



# MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK



# **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.

The appendices to this handbook provide further detail on policies, processes, and procedures.

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 course, 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

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Maintenance Review Application</b> .....	2
Comparison Groups.....	4
<b>Maintenance Visit Materials</b> .....	6
<b>Fifth Year Maintenance Report</b> .....	7
<b>The Visit</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Visit Schedule.....	9
Maintenance Review Visit Report.....	10
Consultative Report.....	12
Best Practices Report.....	12
Sixth Year Review.....	12
Continuing Review.....	13
<b>Review of Team Recommendation</b> .....	14
Accreditation Committee.....	14
Board of Directors .....	15
Applicant .....	15
<b>Maintenance of Accreditation Timeline</b> .....	16
<b><u>Appendices</u></b>	
A. Supporting Documents Available for Download.....	18
B. Accreditation Terminology .....	19
C. Volunteer Travel Policy .....	25
D. Conflict of Interest Guidelines & Code of Conduct .....	26
E. Responsibilities of Institutions with Accreditation.....	29
F. Disclosure of Accreditation Guidelines .....	30
G. Substantive Change Policy .....	31
H. Accreditation Re-entry Timeframe Policy.....	35
I. Complaint Procedure .....	36
J. Appeal Procedure.....	37

## 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. However, that does not mean that reviewers will be insensitive to issues of educational quality. 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.

Please note that each institution has an assigned accreditation staff liaison. This individual serves as the designated AACSB staff person for all your accreditation related questions and needs, and is the liaison between your institution and the volunteer network (peer review team members, accreditation committee, etc.). Your staff liaison is available to assist you with any questions you may have regarding the maintenance process. You can locate your staff liaison by logging onto the *myAACSB* section of our website ([www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)) and viewing your school in the organization directory.

# MAINTENANCE REVIEW APPLICATION

The Maintenance Review Application is due on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 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).
- 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. Schools 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](http://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 schools 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 schools duplicated in the competitive group do not count towards the minimum of three.*

Note that a school 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 season 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 2011-12 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

2009-10 Committee Chairs are:

Bob Reid, Chair, Maintenance of Accreditation Committee  
Jane Mutchler, Chair, Accounting Accreditation Committee

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

### **What Happens Next**

After initial review of the documentation by the appropriate accreditation committee, the chair of that committee will forward the committee's recommendation to the Accreditation Coordinating Committee (ACC) for final approval. The ACC reviews the recommendation and informs the applicant of the scope of accreditation (degree programs that will be included in the review). 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.

## **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 a school 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 schools considered similar in mission and assumed appropriate for performance comparison. A minimum of six comparable schools must be provided. The schools should be chosen carefully to match key characteristics of the applicant. In addition to mission, some features that might be salient when choosing comparison schools include student populations served, size, degree levels, and primary funding source.
- **Competitive Group:** A list of schools so directly competitive that conflict of interest considerations exclude their personnel from the review process. The competitive school 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.
- **Aspirant Group:** A list of schools 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 schools may be of any number, though a minimum of three schools is required to compile the statistical data reports used during the accreditation review.

Comparison groups do not imply categories or rankings of schools 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 school. These reports will help form the context for judgment and consultative elements of the review. AACSB International will distribute the following reports to the applicant and Peer Review Team members 60 days prior to the visit:
  - 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 are 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*.

## **MAINTENANCE VISIT MATERIALS**

### **What is Required**

**AACSB International will provide** the following materials to the applicant and the Peer Review Team members at least 60 days prior to the team visit:

- 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)
- List of included and excluded programs as approved by the Accreditation Coordinating Committee (ACC) at least one year prior to the visit. 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

### **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. Two hard copies 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

2009-10 Committee Chairs are:

Bob Reid, Chair, Maintenance of Accreditation Committee  
Jane Mutchler, Chair, Accounting Accreditation Committee

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

## 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 for an additional six years with a maintenance of accreditation review visit to occur in year five.
- Sixth Year Review visit to take place in the following year to examine the specific accreditation standards-related problems cited in the Maintenance Review Visit Report, along with the respective reporting expectation and the expectations for accomplishments.

##### 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 Sixth Year Review (cite the specific accreditation standard relevant to the issue to be addressed)

#### III. Relevant Facts and Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses in Support of the Team Accreditation Recommendation

- ##### 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.
- ##### B. Strategic Management:
- Comment on the mission and plan and its appropriateness and alignment with the larger institution. Include an assessment of the mission development process as well as the team's assessment that decisions and resource allocations are consistent with the stated mission and supporting plan.
  - Provide an assessment of the portfolio of intellectual contributions within the context of the mission providing the team's assessment of how the school's outcomes fulfill 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.

#### C. Participants:

- Comment on student admissions policies, trends, support services, identifying any issues or strengths.
- Address the school's policies for determining participating and supporting status (Standard 9: Faculty Sufficiency). Address the schools alignment with deployment of participating faculty by program, discipline, location and overall. 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. Other factors to address may be affects on degree progress and access to faculty.
- Address the school's policies for establishing and maintaining academic or professional qualifications (Standard 10: Faculty Qualifications). Address the school's alignment with deployment of qualified faculty by program, discipline, location and overall. If there are non-alignment issues, address the school's compensating actions to support quality and meet the spirit and intent of Standard 10. Other factors to address may include affect on degree progress, access to faculty, and quality of instruction.
- 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.

#### D. Assurance of Learning:

- Address the team's assessment of the continuous improvement focus 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, and Unique Features

### V. Opportunities for Continuous Improvement Relevant to the Accreditation Standards

### VI. Visit Summary

- Descriptive Information:* Brief description of the school or accounting unit including its size and institutional setting (no more than one-half page)
- Degree Programs:* List of all degree programs included in the accreditation review and the number of graduates in the previous year for each program
- Comparison Groups:* Comparable peers, competitive group, and aspirant group
- Visit Team Members:* On-site review dates and names of the full team
- 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

### ***CONSULTATIVE REPORT***

This report is to be completed by the Peer Review Team and included in the Maintenance Review Visit Report (*template available on AACSB website*). The report consists of consultative advice that is **not** relevant to the maintenance of accreditation. That is, any issues raised should be unrelated to standards, or problems related to standards should not be sufficiently material to threaten accreditation. The consultative report will be shared with the applicant and the appropriate accreditation committee.

### ***BEST PRACTICES REPORT***

This report is to be completed by the Peer Review Team and included in the Maintenance Review Visit Report (*template available on AACSB website*). The report identifies 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 in this report as “best practices” that may be of interest to other management educators.

*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 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 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.

## **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 appropriate accreditation committee: the Maintenance of Accreditation Committee (MAC) or the Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC).

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 appropriate accreditation committee, either MAC or AAC, 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 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 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 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 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.

## **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. Schools with both business and accounting accreditation should fulfill the timeline independently for each type of accreditation.

## MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION TIMELINE

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
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> or <i>Accounting Program Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> or <i>Accounting Program Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> or <i>Accounting Program Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> or <i>Accounting Program Questionnaire</i> that are reserved for accredited institutions for prior academic year	Complete those sections of the <i>Business School Questionnaire</i> or <i>Accounting Program 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.	Accreditation Coordinating Committee rules on exclusions and the scope of the accreditation visit	Submit Fifth Year Maintenance Report no later than 60 days prior to the visit date
		Submit List of Degree Programs including Catalogs	Work with AACSB to select Peer Review Team from peer and aspirant groups	
		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 will be distributed to applicant and team members by AACSB International
				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/process/process-toc.asp> (see *Section V: Maintenance of Accreditation Process Documents*):


### 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)
-  Maintenance Visit Report Template (Accounting)
-  Consultative Report Template (Business and Accounting)
-  Best Practices Report Template (Business and Accounting)

#### *Sixth Year Reviews:*

-  Sixth Year Review Team Report Template (Business)
-  Sixth Year Review Team Report Template (Accounting)

#### *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

<b>Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC)</b>	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.
<b>Accounting Accreditation Committee Liaison</b>	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.
<b>Accounting Programs Questionnaire (APQ)</b>	Request for annual data from AACSB International to all accounting accredited schools.
<b>Accreditation</b>	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.
<b>Accreditation Coordinating Committee (ACC)</b>	Makes decisions on all requirements as described in the eligibility procedures A-F in the accreditation standards.
<b>Accreditation Council</b>	Members who have achieved AACSB International accreditation.
<b>Accreditation Plan (AP)</b>	A plan that establishes the agenda for meeting the AACSB standards for accreditation and achieving the mission and objectives of the applicant seeking accreditation.
<b>Accreditation Plan Recommendation (PreAccreditation)</b>	Mentor recommendation to the PreAccreditation Committee (PAC). The Mentor can recommend acceptance or non-acceptance of the Accreditation Plan by the PreAccreditation and Initial (or Accounting) Accreditation Committees. The Mentor recommendation consists of a written report in the form of the AP Review Template.
<b>Accreditation Quality Committee (AQC)</b>	Reviews the accreditation standards and processes for continuous improvement changes.

<b>Accreditation Recommendation-Maintenance</b>	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.
<b>Accreditation Statistical Reports</b>	Reports provided to the applicant and Peer Review Team members for use as background information in the accreditation review.
<b>Annual Mentor Recommendations</b>	The mentor's recommendations to the IAC (or AAC) based on the annual progress report submitted by the applicant.
<b>Applicant</b>	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).
<b>Aspirant Group</b>	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.
<b>Business School Questionnaire (BSQ)</b>	Request for annual data from AACSB International to all accreditation council members. Some of these data are included in the accreditation statistical reports.
<b>Comparable Peers</b>	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.
<b>Comparison Groups</b>	Schools considered by the applicant to be similar in mission and appropriate for performance comparison as either peers, aspirants, or competitors.

<b>Competitive Groups</b>	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.
<b>Consultative Feedback (PreAccreditation)</b>	Mentors are encouraged to provide consultative advice relevant to the expectation of continuous improvement. This advice is separate from the accreditation plan recommendation.
<b>Consultative Feedback (Initial and Maintenance of Accreditation)</b>	Peer review teams are encouraged to provide consultative advice relevant to the expectation of continuous improvement. This advice is separate from the accreditation recommendation.
<b>Consultative Report</b>	Report included in the Peer Review Team Visit Report. The report consists of consultative advice that is not relevant to the accreditation recommendation.
<b>Continuing Review</b>	Additional review for up to two years beyond the sixth year review.
<b>Continuing Review Team</b>	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.
<b>Degree Programs</b>	Undergraduate, master's, doctoral, and other comparable degrees awarded by an institution.
<b>Diversity</b>	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.
<b>Effective Practices</b>	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.
<b>Eligibility Application</b>	Application submitted to the PreAccreditation Committee to establish whether an institution meet 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.

<b>Exclusion of Program(s)</b>	Programs excluded from the accreditation review as described in the eligibility section of the accreditation standards.
<b>Executive Summary</b>	Background information provided by the applicant, which can be up to five pages in length, including a list of self-proposed effective practices.
<b>Fifth Year Maintenance Report-</b>	Report includes materials to inform the Peer Review Team before and during the fifth year maintenance review. Submitted 60 days prior to visit date.
<b>Gap Analysis</b>	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.
<b>Initial Accreditation</b>	Accreditation granted for a six-year period with a review in the fifth year.
<b>Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC)</b>	Appoints a Peer Review Team to assist the applicant in the Initial Accreditation Process, and reviews the initial accreditation recommendation.
<b>Initial Accreditation Committee Liaison</b>	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.
<b>Institution</b>	The member organization of AACSB International. Usually a larger academic organization than the business school or accounting unit being reviewed.
<b>Maintenance of Accreditation</b>	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 six years with a review in the fifth year.
<b>Maintenance of Accreditation Committee (MAC)</b>	Appoints a Peer Review Team to assist the applicant in the maintenance of accreditation process, and reviews the maintenance of accreditation recommendation.
<b>Maintenance Review Application (MRA)</b>	The set of documents required for participation in the maintenance of accreditation process. Submitted by July 1st, two years prior to the visit year.

<b>Maintenance Review Visit Report</b>	The report written by the Peer Review Team for the applicant and for review by the appropriate accreditation committee.
<b>Mentor</b>	Individual assigned to assist an applicant during the PreAccreditation Process. The Mentor reviews the Eligibility Application and facilitates development of the Accreditation Plan and provides comments and recommendations to PAC. During implementation of the Accreditation Plan, the Mentor provides comments to the IAC (or AAC).
<b>Mentor Summary Report</b>	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.
<b>Peer Review Team (PRT)</b>	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.
<b>Peer Review Team Chair (Initial Accreditation)</b>	Chosen from the applicant's submitted Comparable Peer or Aspirant Groups two years in advance of the on-site review. The Chair assumes responsibility for the Mentor in monitoring the applicant's progress through the final two years of AP implementation.
<b>PreAccreditation Committee (PAC)</b>	Reviews the Eligibility Applications for both business and concurrent business/accounting and assigns a Mentor to assist the applicant in the PreAccreditation Process.
<b>PreAccreditation Committee Liaison</b>	A member of the PAC that serves as the principal point of contact and communication between the IAC (or AAC), PAC and Mentor.
<b>Previsit Letter</b>	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.
<b>Progress Reports (PreAccreditation)</b>	Report to the Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC) or Accounting Accreditation Committee (AAC) on the progress the applicant has made on its Accreditation Plan.

<b>Scope of Accreditation</b>	The degree programs that are included in the accreditation review.
<b>Self-Assessment</b>	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 Accreditation Plan can be developed.
<b>Self-Evaluation Report (SER)</b>	Report submitted by the applicant to the PRT detailing how AACSB International accreditation standards are met.
<b>Sixth Year Review</b>	Additional review conducted in the sixth year on those standards-related issues specifically identified as problematic in the maintenance of accreditation review.
<b>Sixth Year Review Team</b>	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.
<b>Strategic Management Plan</b>	The systematic planning and implementation for the prioritized use of resources to accomplish the stated mission.
<b>Suspension of Accreditation</b>	Loss of membership in the Accreditation Council.
<b>Withdrawal of Application by Applicant</b>	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.

## **APPENDIX C: ACCREDITATION VOLUNTEER TRAVEL POLICY**

### **PreAccreditation Mentor**

Normally, the PreAccreditation Mentor will visit the applicant institution at the beginning of the PreAccreditation process. Subsequent visits will be made as needed and as agreed upon by both the Mentor and the applicant.

AACSB International requires the PreAccreditation applicant to work directly with the Mentor to arrange the travel logistics. The PreAccreditation applicant will be responsible for the direct payment or reimbursement of all Mentor travel expenses (see “Reimbursable Expenses” below).

### **Peer Review Team Chair/Advisor Visit Prior to the Accreditation Review**

If agreed upon and deemed necessary by the host institution and the Peer Review Team Chair/Advisor, the Chair/Advisor may conduct an on-site advising visit to assist the host institution in the development of a Self Evaluation Report (for initial accreditation reviews) or the Fifth Year Maintenance Report (for maintenance of accreditation reviews).

AACSB International requires the host institution to work directly with the Chair/Advisor to arrange the travel logistics. The host institution will be responsible for the direct payment or reimbursement of all Chair/Advisor visit expenses (see “Reimbursable Expenses” below).

### **Peer Review Teams Conducting Accreditation Reviews**

Upon the establishment of the visit dates, AACSB International requires the host institution to work directly with the Peer Review Team members to arrange the travel logistics. The host institution will be responsible for the direct payment or reimbursement of all Peer Review Team visit expenses (see “Reimbursable Expenses” below).

***Reasonable promptness in the submission of expense reports, including all original receipts, and the subsequent reimbursement of travel expenses is expected and appreciated in all instances. Volunteers failing to receive prompt reimbursement are asked to contact AACSB.***

### **Reimbursable Expenses**

AACSB International considers the following to be reimbursable expenses related to mentor and peer review team travel:

- Transportation (including airfare, taxi fare or personal automobile mileage, parking charges, tolls, etc.).\*
- Lodging
- Meals
- Other expenses as agreed upon by the host school and mentor or peer team member.

\* It is the policy of AACSB International that air travel will be at economy fares, except for intercontinental travel of 10 hours or longer one-way. The measurement of travel time is based on the scheduled departure time from the origin city until the scheduled arrival time in the final destination city (“gate to gate”). Waiting time during layovers is included in the measurement. Mentor or Peer Review Team airfare may be in business or first class if offered by the school and agreed to by the mentor/peer review team member.

When travel by private car is not the most efficient method of transportation and an individual still elects to travel by private car, reimbursement should be made on the basis of whichever is the lesser cost of coach air service or the personal auto mileage allowance. Normally, no reimbursement is expected for meals or accommodations necessitated by additional time en route.

## **APPENDIX D: CODE OF CONDUCT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

**Introduction:** Mutual respect and integrity must characterize the interactions and activities of those who participate in all AACSB International discussions, decisions and actions, including but not limited to corporate governance, leadership and advocacy activities, and accreditation decisions. Acceptance to serve in a volunteer capacity on the AACSB Board of Directors, a standing committee, task force, peer review team, or other volunteer role or in an AACSB Management Council position or other managerial role constitutes an express agreement to conduct oneself in accordance with the highest standards of professional and moral integrity. In all circumstances, not only actual conflicts of interest, but also the appearance of conflicts of interest must be scrupulously avoided to assure the maintenance of the integrity of AACSB International. Furthermore, all individuals addressed in this document who find themselves in an actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest as described herein have the duty of disclosure that must be exercised as soon as a conflict becomes apparent. The remainder of this document provides guidance with regard to actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest and their resolution should they arise.

**Scope:** This policy addresses actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest relative to the responsibilities of all persons acting on behalf of AACSB, including but not limited to members of the AACSB Board of Directors, all standing committees including the Accreditation Coordinating Committee, the Accreditation Quality Committee, the Accounting Accreditation Committee, Initial Accreditation Committee, Maintenance of Accreditation Committee, and the Pre-Accreditation Committee, Peer Review Team Members, Accreditation Appeal Panelists, Board appointed task forces, members of the AACSB Management Council, and staff members who have managerial responsibilities, as well as any other AACSB International sponsored or authorized activities.

**Policy:** A participant in any AACSB meeting acting on behalf of AACSB, including but not limited to Board of Directors' meetings, committee meetings, or task force meetings, where an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest may arise must excuse him or herself from any and all involvement, discussions and/or votes relative to the issue or topic associated with the actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest. Except with the express consent of the chair, a person excused by virtue of an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest will absent him or herself from the proceedings.

**Conflicts of Interest:** Actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Within the past ten years, employment,<sup>1</sup> enrollment as a student,<sup>2</sup> or other service<sup>3</sup> in any capacity by an institution that is under review,

---

<sup>1</sup> "Employment" includes any engagement by the institution, including consulting or contractual services, whether or not compensated by the institution itself.

<sup>2</sup> "Enrollment" includes any academic involvement whether or not for credit or leading to an academic credential of any kind.

<sup>3</sup> "Other service" includes serving as a board member, advisor, member of an advisory board or committee.

- Within the past three years, employment, enrollment as a student, or other service in any capacity by an institution that is part of the same multi-institutional system as the institution under review.
- Within the past year, employment, enrollment as a student, or other service capacity or direct involvement in the development, direct oversight, and continuing direct management of joint programs or other collaborative educational activities at an institution in cooperation with an institution under review.
- Within the past three years, employment, enrollment as a student, or other service capacity by an institution that offers joint programs or other collaborative educational activities in cooperation with the institution under review.
- Current employment by an institution that is in the same state or province as the institution under review. For institutions located outside the United States, a determination will be made in accordance with this policy with regard to actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest if the AACSB participant is employed by an institution located in the same country as the institution under review.
- Within the past year, having been a candidate for employment in any capacity or having applied for enrollment as a student with the institution under review.
- Family member(s) who is a current employee, board member, candidate for employment or admission to a degree program, or student enrolled in a degree program, at the institution under review.
- Being an alumna or alumnus of the institution under review.
- Hosted a peer review team (most recent review) that included the current dean of the institution under review
- Having a financial interest in the institution under review, including but not limited to ownership of shares of stock in the institution or in any parent of the institution, excepting shares or interests held indirectly such as mutual funds, insurance policies, or blind trusts. In addition, having any immediate family member(s) with any of the above financial interests.<sup>4</sup>

The chair of the Board of Directors, a standing committee, or task force, respectively, is responsible for determining if a conflict of interest exists when a volunteer in one of the roles described above requests a determination. If the chair has a conflict of interest, the vice-chair will provide the final determination. In cases where a participant voluntarily identifies an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest and absents him or herself from the deliberations and actions, these events will be recorded in writing as part of the meeting record and a copy filed with the executive office of AACSB. If a request for a determination of an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest is made to the chair (or vice chair), such requests must be made in

---

<sup>4</sup> “Immediate family members” include spouses, siblings, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, and domestic partners.

writing, and the determination by the chair (or vice chair) is to be in writing, and both are to be filed with the executive office of the AACSB.

An assertion by any third party of an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest in any matter will be referred to the affected individual who will be expected to provide a written explanation. Both the asserted conflict and the explanation will be considered by the chair (or vice chair) for a determination as to the existence of a conflict of interest.

**Annual Confirmation:** Each person covered by this Policy, including but not limited to members of the Board of Directors, standing committees, task forces, and all AACSB managerial staff shall by July 1 of each year or by the commencement of the first meeting after July 1 of each year of the Board, committee, or task force, sign the statement set forth below acknowledging receipt and express agreement with the Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest Policy. Peer review team members and pre-accreditation mentors must sign the statement at the time of confirmation of the appointment as a condition of serving in these roles.

### **Statement of Agreement**

By my signature below, I acknowledge that:

- (a) I understand the mission of AACSB and agree to support the mission as it relates to the role I am assuming;
- (b) I have received, read and understand this Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest Policy; and
- (c) I agree to comply in all respects with this policy.

---

**Signature**

**Date**

**Return to:**

**Office of Corporate Governance  
AACSB International  
777 S. Harbour Island Boulevard, Suite 750  
Tampa, Florida 33602-5730  
FAX: 1-813-769-6559**

*Adopted by AACSB International Board of Directors on April 22, 2007.  
Effective date: July 1, 2007.*

## **APPENDIX E: RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTITUTIONS WITH AACSB INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION**

1. Maintain educational achievements appropriate to AACSB International accreditation standards and to the member's strategic mission.
    - Provide annual accreditation-related data (1)
    - Provide appropriate reports for five-year reviews (1)
    - Ensure that program quality is maintained and that all programs have continuous improvement efforts (1)
    - Ensure that programs promote and operate with integrity (3)
  2. Represent AACSB International accreditation [accurately].
    - Maintain accurate institutional publicity regarding accreditation (2)
    - Make accurate representations regarding accreditation to students and prospective students (2)
    - Promote AACSB International accreditation in catalogs, web sites, and promotional materials (3)
  3. Participate in the AACSB International accreditation review process.
    - Provide representatives to participate in peer review of other institutions (3)
    - Assist in the continuous improvement of AACSB International accreditation (3)
  4. Represent degree and non-degree programs accurately, realistically and with integrity in all communications.
    - Identify educational learning goals realistically (1)
    - Describe the success of graduates accurately (3)
    - Develop and follow consistent practices that ensure integrity in the representation of information about programs and the institution (2)
    - Report program data and information accurately to external parties (3)
- (1) This expectation is monitored through the accreditation review process.  
(2) This expectation is a condition of membership.  
(3) This expectation is presented for guidance.

## **APPENDIX F: DISCLOSURE OF ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES**

In response to inquiries from the public, AACSB International will disclose only whether a member is accredited or not accredited. Information regarding a member's progress in the initial accreditation process, or issues of concern for an accredited member on review is not made public by AACSB International.

Accredited institutions are encouraged to make their accreditation known in accordance with the practices shown at <http://www.aacsb.edu/members/nameref.asp>. An institution may make public information about its accredited status or any portion of a visit team's report. If only a portion of the team report or notice from AACSB International is made public, the member must indicate that the full report is available. If the portion made public presents a biased or distorted impression, AACSB International may disclose information to correct the distortion or inaccuracy.

### **Misrepresentation**

The AACSB International bylaws include the following statement: "A condition to membership by educational institutions in the corporation shall be the use of accurate descriptions of programs or degrees offered. In addition, members are responsible for the accuracy of any data and information requested by the corporation. Any reference to membership or accreditation, institutional or otherwise, which implies AACSB International accreditation in business administration or accounting by institutions which have not achieved accreditation for those programs or levels is prohibited."

Members should only state the status of their school regarding accreditation. Members that are not accredited may state that they are working to achieve accreditation if they are officially engaged in the accreditation process. They must have an accreditation plan that has been approved by the Initial Accreditation Committee or the Accounting Accreditation Committee. They may not state or imply that they will achieve accreditation within a designated time period. Members that are not accredited should not state that their curriculum or other features conform to AACSB International accreditation standards.

A member school that is not accredited by AACSB International should not state its membership affiliation in proximity or in conjunction with statements of other accreditations. For example, a member should not state: "University "X" is accredited by the ABC association and is a member of AACSB International."

# **APPENDIX G: AACSB INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE EVENTS RELATIVE TO AACSB ACCREDITATION**

## **Preamble**

AACSB enthusiastically supports innovation and creativity in the development and delivery of business and accounting programs. With its focus on continuous improvement, change is expected. However, AACSB must be diligent in protecting the integrity of its accreditation brand that is granted to institutions. Therefore, when substantive change events have the potential to impact an institution in material ways such that mission achievement may be in question, AACSB reserves the right to intervene to insure that the integrity of its standards and review processes are maintained. Furthermore, it is vitally important that AACSB determine if an institution that has experienced a “substantive change” event deserves to continue to be recognized as an AACSB accredited institution or an active applicant for initial AACSB accreditation. This document outlines AACSB policies in regards to such “substantive change” events.

## **Introduction: Defining Substantive Change Events**

AACSB standards state: “AACSB reserves the right to request a review of an accredited institution’s programs at any time if questions arise concerning the maintenance of educational quality as defined in its standards” (AACSB, page 78). This document also extends this right to institutions that are formally in the AACSB pre-accreditation or initial accreditation process in regards to substantive change events.

Normally, a substantive change is an event that significantly affects the stated mission and subsequent degree programs offered, participants (faculty, staff, and/or students) and/or resources (financial resources, facilities, etc.) available to the business school or accounting program. The stated mission of a business school or accounting program is the foundation of an AACSB review. Substantive change events that affect mission and supporting strategic directions along with subsequent effects on programs, participants, and/or resources are of vital interest to AACSB. Such events may compromise overall high quality and continuous improvement efforts and alignment with AACSB standards. Therefore, substantive change events should be reported in accordance with the processes and timelines outlined in this document.

Examples of substantive change events for purposes of this document include:

- Significant budget reductions or loss of other resources (faculty, facilities, etc) that impact the ability of the school or accounting program to fulfill its mission and maintain quality and continuous improvement.
- Reorganization of the business school or accounting program
- Merger or acquisition among institutions where one or more of the participants is AACSB accredited or is formally in the process of seeking AACSB accreditation (pre-accreditation or initial accreditation)
- Other significant changes that affect mission, resources, participants, etc.

The above list is not intended to be exhaustive. Any “substantive change” event should be discussed as early as possible with the executive vice president/ chief accreditation officer of AACSB International who will consult with the appropriate AACSB accreditation committee and provide guidance to the school. Early notification is encouraged, even for contemplated events, to ensure schools fully understand the potential impact of “substantive change” events on its AACSB accreditation status. If the “substantive change” event is so material that it may lead to a revocation or denial of accreditation, the matter will be referred to a full meeting of the appropriate accreditation committee and the AACSB Board of Directors (if a denial or revocation of accreditation is involved) before a course of action is formulated in accordance with this document.

Changes that result from normal continuous improvement processes and strategic management decisions (e.g., initiation of new degree programs, revisions in curricula of existing programs, internal reorganization of the business school/accounting program not having a major effect on mission, programs, or resources, etc.) are not normally substantive change events. These actions are addressed through the normal pre-accreditation, initial accreditation, or maintenance of accreditation processes. For such events, there are no unique reporting requirements beyond the processes which are outlined in the Pre-Accreditation Handbook, Initial Accreditation Handbook, or the Maintenance of Accreditation Handbook. Any questions regarding what is or what is not a substantive change should be addressed to the AACSB executive vice president and chief accreditation officer.

### **Guiding Principles**

The following Guiding Principles apply:

- AACSB International accreditation can not be “acquired” as part of a subsequent event that involves a merger or acquisition and can only be conveyed to a surviving institution resulting from such events following appropriate self-assessment and AACSB peer review processes and ratification by the AACSB Board of Directors.
- AACSB assumes that an institution that has experienced a “substantive change” event described in this document wants to earn or maintain AACSB accreditation. If the institution does not wish to earn or maintain AACSB accreditation as a result of a substantive change event, the senior administration (e.g. president, chief academic officer, and dean) of the institution must notify AACSB International in writing as soon as possible

### **Substantive Change Process for Institutions in the Pre-Accreditation or Initial Accreditation Stage**

If an institution is formally approved to be in the pre-accreditation or initial accreditation stage of AACSB accreditation and is involved in a substantive change event, the institution must notify the appropriate committee (Pre-Accreditation Committee [PAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:PAC@aacsb.edu), Initial Accreditation Committee [IAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:IAC@aacsb.edu), or the Accounting Accreditation Committee [AAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:AAC@aacsb.edu)) no later than 90 days following consummation of the event. Earlier notification is encouraged. Notification should address the impact of the subsequent event on the institution’s mission, resources, programs, participants and alignment with AACSB standards including changes in the accreditation plan if it has already been submitted and approved.

The respective committee will determine the next course of action which may include:

1. Continue with the current accreditation process with additional reporting on the substantive change.
2. Discontinue the accreditation process and request the school reapply for accreditation due to the significant level of change that has occurred as a result of the substantive change.
3. Removal from the accreditation process with denial of the opportunity to reapply for accreditation for a specified period of time in accordance with AACSB policies.
4. Suspension of the accreditation process for no longer than 12 months allowing the school time to address the substantive change before resuming the accreditation process pending PAC or IAC approval.

If AACSB is not notified under the provisions of this policy, AACSB reserves the right to remove a school from the accreditation process and deny access to re-enter the process for no less than 5 years.

### **Substantive Change Process for Institutions that Hold AACSB Business/Accounting Accreditation**

An institution that holds AACSB business/accounting accreditation and is involved in a substantive change event must notify in writing the Maintenance of Accreditation Committee and/or the Accounting Accreditation Committee ([MAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:MAC@aacsb.edu) and/or [AAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:AAC@aacsb.edu)) of the nature of the change. This written notification should be submitted no later than 90 days following the consummation of the event. Earlier notification is encouraged.

The written notification should provide the following information:

- A brief description of the substantive change event and an assessment of the continuing commitment of the institution to the business and/or accounting programs affected by the substantive change.
- The expected impact on the AACSB accredited business school and/or accounting program including changes in mission, students served, faculty resources, the portfolio of degree programs offered, and financial resources.
- The impact of the substantive change event on faculty management policies and procedures related to faculty planning, recruitment, development, and evaluation.
- The impact of the substantive change on the assurance of learning processes in the business school or accounting program.
- The revised organizational and administrative structure that emerges from the substantive change.

The MAC and/or AAC will review the report, and one of the following may occur;

- The business school or accounting program will be notified of any significant issues or concerns which must be addressed as part of the next scheduled maintenance of accreditation review.
- The next accreditation review may be accelerated. In such a case, the committee will notify the institution of the reporting requirements and revised visit schedule. The committee reserves the right to request a full self-evaluation report from the institution prepared on a standard-by-standard basis or on selected standards to determine the impact

of the substantive change event on the business school and/or accounting program and its ability to align with AACSB standards.

Failure to notify AACSB in accordance with the spirit and intent of this policy may result in immediate acceleration of an AACSB visit and review.

### **Public Statements Regarding AACSB Status**

Business schools or accounting programs experiencing a substantive change event will be notified as part of the AACSB review process of the exact language that may be used in public documents, press releases, websites, etc. in regard to their AACSB status following the substantive change event.

### **Appeals**

Institutions involved in the substantive change events outlined in this document may use appropriate AACSB appeal procedures when it disagrees with the decision of an accreditation committee and, if appropriate, the AACSB board of directors. Appeal procedures are outlined in the accreditation handbooks.

**Approved by the AACSB International Accreditation Coordinating Committee on 6  
January 2008.**

## **APPENDIX H: AACSB INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON TIME FRAME FOR RE-ENTERING THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOLLOWING A WITHDRAWAL, DENIAL, OR REVOCATION OF ACCREDITATION**

The following policy governs the timing for business schools and/or accounting programs to re-enter the AACSB accreditation process following a withdrawal from the pre-accreditation or initial accreditation process, denial of initial accreditation, a voluntary relinquishment of AACSB accreditation, or revocation of accreditation.

- Pre-accreditation Eligibility Application deemed premature by PAC (or AAC): Minimum of one year and PAC may advise that a longer period is needed.
- Voluntary withdrawal from the pre-accreditation process following approval of the Eligibility Application but prior to completion of an accreditation plan: Minimum of one year and PAC (or AAC) may advise that a longer period is needed.
- Voluntary withdrawal from the pre-accreditation process following approval of the accreditation plan by IAC (or AAC), but prior to approval to enter the initial accreditation process: Minimum of one year and maximum of 3 years as determined by IAC.
- Initial accreditation process at the self-evaluation stage with a voluntary withdrawal following a “no-visit” recommendation by the peer review team: Minimum of one year and a maximum of 3 years to be determined by IAC (or AAC) following a review of a response from the school on the key issues that led to the no-visit recommendation. A school may proceed with the original visit even if a “no-visit” recommendation is made by the peer review team.
- Withdrawal from the initial accreditation process after receipt of peer review team and Initial Accreditation Committee (or Accounting Accreditation Committee) recommendation to defer or deny accreditation prior to final action by the AACSB Board of Directors: Minimum of one year and a maximum of 3 years to be determined by IAC (or AAC).
- Denial of initial accreditation by the Board of Directors: minimum of 3 years.
- Voluntary relinquishment of accreditation: minimum of one year.
- Revocation of accreditation by the Board of Directors: minimum of 3 years.

**Approved by the AACSB Accreditation Coordinating Committee on 6 January 2008.**

# APPENDIX I: COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

## AACSB INTERNATIONAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

AACSB International is concerned with sustained quality and continual improvement of collegiate education for business administration and accounting. AACSB International will receive and review complaints filed by third parties (e.g., students, faculty members) who claim conduct by the member school contrary to AACSB International accreditation standards. Complaints should be submitted by in hard copy and via email to AACSB International in care of the appropriate committee:

- For Initial Accreditation: [iac@aacsb.edu](mailto:iac@aacsb.edu)
- For Maintenance of Accreditation: [mac@aacsb.edu](mailto:mac@aacsb.edu)
- For Accounting Accreditation: [aac@aacsb.edu](mailto:aac@aacsb.edu)

All complaints should (1) identify the specific accreditation standard(s) relevant to the complaint, (2) provide documentation that supports the complaint, (3) ***identify the complainant***, (4) ***provide permission to share the complaint with the member institution***, and (5) identify the relationship of the complainant to the member school. AACSB will acknowledge receipt of complaints within 30 days, but it will not respond to complaints that are not submitted in writing nor will it respond to anonymous complaints.

The Chief Accreditation Officer of AACSB International will ascertain whether the complaint satisfies these five requirements ***and in consultation with the chair of the appropriate accreditation committee determine if a response from the school is appropriate***. If the Chief Accreditation Officer determines that the complaint does not satisfy the five requirements, or the complaint does not fall within the purview of AACSB, the complainant will be notified. ***Should the Chief Accreditation Officer determine that the complaint does fall within the purview of AACSB and that a response from the school is appropriate, he/she*** will forward a copy of the complaint and supporting materials to the member school, ***requesting a written response***.

For schools engaged in the initial accreditation process ***and if the school is requested to respond to a complaint***, the member school will be asked to report on those standards in light of the issues raised in the complaint. ***The appropriate accreditation committee and subsequently***, the Peer Review Team will pay particular attention to those standards in the context of the evidence presented in the complaint, in the school's Self-Evaluation Report, and in the school's response to the complaint. The Peer Review Team will report on its findings regarding the complaint and the involved standards as a part of the Visit Report.

***If a member school is requested to respond to a complaint***, the school will be asked to report on those standards in light of the allegations of the complaint. ***The appropriate accreditation committee will review the complaint and the response from the school. If a school is scheduled for a maintenance review, the appropriate committee may ask the*** Peer Review Team to pay particular attention to those standards in the context of the evidence presented in the complaint and the school's response, and the team will make a report on its findings regarding the complaint and the involved standards.

If, on receipt of the complaint, the Chief Accreditation Officer and the chair of the appropriate accreditation committee believe the issue significantly jeopardizes ***the quality of*** students' educational experiences at an accredited institution, the relevant committee ***can*** proceed with an immediate investigation, rather than awaiting the next scheduled maintenance review.

Should the Chief Accreditation Officer and the appropriate accreditation committee determine that the school's response has satisfactorily addressed the complaint and is otherwise satisfied that no violation of the AACSB accreditation standards, policies or procedures has occurred, the matter will be considered closed. AACSB will notify the complainant of the results of the review within 30 days of the determination.

Approved January 2010

## APPENDIX J: APPEAL PROCEDURE

**An institution may appeal only the following negative decisions: (1) denial of initial Accreditation as a result of a decision by the AACSB Board of Directors, or (2) revocation of accredited status as a result of a decision by the AACSB Board of Directors. The accredited status of the institution shall remain unchanged pending the outcome of a timely filed appeal of a negative decision; however, the appeal procedure specified herein is the exclusive remedy for an institution that believes a negative decision was unwarranted.**

The procedures for an appeal of a negative decision are:

1. An institution's appeal must be submitted to the AACSB International President within thirty calendar (30) days from the date of the negative decision. The grounds for an appeal are limited to the following: (a) the negative decision was arbitrary, capricious or otherwise in disregard of AACSB accreditation standards; (b) the negative decision was arrived at in disregard of AACSB procedures; or (c) the negative decision is not supported by evidence in the record on which the decision of the AACSB Board of Directors was based.
2. In submitting its appeal, the institution must detail each of the grounds upon which it bases its appeal (“Grounds for Appeal”). The institution shall provide AACSB with the original and [ # ] copies of its Grounds for Appeal and attach thereto the documentation and information upon which it intends to rely in support of its Grounds for Appeal.
3. In submitting its Grounds for Appeal, the institution cannot rely on any information or documentation unless that information or documentation had been submitted to AACSB prior to the time of the AACSB Board of Directors’ negative decision, with the exception of additional financial information or documentation as noted below. Accordingly, in submitting its Grounds for Appeal, the institution must include a specific reference to where the information or documentation it is citing in its Grounds for Appeal can be found in the record that was before the AACSB Board of Directors at the time of the negative decision.

The sole exception to this requirement is dependent on the extent to which the basis for the negative decision was the institution’s failure to meet AACSB financial standards. The institution may provide financial information that was not part of the record before the AACSB Board of Directors at the time of the negative decision, if the institution can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Appeal Panel that the additional financial information it seeks to provide as part of its Grounds for Appeal was (a) unavailable at the time of the negative decision of the AACSB Board of Directors, and (b) bears materially on the financial deficiencies that were the basis for the determination that the institution failed to meet AACSB financial standards.

4. In submitting its Grounds for Appeal the institution shall pay an advance deposit toward the costs and expenses of AACSB in processing its appeal. Payment of this advance deposit is a condition precedent to filing a timely appeal.
5. The institution has the burden of proof with regard to its appeal.

6. Within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the institution's Grounds for Appeal, the AACSB board chair (or designee) shall provide the institution with a complete list of the members of the Accreditation Council and identify the three Accreditation Council member representatives on that list who are willing and qualified to serve on an Appeal Panel and possessing knowledge of the accreditation standards and processes applicable to the respective accounting or business programs which are the subject of the appeal. Within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of those names, the institution will remove two names from the list and notify the AACSB board chair (or designee) of its decision.
7. Concurrent with its notification of the two names it has removed, the institution shall provide AACSB with three names of Accreditation Council member representatives willing and qualified to serve on the Appeal Panel and possessing knowledge of the accreditation standards and processes applicable to the respective accounting or business program which is the subject of the appeal. Within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of those three names, AACSB shall notify the institution of the two names it has removed.
8. Within twenty-one (21) calendar days of confirmation of their joint appointment, the two members thus chosen shall select a third member of the Accreditation Council willing and qualified to serve on the Appeal Panel and possessing knowledge of the accreditation standards and processes applicable to the respective accounting or business programs which are the subject of the appeal.
9. The Appeal Panel shall not include any members of the peer review team, accreditation committees, or Board of Directors who participated in the process leading to the negative decision under appeal. Members of the Appeal Panel shall comply with the requirements and provisions of the AACSB Conflict of Interest Policy.
10. The Appeal Panel shall select one of its members to serve as Chair. The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall determine the date of the hearing and shall notify all parties at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance of the hearing. The hearing shall be an open proceeding unless the institution requests in writing that it be closed, which request must be made within seven (7) calendar days of notice of the hearing date. The hearing shall be occur within six (6) months of the negative decision and be held at the AACSB International Headquarters location or at such other location as AACSB and the institution may agree.
11. AACSB shall provide each member of the Appeal Panel with a copy of the Grounds for Appeal, a copy of the record under review, and subsequent correspondence to and from the institution. All information and documentation provided to the Appeal Panel by AACSB shall simultaneously be provided to the institution.
12. All costs and expenses incurred by AACSB in providing for the appeal, the hearing, expenses of the Appeal Panel, and all other expenses (exclusive of legal fees, if any) in connection with the appeal shall be borne by the institution, except where the Appeal Panel finds that the negative decision was arbitrary, capricious or otherwise in disregard of AACSB accreditation standards. Should the Appeal Panel find that the negative decision was arbitrary, capricious or otherwise in disregard of AACSB accreditation standards, AACSB shall bear fifty percent of all costs and expenses for the appeal.

These costs and expenses include the hearing costs, transcription costs, and travel costs of the Appeal Panel and of the staff and other representatives of AACSB at the hearing. AACSB will calculate and submit to the institution its estimate of those costs and expenses as soon after the Grounds for Appeal has been submitted as is practicable. Within twenty (20) calendar days of the date of that estimate, the institution shall advance to AACSB the full amount of those estimated costs and expenses. Should subsequent events cause AACSB to increase its estimate, AACSB has the right to request the institution to advance that additional amount within twenty (20) calendar days of the date of that revised estimate. Failure to advance the sums requested by AACSB in a timely manner shall be made known to the Appeal Panel, which shall have the right to treat the appeal as abandoned and issue a decision so stating, which decision shall be final and binding on the institution. As soon as practicable following the hearing, the expenses associated with the appeal will be calculated. The final costs associated with the appeal shall be deducted from the estimated deposit(s), and the balance will either be billed or refunded to the institution.

13. The hearing shall be transcribed before a court reporter and a transcript of the hearing shall be provided to the Appeal Panel, the institution and AACSB. The costs of these transcripts shall be borne by the institution.
14. The institution and AACSB shall have the right to appear before the Appeal Panel, to be represented by counsel, and to present opening statements, all within the limitations prescribed by the Chair of the Appeal Panel. The hearing, which customarily will not take more than two (2) hours to complete, shall proceed in the following manner:

The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall describe the standard of review the Appeal Panel will utilize in the conduct of the appeal and the procedures that will be followed.

The institution or its counsel shall then offer an opening statement summarizing the institution's grounds for the appeal.

AACSB or its counsel shall then offer an opening statement summarizing AACSB's position on the issues presented in the original negative action.

After the opening statements, the Appeal Panel may ask questions directed to the institution, AACSB or both related to the record on appeal or any of the issues raised by the institution or AACSB. Counsel may fully participate. AACSB and the institution may not address each other, call witnesses, or introduce new evidence<sup>5</sup>.

The institution or its counsel may then, but shall not be required to, offer a closing statement, following which the hearing will adjourn.

The institution, AACSB and members of the Appeal Panel are expected to adhere to the time limits set forth herein. Any changes in the schedule must be approved by the Appeal Panel.

---

<sup>5</sup> An institution may introduce new evidence under the circumstances and within the guidelines noted in sections #3 and #16.

15. In reviewing the negative decision on appeal, the Appeal Panel shall determine whether the institution has carried its burden of proof that, based on the information or documentation that was part of the record before the AACSB Board of Directors at the time of the negative decision, (a) the negative decision was arbitrary, capricious or otherwise in substantial disregard of AACSB accreditation standards; (b) the negative decision was arrived at in substantial disregard of AACSB procedures; or (c) the negative decision is not supported by substantial evidence in the record.
16. If and to the extent the basis for the negative decision was the institution's failure to meet AACSB financial standards, and the institution has submitted additional financial information, the Appeal Panel shall determine whether the institution has carried its burden of proof that the additional financial information the institution provided was (a) unavailable at the time of the negative decision, (b) bears materially on the financial deficiencies that were the basis for the determination that the institution failed to meet AACSB financial standards, and (c) the institution now meets those AACSB financial standards.
17. The Appeal Panel does not have the authority to grant initial accreditation or renew an institution's accreditation. The Appeal Panel must either uphold the negative decision or remand the negative decision. The Appeal Panel shall act by majority affirmative vote; a remand shall only be approved if at least two members of the Appeals Panel vote to remand. The committee shall take such action as it shall deem appropriate, consistent with AACSB rules and procedures, and shall refer such action to the AACSB Board of Directors, whose decision shall be final and not subject to further appeal.
18. A remand shall result in the negative decision being vacated and the matter of the grant of initial accreditation or revocation of accreditation, as applicable, returned to the appropriate accreditation committee, which shall reconsider the denial of initial accreditation or withdrawal of accreditation, as applicable, taking into account such recommendations as were made by the Appeal Panel.
19. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be in writing and shall include a statement of the grounds for the decision and any recommendations respecting consideration on remand. The written decision shall be submitted to the institution and AACSB within thirty (30) calendar days of the hearing
20. The decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final. No requests for reconsideration by the Appeal Panel are permitted or shall be considered.
21. An institution that appeals a negative decision and that negative decision is upheld by the Appeal Panel or upon remand may not re-enter the AACSB accreditation process for a minimum of three years following the decision of the Appeal Panel or the remand, as applicable. Should the institution withdraw from or abandon the appeal process after the filing of Grounds for Appeal at any time,

the initial action shall stand and the three year exclusion period shall apply from the date of withdrawal or the decision of the Appeal Panel determining that the institution has abandoned its appeal.

Draft: Jan 8, 2009  
(Revised 3/04/09)  
(Revised January 2010)