peer review e-learning course that provides an overview of the roles and processes involved in peer review. The training, found at <http://aacsb.ekpondemand.com>, includes helpful information for schools and reviewers regarding all phases of the accreditation process, including maintenance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	1
II. Maintenance Review Application	2
III. Comparison Groups	3
IV. Maintenance Visit Materials	5
V. Fifth Year Maintenance Report	5
VI. The Visit	8
Visit Schedule	8
Maintenance Review Visit Report.....	9
Sixth Year Review	11
Continuing Review	11
VII. Review of Team Recommendation	12
Accreditation Committee.....	12
Board of Directors	13
Applicant	13
VIII. Maintenance of Accreditation Timeline	14
<u>Appendices</u>	
A. Supporting Documents Available for Download.....	16
B. Accreditation Terminology	17

I. INTRODUCTION

The AACSB International Board of Directors adopted the maintenance of accreditation procedures described in this handbook in January 2003. **The maintenance of accreditation process pertains only to institutions already accredited**; all initial accreditation reviews follow the standard-by-standard review process.

The maintenance of accreditation process minimizes the reporting burden on accredited institutions. The process creates an ongoing “maintenance of accreditation” signaling that once an institution has achieved accreditation, a process of continuous improvement maintains the accreditation status.

Maintenance of accreditation is not a standard-by-standard review. By focusing the review on educational improvement, strategic management, and fulfillment of mission, the members of Peer Review Teams will be particularly attuned to educational quality issues and problems that may be revealed in the process.

The applicant and the reviewers provide evaluations of the process. Changes in the procedures are made each year to incorporate opportunities for continuous improvement learned from the participants in the previous year.

Each institution has an assigned accreditation staff liaison. This individual serves as the designated AACSB staff member for all accreditation related questions and needs, and is the liaison between the institution and the volunteer network (peer review team members, accreditation committee, etc.). The staff liaison is available to assist with any questions regarding the maintenance process. The institution’s staff liaison can be found by logging onto the *myAACSB* section of the website (www.aacsb.edu) and viewing the institution in the organization directory.

II. MAINTENANCE REVIEW APPLICATION

The Maintenance Review Application is due on July 1st, two years prior to the review year. This application initiates the maintenance process.

What is Required

The applicant submits a Maintenance Review Application (for schools with both business and accounting accreditation, separate sets of these documents need to be provided) in which the applicant provides details on the characteristics that determine institutional eligibility for accreditation and an update on issues identified at the last AACSB review. The application will include:

- Update on how school addresses diversity (Eligibility Criteria E) and encourages ethical behavior (Eligibility Criteria F).
- Update on progress addressing concerns stated in the last AACSB review and updates on major changes in financial resources, facilities, other infrastructure, deployment of participating/supporting and AQ/PQ faculty including an assessment of impact on alignment with AACSB standards.
- List of Degree Programs Offered – web links to online catalogs may be included in lieu of hard copy course catalogs.
- Identification of programs requested for exclusion and justifications - The process for requesting exclusions is described in the *Eligibility Procedures and Standards for Business Accreditation* (<http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards.asp>). New documentation does not need to be submitted for exclusions approved in a prior visit, either maintenance or initial. Institutions only need to submit exclusion request documentation for new degrees, degrees whose names have changed, or substantive changes in previously excluded degrees that have occurred since the last review.

A cover letter must accompany these items. The letter, addressed to the appropriate accreditation committee chair, should include a statement requesting the maintenance of accreditation review and preferred visit dates. A template for the cover letter is available on the AACSB website (www.aacsb.edu). The cover letter must be signed by:

- Chief Executive Officer (President, Chancellor, etc.)
- Chief Academic Officer (Provost, Vice-President/Chancellor for Academic Affairs, etc.)
- Head of the Business School
- Head of the Accounting Academic Unit (when applicable)

The cover letter should also provide a list of comparative peer schools as follows:

- Comparable Peers (for consideration to serve on the Peer Review Team) -- *a minimum of six comparable peers are required to compile the statistical data report. Any institutions duplicated in the competitive group do not count towards the minimum of six.*
- Competitive Group (excluded from serving on the Peer Review Team)
- Aspirant Group (for consideration to serve on the Peer Review Team) -- *a minimum of three aspirants are required to compile the statistical data report. Any institutions duplicated in the competitive group do not count towards the minimum of three.*

Note that an institution may be listed in one or all of the groups above. Additional detail regarding the selection of comparison groups can be found on page 4.

AACSB International will make every effort to accommodate the requested review timeframe. However, AACSB reserves the right to schedule the review in a different period of the originally scheduled year if necessary to evenly distribute the reviews among available timeframes.

When to Submit

These items are due by July 1, two years prior to the scheduled year of visit; i.e., for a visit between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 visit, the items are due by July 1, 2009. **The applicant requests exclusion of program(s) no later than TWO years prior to the scheduled visit.**

How to Submit

The applicant submits one hard copy of the cover letter along with the required maintenance review application items listed above to the appropriate accreditation committee chair in care of the AACSB International headquarters:

AACSB International
777 S. Harbour Island Boulevard
Suite 750
Tampa, FL 33602-5730
USA

The complete application must also be submitted electronically to the appropriate accreditation committee chair (mac@aacsb.edu for business and aac@aacsb.edu for accounting). The electronic file(s) should be in Adobe PDF format or Microsoft Word format.

What Happens Next

Upon receipt staff reviews the documentation and confirms the scope of accreditation (degree programs that will be included in the review). In the event that requests are controversial, the request will be forwarded to the Accreditation Coordinating Committee (ACC) for a final decision. The process for identifying the accreditation scope must be completed prior to scheduling the on-site review and normally no later than one year in advance of the Peer Review Team visit.

III. COMPARISON GROUPS

Processes to support the accreditation review include the selection of comparison groups to form a relevant context for judgments and assist in the selection of Peer Review Team members. Reviewers from comparable institutions are better prepared to make evaluative judgments about the applicant, to understand the applicant and its aspirations, and to offer suggestions for the applicant's improvement.

What is Required

The applicant submits three comparison groups selected from members of the Accreditation Council. The applicant may select comparison groups on the basis of institutional or program comparisons. It is important to note that an institution may be chosen in all three groups, as a peer, competitor, and aspirant based upon particulars of the school or programs it offers. Accounting programs may have a different set of comparison groups than the business programs and must be selected from those

members of the Accreditation Council with accounting accreditation. Doctoral programs may have another set.

- **Comparable Peers:** A list of institutions considered similar in mission and assumed appropriate for performance comparison. A minimum of six comparable institutions must be provided. The institutions should be chosen carefully to match key characteristics of the applicant. In addition to mission, some features that might be salient when choosing comparison institutions include student populations served, size, degree levels, and primary funding source.
- **Competitive Group:** A list of institutions so directly competitive that conflict of interest considerations exclude their personnel from the review process. The competitive institution list may be of any number. Only those institutions should be included where the direct competition for students, faculty, or resources is so compelling that the appearance of a conflict of interest is present.
- **Aspirant Group:** A list of institutions that provides a developmental goal for the applicant, represents management education programs or features that the applicant hopes to emulate, and places the vision and strategy of the applicant in context. The list of aspirant institutions may be of any number, though a minimum of three institutions is required to compile the statistical data reports used during the accreditation review.

Comparison groups do not imply categories or rankings of institutions or members accredited by AACSB International. AACSB International will not publish or otherwise make available comparison group listings beyond the accreditation process. These lists are for the benefit of the applicant and the Peer Review Team in the accreditation review.

Although comparison groups include only AACSB International accredited schools of business or those with accounting accreditation when applicable, applicants are encouraged to look beyond academe for examples of best practices and potential Peer Review Team members. Processes for selecting Peer Review Team members will continue to value and support involvement from corporations and other appropriate persons.

The applicant should demonstrate in the review that it appropriately relates to the operational levels of the comparison school set. In some circumstances idiosyncratic features of the applicant may make some of the data non-comparable.

AACSB International has developed an on-line system to assist the applicant to identify potential comparison schools. The on-line service, available at <https://datadirect.aacsb.edu/public/profiles/search.cfm>, offers advanced search functions that produce institution lists based on optionally selected criteria.

What Happens Next

- **Peer Review Team:** The appropriate accreditation committee chair selects, and proposes to the applicant for acceptance, Peer Review Team members suggested by the applicant and from the Comparable Peers and Aspirant Group. The proposed members are likely to be most well-prepared to make evaluative judgments about the applicant, to understand the applicant and its aspirations, and to offer suggestions for the applicant's improvement. Sometimes for scheduling or other reasons, reviewers who are not on the Comparison Group list may be proposed. When mutual agreement between the applicant and accreditation

committee chair is reached, AACSB International invites the individuals to serve on the team.

- **Accreditation Statistical Reports:** All accreditation council members are required to complete those sections of the *Business School Questionnaire* or *Accounting Program Questionnaire* that are reserved for accredited institutions. Statistical reports are generated from this data based on the responses from Comparison Groups identified by the institution. These reports will help form the context for judgment and consultative elements of the review. Upon request from the institution undergoing the accreditation review or on request of the visit team AACSB International will compile a
 - Comparable Peer Report (includes data on the applicant and its comparable peers)
 - Aspirant Group Report (includes data on the applicant and its aspirant schools)

The data should be used for **background information only and not for making accreditation decisions**. Feedback from the team that identifies those data elements most helpful in promoting useful discussions relating to the accreditation review will be used to further refine the *Accreditation Statistical Reports*.

IV. MAINTENANCE VISIT MATERIALS

What is Required

Upon request AACSB International will provide the following materials to the applicant and the Peer Review Team members:

- Accreditation Statistical Reports – (Only those members responding to the accreditation questions in the *Business School Questionnaire* will be included in the statistical reports.)
 - Comparable Peers (applicant data is included)
 - Aspirant Group (applicant data is included)

AACSB International will provide:

- List of included and excluded programs (Scope of Accreditation). Please note that any new degree programs started after the accreditation decision will be considered accredited until the next review. New degree programs will be reviewed during the next maintenance of accreditation review.
- Documentation related to the last accreditation review (Maintenance or Initial Accreditation Visit Report and official AACSB correspondence).

The Applicant will provide the following to each team member and to the applicable accreditation committee chair at least 60 days prior to the team visit:

- Fifth Year Maintenance Report

V. FIFTH YEAR MAINTENANCE REPORT

The format for the Fifth Year Maintenance Report documentation is outlined below. The Fifth Year Maintenance Report is to be provided to AACSB and the Peer Review Team no later than 60 days prior to the start of the campus visit. **A separate report for accounting programs is required when applying for accounting maintenance of accreditation.** The report should be no longer than 50 pages in length, excluding appendices. The documentation for the Fifth Year Maintenance Report (business and accounting) should include the following essential elements:

1. **Situational Analysis** (no more than five pages): Provide a brief analysis that enables the Peer Review Team to understand the context within which the applicant operates. It should answer the following types of questions:
 - What historical, national, local, and other factors shape the applicant’s mission and operations?
 - What are the applicant’s relative advantages and disadvantages in reputation, resources, sponsors, and supporters?
 - What internal, environmental, or competitive forces challenge the applicant’s future?
 - What opportunities exist for enhancing the applicant’s degree offerings?
 - What degree programs are included in the accreditation review, and what is the number of graduates in the previous year for each program?
2. **Progress Update on Concerns from Previous Review:** Provide an update on progress in addressing “Concerns that must be addressed prior to or at the time of the next maintenance review” as stated in the last AACSB accreditation review official correspondence:
3. **Strategic Management:** Address the following items:
 - **Mission Statement and summary of strategic plan or framework:** Provide the mission statement of the business school and the supporting major components of the strategic plan or framework (goals, objectives, etc.). If the mission statement and supporting document have changed, provide factors influencing the changes.
 - **Strategic Management Planning Process and Outcomes:** Describe the strategic management planning process of the applicant. Provide an overview of demonstrated continuous improvement outcomes and/or achievement of mission and goals. Summarize key continuous improvement achievements since the last accreditation review.
 - **Financial Strategies:** Describe the school’s 1-3 year action items and financial plans to achieve them. This should include anticipated sources and timing of funding (see Standards 4 and 5 for definition and interpretation).
 - **New Degree Programs:** Provide a list of degree programs introduced since the previous accreditation review. The following information is required for each new degree program:
 - A brief description of the employer or employment needs to be served by the program
 - A brief description of the intended student market
 - A description of the source(s) of faculty, technology, and facility support
 - A description of the learning goals, how the goals are measured, and results that demonstrate achievement.

Please note that any new degree programs started after the accreditation decision will be considered accredited until the next review. New degree programs will be reviewed during the next maintenance of accreditation review.

 - **Intellectual Contributions:** Provide Table 2-1 (required) in an appendix. Table 2-2 is optional, but may also be included. Briefly describe the value of the school’s intellectual contributions and how the “substantial cross-section of faculty in each discipline” is achieved. Briefly describe the infrastructure supporting faculty intellectual contribution development.

4. **Participants:** Address the following in regards to participants:
 - **Students:** Describe any changes in students (enrollments trends, diversity, affect of changes in admission criteria, etc.) and/or support services (advising, career services, other student development initiatives, etc.) since the last review.
 - **Faculty:** Provide an overview of faculty management policies including recruitment, hiring, mentoring, evaluation, reward systems, etc. Also, please summarize your criteria guiding the development of intellectual contributions, participating and supporting status, and academic and professional qualifications. Describe any major changes in faculty resources or other related developments since the last review.
 - **Tables:** Provide Tables 9-1, 10-1, and 10-2 in an appendix to this core document.
5. **Assurance of Learning:** Address the following in regards to assurance of learning processes and curricula development:
 - **Curricula Development:** Provide an overview of major curricula revisions that have occurred since the last review. Describe the factors that led to the revisions.
 - **Assessment Tools and Procedures:** Summarize in a brief statement learning goals for each degree program, along with a list of the assessment tools, procedures, and results used to demonstrate progress toward achievement of the mission. What are the most recent outcomes from the assessments, and what is the impact on curricula development actions?
6. **Other Material:** Address any additional issues or areas not included in an earlier section of the report. In addition, identify any innovative and/or exemplary practices, innovations, activities, programs, etc. that should be brought to the attention of the team and AACSB. Provide a brief overview of progress relative to the stated mission.

To facilitate the maintenance of accreditation visit, additional materials or documentation may be requested by the Peer Review Team. However, if the purpose of the request is for a standard-by-standard review, (audit) it is probably an inappropriate request. Please keep in mind the spirit of the review.

How to Submit

The applicant should submit the required items electronically and in hard copy to the Peer Review Team members. A hard copy should be submitted to the appropriate accreditation committee chair in care of the AACSB International headquarters:

AACSB International
777 S. Harbour Island Boulevard
Suite 750
Tampa, FL 33602-5730
USA

Electronic copies to the appropriate committee chair should be submitted to mac@aacsb.edu for business and aac@aacsb.edu for accounting. The electronic files should be in Adobe PDF format or Microsoft Word format.

VI. THE VISIT

Maintenance of Accreditation focuses on strategic management. The Peer Review Team contributes an external perspective on the applicant's action items, accomplishments, and progress toward achieving its mission. The applicant should be prepared to respond to questions, such as:

- Are the objectives in the vision and mission statements realistic for the applicant?
- Does the applicant have a realistic vision and mission relative to its financial, intellectual capital, human capital, and physical capital resources?
- What has the applicant accomplished relevant to its plan?
- What are the next action items in the pursuit of the mission?
- Is the applicant taking the necessary steps to see that its programs remain current and relevant?
- Does the applicant have processes to ensure continuous improvement?
- Do the applicant's accomplishments demonstrate effectiveness of its planning and implementation of its action items?

For institutions with both business and accounting accreditation, a single Peer Review Team is appointed with representatives having both general review responsibility and an assigned emphasis in either business or accounting. The visit is coordinated so that representatives of both business and accounting accreditation are part of the same visit. Some parts of the visit may separate the business and accounting reviewers and leaders for discussions that emphasize specific concerns for the separate programs. Reviewers will prepare separate reports and recommendations for the appropriate accreditation committee.

VISIT SCHEDULE

The Peer Review Team Chair works with the administrative head of the business school to determine the schedule for the visit (*see sample schedule on AACSB website*). When accounting accreditation is included, the Accounting Review Chair works with the accounting administrator to schedule sessions specific to the accounting review.

The visit should include certain individuals and groups. Because of differences in administrative structures, the groups and titles may differ from the following:

- Administrative officers of the business school/accounting program
- Strategic management committee
- Department chairs and academic program directors
- Promotion and tenure committee
- Senior faculty representatives, junior faculty representatives, clinical faculty representatives, part-time and adjunct faculty representatives
- Assessment committee
- Student service directors, e.g., graduate admissions, academic support and advising, career services and placement
- Chief executive and chief academic officers of the institution, e.g., president, chancellor, academic vice president, provost, etc.
- Student representatives

The meeting of the Peer Review Team with the chief executive and chief academic officers should be one of the final meetings of the visit. During this meeting, the team should present the recommendation (Section I of the Maintenance Review Visit Report) and discuss any effective practices (Section IV) highlighted during the review.

MAINTENANCE REVIEW VISIT REPORT

Within ten days following the visit, the Team provides the *Maintenance Review Visit Report* (Template available on AACSB website) to the applicant and copies the appropriate accreditation committee chair. Within ten days of receipt of the report, the applicant should send the team and committee chair any comments and corrections related to factual information noted in the report. The report should include the following three sections:

I. Team Recommendation

A. Accreditation Recommendation (one of the following two):

- **Extend Accreditation Maintenance:** The recommendation of the Peer Review Team is that the accreditation of the (undergraduate, master's, and doctoral) degree programs in business offered by (Name of Institution) be extended for an additional six years with a Maintenance Review to occur in year five. Concurrence by the accreditation committee and ratification by the Board of Directors are required prior to the confirmation of the accreditation decision. Following ratification by the Board of Directors, the applicant will be notified. The applicant must wait for this official notification before making any public announcement. AACSB International provides a list of applicants achieving accreditation to its members and the public

Sixth Year Review: The recommendation of the Peer Review Team is that the maintenance of accreditation review of the (undergraduate, master's, and doctoral) degree programs in business offered by (Name of Institution) be continued for an additional year. The educational quality issues relating to the accreditation standards and expectations for resolution are listed below. Concurrence by the accreditation committee is required prior to official notification. Sixth year review does not require ratification by the Board of Directors because sixth year review does not change the accredited status of the member. Applicants participating in these on-going reviews are not announced or communicated by AACSB International to its members or the public.

When the Peer Review Team encounters issues or practices that raise concerns about educational quality, they must determine if the issue or issues relates directly to one or more AACSB International accreditation standards. An institution's accreditation can only be questioned on the basis of issues relative to AACSB standards. The report should cite such problems with specific reference to the appropriate AACSB International accreditation standards. These issues will form the focus of a follow-up review (a visit may or may not be required) in the following year. During the sixth year review, the accreditation status of the applicant does not change until the review and decision process has been completed.

Note: In all cases, the applicant may file a statement with the appropriate accreditation committee in response to the Peer Review Team Report.

- #### **B. Team Recommendation Review Schedule:** Date that the appropriate accreditation committee will meet to review the team recommendation

II. Identification of Areas That Must Be Addressed Prior to Next Maintenance Review *or* Identification of Areas That Must Be Addressed During the Sixth Year Review (cite the specific accreditation standard relevant to the issue to be addressed)

- Summarize the team’s analysis of the school’s response and actions to address concerns that were stated during the last accreditation review (initial or maintenance), and one of the following:
 1. Prior to next maintenance review, specific recommendations relative to AACSB standards that should be addressed and reported in the maintenance of accreditation application and at the time of the next review, *or*
 2. Identification of areas that must be addressed during the 6th-Year Review citing the specific accreditation standard(s) relevant to the issue(s) to be addressed and the reporting that is required.

III. Relevant Facts and Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses in Support of the Team Accreditation Recommendation (Normally, this section should be limited to 2-5 pages and support the recommendations in Sections I and II).

- A. Situational analysis: Describe any issues, opportunities, challenges, or other developments from an environmental context that have or may impact the business school positively or negatively and its impact on maintenance of alignment with AACSB accreditation standards.
- B. Describe any changes that impact the schools alignment with AACSB Eligibility Criteria A-G since its maintenance of accreditation application was submitted.
- C. Strategic Management addressing the following:
 - The mission and strategic management plan and its appropriateness and alignment with the larger institution and higher education
 - Assessment of mission development process including stakeholders
 - Assessment of past decisions, future action plans, and resource allocations in the context of consistency with the stated mission and supporting plan.
 - Assessment of the portfolio of intellectual contributions (ICs) as presented in Table 2-1 (or 31-1 for accounting reviews) within the context of the mission
 - Assessment of the school’s IC outcomes in terms of fulfillment of the expectations that ICs emanate from a substantial cross-section of faculty in each discipline and that a significant proportion of the IC portfolio includes peer review journals or equivalent outcomes.
 - Comment on any financial factors related to mission achievement, new develops, etc
 - Cite significant, appropriate continuous improvement outcomes and assess alignment with the mission and plan.
- D. Participants addressing the following:
 - Comment on:
 - Student admissions policies, trends, support services, identifying any issues or strengths.
 - In regard to faculty sufficiency (Standard 9),
 - Address the schools alignment with deployment of participating faculty as detailed in Table 9-1.
 - If there are non-alignment issues, address the school’s compensating actions to support quality and meet the spirit and intent of the student-

faculty interaction principles. Factors to address may include impact on degree progress and access to faculty.

- Address the school's policies for determining participating and supporting status.
 - In regards to faculty qualifications (Standard 10):
 - Address the school's deployment of qualified faculty as documented in Tables 10-1 and 10-2.
 - If there are non-alignment issues, address the school's compensating actions to support quality and meet the spirit and intent of Standard 10. Factors to address may include effect on degree progress, access to faculty, and quality of instruction.
 - Address the school's policies for establishing and maintaining academic and professional qualifications.
 - Comment on existing faculty management policies in regards to their support for deployment of sufficient and qualified faculty in support of degree programs and other aspects of the school's mission.
- E. Assurance of Learning:
- Address the school's success in:
 - Demonstrating continuous improvement in regards to curricula development.
 - Describe some major factors that have impacted curricula development including externalities as well as outcome assessment results.
 - Address the assurance of learning program for undergraduate, masters, and/or doctoral degree programs, their maturity, and impact on curricula management.

IV. Commendations of Strengths, Innovations, Unique Features and Effective Practices

A. Commendations for Strengths, Innovations, and Unique Features:

Provide a brief description of strengths, innovations, and/or unique features of the applicant.

B. Effective practices:

Provide a brief description of items noted by the team as examples of exceptionally effective practices that demonstrate leadership and high quality continuous improvement in management education. They are highlighted here as "effective practices" that may be of interest to other business school leaders.

V. Opportunities for Continuous Improvement Relevant to the Accreditation Standards

A. Relevant to the accreditation standards:

Address those areas where improvements, in the opinion of the team, are recommended relative to improved alignment with the accreditation standards. These recommendations should be in addition to those identified in Section II. These recommendations should not be sufficiently material to threaten accreditation or result in a 6th-year review.

B. Consultative report on matters not related to the accreditation decision:

Provide consultative advice that is **not** relevant to the maintenance of accreditation, but may be useful in the context of continuous improvement. That is, any issues raised should be unrelated to standards, or problems related to standards and should not be sufficiently material to threaten accreditation.

VI. Visit Summary

- A. *Descriptive Information:* Brief description of the school or accounting unit including its size and institutional setting (no more than one-half page)
- B. *Degree Programs:* List of all degree programs included in the accreditation review and the number of graduates in the previous year for each program

Name of Degree Program	Major(s), Concentration(s), Area(s) of Emphasis	Graduates

- C. *Comparison Groups:* Comparable peers, competitive group, and aspirant group
- D. *Visit Team Members:* On-site review dates and names of the full team
- E. *Maintenance Review Visit Schedule:* List of persons and activities followed during the visit
- F. *Materials Reviewed:* List of all the materials provided by the applicant and reviewed by the Peer Review Team to make its accreditation recommendation

The Maintenance of Accreditation committee will review any response to the visit report from the applicant at its next scheduled meeting (normally, provided that the report is received at least three weeks in advance of the meeting).

SIXTH YEAR REVIEW

If, during the maintenance of accreditation review, the Peer Review Team finds standards-related quality items that require additional investigation, a focused review will occur in the following year. The Peer Review Team identifies the weakness or threat to educational quality in Section II of the Maintenance Review Visit Report and states the expectations for the sixth year review. The applicant distributes to the Sixth Year Review Team and appropriate accreditation committee its response to the specific concerns cited by the Peer Review Team. During the sixth year review, the accredited status of the applicant does not change until the review and decision process has been completed.

What Happens Next:

The relevant accreditation committee selects, and proposes to the applicant for approval, the Sixth Year Review Team that normally includes one member from the Peer Review Team and one from (or appointed by) the accreditation committee. The Sixth Year Review Team reviews the response from the applicant and prepares a Sixth Year Review Team Report (*template available on AACSB*

website). An on-site review may or may not be required. Please note that the policy for sixth year reviews requires that the applicant be assessed a fee of \$4200.

Successful completion of the review in the sixth year earns the institution a five-year extension of its accreditation with the original review year as the start year and the next scheduled maintenance review to take place in year five; i.e., the five-year review cycle remains constant. For example, if the applicant is reviewed in year 2009-10, the next review will be in year 2014-15, irrespective of whether a sixth year review is required. If successful completion is not achieved in the sixth year, the Sixth Year Review Team will recommend continuing review of maintenance of accreditation for up to two additional years.

CONTINUING REVIEW

During the continuing review period, the applicant must rectify the standards-related quality items from the Sixth Year Review Team Report before maintenance of accreditation can be extended. The applicant responds annually on the progress being made or achievements that satisfactorily address the specific concerns and expectations. Each of these reports is submitted to the Continuing Review Team and the appropriate accreditation committee.

What Happens Next:

The relevant accreditation committee selects, and proposes to the applicant, the Continuing Review Team that normally includes one member from the Sixth Year or Peer Review Team and one from (or appointed by) the accreditation committee. The Sixth Year Review Team may be asked to continue to serve as the Continuing Review Team. The Continuing Review Team reviews the annual Continuing Review Report submitted by the applicant and confers with the appropriate accreditation committee to determine (1) if the concerns have been satisfactorily addressed, (2) how the Continuing Review Team and Committee can further assist the applicant, and (3) if an on-site review is needed. An on-site visit is required in the second year of continuing review. The team prepares a Continuing Review Team Report (*template available on AACSB website*). Note that the applicant will be assessed a fee of \$4200 for each year of continuing review.

Successful completion of the continuing review earns the institution a six-year extension of its accreditation with the original review year as the start year and the next scheduled maintenance review to take place in year five; i.e., the five-year review cycle remains constant. For example, if the applicant is reviewed in year 2009-10, the next review will be in year 2014-15, irrespective of whether a sixth year review and continuing review period are required. The continuing review period can be up to two years in duration. If successful completion is not achieved by the end of the continuing review period, the Continuing Review Team will recommend suspension of accreditation.

VII. REVIEW OF TEAM RECOMMENDATION

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

The role of the accreditation committee is to ensure consistent application of AACSB International accreditation standards and processes across Peer Review Teams. Within 10 days following the visit, the Peer Review Team forwards a copy of the team visit report and its recommendation to the Maintenance of Accreditation Committee (MAC).

Two members of the committee will serve as a liaison and a reader between the visit team and the committee. The liaison's role is to lead discussions concerning the institution at accreditation

meetings. The reader serves as a back-up should the liaison not be available for the committee meetings. Prior to the committee meetings, the liaison and reader thoroughly review the reports, recommendation, and any responses from the institution and if needed consult with the team chair for additional information or clarification.

The MAC will normally review the team visit report and any response from the applicant at its next scheduled meeting. The committee can make the following recommendations:

Maintenance Review Team Recommendation

- Concur with the team recommendation
- Remand the team's recommendation
 - The committee may remand the recommendation to the team for information, clarification, or similar reconsideration when an apparent inconsistency is noted. A conference call is convened with the committee chair and vice-chair, liaison, reader, Peer Review Team members, and AACSB International staff. The team may submit additional information or a revised recommendation following this conference call.
 - Based on additional information or an updated team recommendation, the committee concurs with the recommendation or refers the case to a panel.
 1. A panel consists of three individuals: one from the original team; one from the committee; and an outside member who is an experienced accreditation reviewer. The outside member serves as chair.
 2. The panel must reach agreement on recommendation
 - Panel decision to extend accreditation or suspend accreditation is forwarded to the Board of Directors for ratification consideration
 - Panel decision for a sixth year review (when the panel consideration is between extending accreditation and a sixth year review) or continuing review (when the panel consideration is between extending accreditation and continuing review) becomes the decision.

Sixth Year Review Team Recommendation

- Process is the same as noted above for Peer Review Team Recommendation.
- Successful completion of the review in the sixth year earns the institution a five-year extension of its accreditation with the original review year as the start year and the next scheduled maintenance review to take place in year five; i.e., the five year review cycle remains constant. For example, if the applicant is reviewed in year 2009-10, the next review will be in year 2014-15, irrespective of whether a sixth year review is required.
- If successful completion is not achieved in the sixth year, the Sixth Year Review Team will recommend continuing review of maintenance of accreditation for up to two additional years.

Continuing Review Team Recommendation

- Process is the same as noted above for Peer Review Team Recommendation.
- Successful completion of the continuing review earns the institution a five-year extension of its accreditation with the original review year as the start year and the next scheduled maintenance review to take place in year five; i.e., the five-year review cycle remains constant. For example, if the applicant is reviewed in year 2009-10, the next review will be in year 2014-15, irrespective of whether a sixth year review and continuing review is required.
- If successful completion is not achieved in the second year of continuing review, the Continuing Review Team will recommend suspension of accreditation.

- Recommendation for suspension will initiate an invitation to the applicant to present its case for extension of accreditation at the next accreditation committee meeting.
- When the institution is suspended, the member is removed from the Accreditation Council and the listing of accredited institutions.
- Suspension requires Board of Directors ratification.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ratifies recommendation for extension or suspension of accreditation.
- May remand the recommendation to the appropriate accreditation committee with specific conditions.

APPLICANT

- The institution may withdraw its application for maintenance of accreditation any time prior to consideration by the Board of Directors. In the case of an accredited school in the maintenance of accreditation process, withdrawal from the process is also a withdrawal from the Accreditation Council.
- As to a suspension decision, the institution may submit an appeal to the Chair of the Board of AACSB International. An Appeal Panel will be formed to hear the appeal and make a judgment. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final.
- When the institution is suspended, the member is removed from the Accreditation Council and the listing of accredited institutions.

VIII. THE MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION TIMELINE

The Maintenance of Accreditation Process is displayed on the following page as a timeline. This five-year review cycle remains constant throughout the cycle of consecutive reviews for a school, irrespective of whether a sixth year review or continuing review is required. Therefore, Year 1 represents the academic year immediately following an on-site review, regardless of whether or not an accreditation decision has been made. The next visit will occur in Year 5. The Maintenance of Accreditation Committee (MAC) is responsible for oversight of the maintenance of accreditation process for business reviews. The Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC) is responsible for oversight of the maintenance of accreditation process for accounting reviews. Institutions with both business and accounting accreditation should fulfill the timeline independently for each type of accreditation.

MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION TIMELINE

<u>YEAR 1</u>	<u>YEAR 2</u>	<u>YEAR 3</u>	<u>YEAR 4</u>	<u>YEAR 5</u>
Review and Refine Strategic Management Plan	Review and Refine Strategic Management Plan	Review and Refine Strategic Management Plan	Review and Refine Strategic Management Plan	Review and Refine Strategic Management Plan
Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year
		By July 1, submit Maintenance Review Application with signed cover letter requesting maintenance review and preferred visit dates.	Scope of the accreditation is confirmed	Submit Fifth Year Maintenance Report no later than 60 days prior to the visit date
		Submit List of Degree Programs including Catalogs (or websites)	Work with AACSB to select Peer Review Team	
		Submit request for exclusion of degree programs including justification for the request	Work with AACSB to set the visit date	
		Submit List of Comparison Groups (Peer, Competitive, and Aspirant) <i>Previous four items to be submitted together.</i>		Accreditation Statistical Reports provided upon request by applicant and/or team
				Work with Peer Review Team to prepare the Visit Schedule
				Peer Review Team Visit




Appendix A

The following documents referenced within this Handbook may be downloaded from the AACSB International website at <http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/business/maintenance.asp>







Accreditation Process Flowcharts & Timelines

 Maintenance of Accreditation Timeline



Application for Maintenance of Accreditation Review

-  Cover Letter Template
-  Accreditation Maintenance Review Application (Business)
-  Accreditation Maintenance Review Application (Accounting)

Fifth Year Maintenance Reports

-  Fifth Year Maintenance Report Outline
-  Table 2-1 - Five-Year Summary of Intellectual Contributions
-  Table 2-2 - Five-Year Summary of Peer Reviewed Journals and Number of Publications in Each (Optional)
-  Table 9-1 - Summary of Faculty Sufficiency
-  Table 10-1 - Summary of Faculty Qualifications, Development Activities, and Professional Responsibilities
-  Table 10-2 - Calculations Relative to Deployment of Qualified Faculty

Peer Review Team Visits

-  PreAccreditation Roles and Responsibilities
-  Example Visit Schedule

Peer Review Team Reports





Maintenance of Accreditation Reviews:

-  Maintenance Visit Report Template (Business)

Sixth Year Reviews:

-  Sixth Year Review Team Report Template (Business)

Continuing Reviews:

-  Continuing Review Year 1 Team Report Template (Business)
-  Continuing Review Year 1 Team Report Template (Accounting)
-  Continuing Review Year 2 Team Report Template (Business)
-  Continuing Review Year 2 Team Report Template (Accounting)

APPENDIX B: ACCREDITATION TERMINOLOGY

Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC)	Appoints Peer Review Teams to assist the applicants in the Initial Accounting and Maintenance of Accounting Accreditation Processes, and reviews initial accounting accreditation and accounting maintenance of accreditation recommendations.
Accounting Accreditation Committee Liaison	A member of the AAC who serves as the principal point of contact and communication between the AAC, PAC, Mentor, and peer review team in the initial accreditation phase, or between the AAC and peer review team in the maintenance phase.
Accreditation	Recognition by AACSB International that an institution commits to fulfill its mission, and continues to sustain and improve educational quality of its undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs according to the standards of AACSB International as interpreted by its Peer Review Team(s), accreditation committees, and the Board of Directors.
Accreditation Coordinating Committee (ACC)	Makes decisions on all requirements as described in the eligibility procedures A-G in the accreditation standards.
Accreditation Council	Members who have achieved AACSB International accreditation.
Standards Alignment Plan (SAP)	A plan that establishes the agenda for meeting the AACSB standards for accreditation and achieving the mission and objectives of the applicant seeking accreditation.
Standards Alignment Plan Recommendation (PreAccreditation)	Mentor recommendation to the PreAccreditation Committee (PAC). The Mentor can recommend acceptance or non-acceptance of the Plan by the PreAccreditation and Initial (or Accounting) Accreditation Committees. The Mentor recommendation consists of a written report in the form of the SAP Review Template.
Accreditation Quality Committee (AQC)	Reviews the accreditation standards and processes for continuous improvement changes.

Accreditation Recommendation-Maintenance	Peer Review Team recommendation can be extension of accreditation or sixth year review. Sixth Year Review Team recommendation can be extension of accreditation or continuing review. Continuing Review Team recommendation can be extension of accreditation or suspension. The appropriate accreditation committee must review all team recommendations for concurrence. Immediate suspension of accreditation can result for cause at any time. Recommendations and concurrence for extension of accreditation and suspension of accreditation must be considered for ratification by the Board of Directors.
Accreditation Statistical Reports	Reports provided to the applicant and Peer Review Team members for use as background information in the accreditation review.
Annual Mentor Recommendations	The mentor's recommendations to the IAC (or AAC) based on the annual progress report submitted by the applicant.
Applicant	The department, school, or program unit that is responsible for the degree programs under review. AACSB International accreditation is achieved and awarded to the member institution for all degree programs in business or accounting that it offers (except specifically excluded programs).
Aspirant Group	A list of schools that provides developmental goals for the applicant, represents management education programs or features that the applicant hopes to emulate, and places the vision and strategy of the applicant in context. The list may be of any number.
Business School Questionnaire (BSQ)	Request for annual data from AACSB International to all accreditation council members. Some of these data are included in the accreditation statistical reports.
Comparable Peers	A list of schools considered similar in mission and assumed to be appropriate for performance comparison. A minimum of six comparable schools must be provided.
Comparison Groups	Schools considered by the applicant to be similar in mission and appropriate for performance comparison as either peers, aspirants, or competitors.

Competitive Groups	A list of schools so directly competitive that conflict of interest considerations exclude their personnel from the review process of the applicant. The list may be of any number. Only those schools should be included where the direct competition for students, faculty, or resources is so compelling that the appearance of a conflict of interest is present.
Consultative Feedback (PreAccreditation)	Mentors are encouraged to provide consultative advice relevant to the expectation of continuous improvement. This advice is separate from the Standards Alignment Plan recommendation.
Consultative Feedback (Initial and Maintenance of Accreditation)	Peer review teams are encouraged to provide consultative advice relevant to the expectation of continuous improvement. This advice is separate from the accreditation recommendation.
Consultative Report	Report included in the Peer Review Team Visit Report. The report consists of consultative advice that is not relevant to the accreditation recommendation.
Continuing Review	Additional review for up to two years beyond the sixth year review.
Continuing Review Team	Mutually agreed upon team consisting of one member from the Sixth Year or Peer Review Team and one from (or appointed by) the relevant accreditation committee. The Continuing Review Team evaluates progress and resolution of specific standards-related quality items identified by the Sixth Year Review Visit Report.
Degree Programs	Undergraduate, master's, doctoral, and other comparable degrees awarded by an institution.
Diversity	In its mission, a school should define the populations it serves, consider its role in creating opportunities for under-served groups, and show how it endeavors to make sure that a variety of perspectives are included in all educational activities.
Effective Practices	Exceptional practices that demonstrate leadership and high quality continuous improvement in management or accounting education, noted by the Mentor in his/her summary report and/or the Peer Review Team in its Visit Report.
Eligibility Application	Application submitted to the PreAccreditation Committee to establish whether an institution meets the criteria to be eligible for accreditation by AACSB International. For schools holding business accreditation, eligibility applications for accounting accreditation are submitted to the Accounting Accreditation Committee.
Exclusion of Program(s)	Programs excluded from the accreditation review as described in

the eligibility section of the accreditation standards.

Executive Summary

Background information provided by the applicant, which can be up to five pages in length, including a list of self-proposed effective practices.

Fifth Year Maintenance Report-

Report includes materials to inform the Peer Review Team before and during the fifth year maintenance review. Submitted 60 days prior to visit date.

Gap Analysis

A systematic analysis of the applicant's strengths and weaknesses relative to each of the AACSB standards for accreditation and relative to the applicant's unique mission and strategic management objectives.

Initial Accreditation

Accreditation granted for a five-year period with a review in the fifth year.

Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC)

Appoints a Peer Review Team to assist the applicant in the Initial Accreditation Process, and reviews the initial accreditation recommendation.

Initial Accreditation Committee Liaison

A member of the IAC that serves as the principal point of contact and communication between the Initial Accreditation Committee and the PreAccreditation Committee, Mentor, and/or Peer Review Team.

Institution

The member organization of AACSB International. Usually a larger academic organization than the business school or accounting unit being reviewed.

Maintenance of Accreditation

The process or set of activities and results required to maintain accreditation. This process is not a standard-by-standard review. It is an ongoing review which emphasizes continuous improvement to maintain the accreditation status. Accreditation is extended for five years with a review in the fifth year.

Maintenance of Accreditation Committee (MAC)

Appoints a Peer Review Team to assist the applicant in the maintenance of accreditation process, and reviews the maintenance of accreditation recommendation.

Maintenance Review Application (MRA)

The set of documents required for participation in the maintenance of accreditation process. Submitted by July 1st, two years prior to the visit year.

Maintenance Review Visit Report	The report written by the Peer Review Team for the applicant and for review by the appropriate accreditation committee.
Mentor	Individual assigned to assist an applicant during the PreAccreditation Process. The Mentor reviews the Eligibility Application and facilitates development of the Standards Alignment Plan and provides comments and recommendations to PAC. During implementation of the Standards Alignment Plan, the Mentor provides comments to the IAC (or AAC).
Mentor Summary Report	A summary report drafted by the Mentor subsequent to the on-site visit to the applicant institution. The report consists of three distinct sections: the standard-by-standard summary report, the eligibility criteria recommendation report and the Mentor visit schedule.
Peer Review Team (PRT)	Mutually agreed upon team, normally chosen from the submitted Comparable Peer or Aspirant Groups. The PRT performs the accreditation review and makes a recommendation to the appropriate accreditation committee.
Peer Review Team Chair (Initial Accreditation)	Chosen from the applicant's submitted Comparable Peer or Aspirant Groups two years in advance of the on-site review. The Chair assumes the responsibility from the Mentor in monitoring the applicant's progress through the final two years of SAP implementation.
PreAccreditation Committee (PAC)	Reviews the Eligibility Applications for business and assigns a Mentor to assist the applicant in the PreAccreditation Process.
PreAccreditation Committee Liaison	A member of the PAC that serves as the principal point of contact and communication between the IAC (or AAC), PAC and Mentor.
Previsit Letter	Letter written by the PRT to the applicant based on the Self-Evaluation Report recommending whether or not a visit should take place. The letter typically includes requests for information to be submitted before a visit takes place as well as information that should be available during the visit. The previsit letter typically includes a standard-by-standard analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report.
Progress Reports (PreAccreditation)	Report to the Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC) or Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC) on the progress the applicant has made on the development of the Standards Alignment Plan or the implementation of its

Scope of Accreditation	Standards Alignment Plan. The degree programs that are included in the accreditation review.
Self-Assessment	A systematic analysis of the business academic unit's mission, faculty, students, curriculum, instructional resources, operations, intellectual contributions, and processes, which provides the basis upon which a realistic and comprehensive Standards Alignment Plan can be developed.
Self-Evaluation Report (SER)	Report submitted by the applicant to the PRT detailing how AACSB International accreditation standards are met.
Sixth Year Review	Additional review conducted in the sixth year on those standards-related issues specifically identified as problematic in the maintenance of accreditation review.
Sixth Year Review Team	Mutually agreed upon team consisting of one member from the Peer Review Team and one from (or appointed by) the appropriate accreditation committee. The team evaluates resolution of specific standards-related quality issues.
Strategic Management Plan	The systematic planning and implementation for the prioritized use of resources to accomplish the stated mission.
Suspension of Accreditation	Loss of membership in the Accreditation Council.
Withdrawal of Application by Applicant	Action available to applicant any time prior to consideration by the Board of Directors. In the case of an accredited school in the maintenance of accreditation process, withdrawal from the process is also withdrawal from the Accreditation Council.