



Global StandardsTM for Business Education

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PREAMBLE

Purpose and Vision of the Global Standards and Relationship to AACSB Accreditation

Business education plays a vital role in shaping leaders, organizations, and societies. AACSB's Global Standards for Business Education articulate a shared vision for excellence that transcends geography, culture, and institutional type. They define what high-quality business education looks like in a dynamic world—one that demands innovation, ethical judgment, global perspective, and meaningful impact.

The purpose of the standards is to support schools in preparing learners for a rapidly evolving environment, advancing knowledge through intellectual contributions, and engaging with business and society to create positive change. The standards express the values that underpin this vision: integrity, rigor, relevance, innovation, learner-centeredness, and a commitment to improving the world through business education.

AACSB accreditation is grounded in these global standards. Accreditation affirms that a school has aligned its mission, strategy, operations, and outcomes with the expectations of high-quality business education. The accreditation process recognizes that excellence can be demonstrated through many pathways and honors the diverse contexts in which schools operate around the world. It supports continuous improvement by encouraging innovation, strategic clarity, and evidence of positive impact.

The Global Standards for Business Education provides a framework that is both aspirational and practical. It establishes a global benchmark for quality while enabling schools to express their distinctiveness and mission-driven commitments. Through this integrated system, AACSB advances a worldwide community dedicated to developing principled, future-ready leaders and strengthening the role of business education as a force for societal good.

With the introduction of the AACSB Global Standards for Business Education, AACSB expands its role from accreditor to global standard setter. This evolution affirms AACSB's commitment to advancing excellence and impact in business education worldwide. By establishing a clear, adaptable, and globally respected framework, AACSB seeks to strengthen the ecosystem of business education—ensuring that schools everywhere have access to the same principles of quality, relevance, and continuous improvement that have guided AACSB-accredited institutions for more than a century.

Ultimately, this document serves two interrelated functions:

1. To present the Global Standards for Business Education, applicable to all schools seeking to enhance quality improvement, relevance, and societal impact; and
2. To define AACSB accreditation, which describes the evidence, processes, and outcomes required to achieve and maintain AACSB accreditation.

Thus, the Global Standards provide the basis for one integrated system—one that not only recognizes excellence but also inspires advancement across all of business education.



ONE SET OF STANDARDS, TWO PURPOSES



GLOBAL STANDARDS FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION

Introduction to the Global Standards

Global Standards for Business Education define a shared framework of quality and continuous improvement for business schools around the world. They articulate what constitutes excellence in business education and establish a common language for evaluating, benchmarking, and advancing quality and impact globally.

These standards are designed to provide value to all business schools, not only those that hold AACSB accreditation. They represent a global quality imprimatur, a set of expectations that any business school, regardless of geography, mission, or size, can use to guide strategic development, enhance performance, and demonstrate its commitment to excellence. In this way, the Global Standards serve as both a beacon and a tool, a beacon for global educational quality and a practical instrument for institutional improvement.

The Global Standards are foundational: they are the bedrock on which AACSB accreditation is built. Standards can exist independently of accreditation, but accreditation cannot exist without standards. The Global Standards define the essential attributes of high-quality business education; accreditation is the process through which an external body evaluates whether an institution meets or exceeds those standards.

Thus, while the Global Standards offer a framework that can be applied by all business schools for quality improvement and strategic advancement, AACSB accreditation represents the formal recognition that a school has achieved these standards in both spirit and practice.

Schools that meet all of the Global Standards are recognized as having reached the level of quality expected of AACSB-accredited institutions. Yet, even schools not pursuing accreditation benefit from using the Global Standards as a structured pathway for self-assessment, goal setting, and continuous improvement. They enable schools to align their missions with globally recognized benchmarks while adapting their strategies to local and cultural contexts, a principle that underpins AACSB's commitment to both global consistency and local relevance.

Global Standards with Local Application

Because AACSB is a global organization with accredited institutions throughout the world, AACSB recognizes that the Global Standards must be viewed through an appropriate cultural and contextual lens. AACSB recognizes and respects the unique missions, values, and strategic priorities of institutions, wherever they are located. Accordingly, schools may tailor

their approaches to reflect their regional, cultural, and institutional contexts, provided these approaches align with the intent and spirit of the standards.

Peer review teams, assembled for accreditation purposes, in turn, are expected to exercise discernment, respect institutional mission, and appreciate differing perspectives when evaluating how schools interpret and apply the standards in their local context. The goal of the accreditation review process is not uniformity, but the thoughtful application of global principles in ways that are meaningful and effective within each institution's environment.

While the Global Standards support quality business education for all business schools, and accreditation represents the process of alignment with all the global standards, AACSB additionally provides a supplemental resource called the "Interpretive Guidance" as a companion to application of the Global Standards to the process of accreditation. The Interpretive Guidance is considered authoritative and is available only to AACSB members. AACSB's regional advisory councils provide additional guidance through examples highlighting regional application of the Global Standards in the context of accreditation.



Interpretive Guidance

Authoritative guidelines on accreditation processes and requirements.

Regional Interpretive Guidance

Examples from business schools and businesses.

**North
American
Advisory
Council**

**Latin
American
Advisory
Council**

**European
Advisory
Council**

**Middle East and
Africa Advisory
Council**

**Asia Pacific
Advisory
Council**

Structure of the Global Standards

Each of the standards consists of three sections: (1) Standards, (2) Basis for Judgment, and (3) Suggested Documentation.

Standards

The standards identify the essential core component of each topical area. All business schools are encouraged and accredited business schools are expected to meet the elements of the standards unless deviations are justified and acceptable to the accreditation peer review team, the mentor, and subsequent accreditation committees. Each standard is shown in bold font to identify it as language that is the responsibility of the AACSB Accreditation Council. This means the standards themselves cannot be changed without a majority vote of the Accreditation Council.

Basis for Judgment

This section is intended as guidance to accreditation peer review teams as to which factors they should collectively consider in determining whether a school is in alignment with the spirit of any given standard. Schools may use the Basis for Judgment as guidance as they strive to achieve standards compliance and to learn how they will be evaluated by accreditation peer review teams and accreditation committees. The Basis for Judgment language may be updated annually as needed by the Global Standards Committee (GSC).

Suggested Documentation

This section of each standard is written for the school's benefit to indicate what evidence an accreditation peer review team may seek to assess whether the school is aligned with the standard. As with the Basis for Judgment, Suggested Documentation can help guide compliance with the standard. Note that schools in the initial accreditation process are expected to have available upon request by the accreditation peer review team all documentation listed in this section for each standard, while accredited schools generally are not expected to provide such detail during continuous improvement reviews. This practice is consistent with AACSB's philosophy that subsequent reviews of accredited schools are not a standard-by-standard review with respect to the amount of evidence provided at each continuous improvement review visit.

Although continuous improvement reviews are not a standard-by-standard review, the accreditation peer review team will still expect schools to remain in alignment with the standards and the guiding principles and expectations for accredited schools that accompany the standards. A more detailed review of alignment with specific standard(s) may occur in the continuous improvement review process when quality concerns are identified. The school template provided by AACSB, along with school conversations with the accreditation peer review team collectively guide the accredited school on what specific evidence the accreditation peer review team is interested in seeing; however, unless otherwise noted, tables included in standards are expected to be provided by all schools seeking accreditation. The

Suggested Documentation language may be updated annually as needed by the Global Standards Committee (GSC).

Standard-Setting Governance

The association regularly reviews its Global Standards and processes for opportunities to improve relevancy, maintain currency, and increase value, according to the AACSB Global Standard-Setting Framework. This edition of the standards was adopted by the AACSB Accreditation Council in April 2026.

As per the above-referenced framework, the Global Standards undergo an overall refresh periodically (normally every six years) through the work of the Global Standards Committee, an affirmative vote of the AACSB Board of Directors, and a final vote of the AACSB Accreditation Council. The AACSB Interpretive Guidance (which exists separately from the standards) is updated annually by the AACSB Global Accreditation Committee. Note that, with respect to the updating of these two documents, the official AACSB Global Standards (shown in bold type beginning within the section entitled “Standards for Business Accreditation”) are the responsibility of the Accreditation Council; however, all other components residing within the Global Standards for Business Education, including the Guiding Principles, Basis for Judgment, Suggested Documentation, as well as the entire separate Interpretive Guidance document, may be updated as needed, subject to the approval of the Global Accreditation Committee, which collectively represents the Accreditation Council.

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THE GLOBAL STANDARDS

Overview of the Global Standards

The Global Standards consist of nine standards divided into three sections: (1) Strategic Management and Innovation, (2) Learner Success and Engagement, and (3) Pathways to Impact. Each section contains standards that, when met, lead a school to make a positive individual impact. The combined impact across all schools of business and AACSB-accredited schools in particular moves AACSB toward realizing its vision of achieving positive societal impact through business schools and its belief that business education is a force for good in society.



Strategic Management	Learner Success	Pathways to Impact
Standard 1 Standard 2 Standard 3	Standard 4 Standard 5 Standard 6	Standard 7 Standard 8 Standard 9

Engagement • Innovation • Impact

AACSB believes that a wide range of missions can be consistent with high quality, positive impact, and innovation. Such success is achieved when schools are clear about their priorities and when their mission, strategies, and expected outcomes are internally aligned.

The standards reflect the dynamic context of business schools. These standards require the periodic, systematic review and possible revision of a school's mission, as well as the engagement of appropriate stakeholders in developing and revising the school's strategic plan. Quality business schools have legacies of achievement, improvement, and impact. They implement forward-looking strategies to further their success, sustain their missions, and make an impact in the future. They are innovative both in delivery of instruction and in strong connections to the practice of business. Central to the dynamic environment of business

schools are faculty, professional staff, physical resources, and financial strategies that support change and innovation.

Sound financial models and strategies are essential for operational sustainability, improvement, and innovation in a business school. Sustaining quality business education and impactful research requires careful financial planning and an effective financial model. Schools cannot implement actions related to continuous improvement and innovation without sufficient resources. In addition, schools cannot make effective strategic decisions without a clear understanding of the financial implications. Schools must demonstrate both financial vitality based on available resources as well as the resources necessary to achieve their top strategic goals.

Faculty and professional staff are also a crucial resource for the school. In identifying faculty resources, a school should focus on the participation and work of faculty members. Faculty contractual relationships, title, tenure status, full-time or part-time status, etc., can help to explain and document the work of faculty, but these factors are not perfectly correlated with participation or with the most critical variables in assessing faculty sufficiency, deployment, and qualifications. What is most important is that the production and maintenance of faculty's intellectual capital brings currency, rigor, and relevance to a business school's programs and supports its mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. Faculty should also participate meaningfully in ways that connect academia and the practice of business. In addition, the school must ensure that faculty and professional staff members are sufficient to support research outcomes and other mission-related activities, and that policies, procedures, and feedback mechanisms exist to provide evidence that all participants in these activities produce outcomes of quality and embrace continuous improvement. Where there are problems, evidence of corrective action is essential.

In business schools of the future, we expect a proliferation both in the type of consumers of higher education and in the learning models and technology that will facilitate and support learning. The Standards envision a wide variety of learners of all ages, participating in the educational experience through a number of modalities of learning as well as locations. Some learners will seek degree credentials, while others will seek microlearning credentials. Lifelong learning will become the norm, and we must consider how quality is assured in courses or modules delivered by all business schools and AACSB-accredited schools in particular. The standards are designed to be flexible enough to accommodate multiple types of learners, pedagogies, instructional models, and collaborative partnerships, with a continued focus on high-quality outcomes.

The currency and relevancy of curriculum will focus on competencies and what learners will be expected to be able to demonstrate upon completion of their program of study. Digital literacy will be ever important, and all business schools are urged, and AACSB-accredited schools are expected, to have processes in place to ensure that both learners and faculty are competent with current and emerging technologies.

These standards also recognize that, with the advent of different program instructional models, certain responsibilities once managed exclusively by those traditionally considered “faculty” may now be shared or managed by others. In other words, developing curricula, creating instructional materials, delivering classroom lectures, tutoring small groups of learners, and grading papers, etc., may be conducted by traditional faculty, by nontraditional faculty, or by a team of individuals.

Regardless of the blend of faculty and other key members of the business school’s team, the critical issue is ensuring quality outcomes. Therefore, schools under accreditation review must make the case that their division of labor across faculty and professional staff, as well as their supporting policies, procedures, and infrastructure, deliver high-quality learning outcomes in the context of the teaching and learning models they employ.

Finally, the standards focus on how business schools create meaningful impact through teaching, scholarship, and engagement. Together, these elements represent the many pathways through which schools shape learners, contribute new knowledge, and address societal needs.

A core expectation is that teaching does more than convey content. Teaching should also measurably enhance learner success and prepare graduates for a complex, technology-enabled global environment. Schools demonstrate a commitment to high-quality teaching through clear expectations for instructional excellence, evidence of ongoing improvement, and approaches that foster deep, applied learning across all modalities of instructional delivery.

Scholarship is another essential pathway to impact. AACSB values rigorous and responsible research in its many forms, basic, applied, pedagogical, and emerging types of intellectual work. Thought leadership is expressed not only through the production of intellectual contributions, but also through the influence these contributions have on practice, policy, education, and society. The emphasis is on outcomes rather than outputs: how the school’s scholarly activity advances understanding, improves organizations, or contributes to solving real-world challenges.

Schools demonstrate their broader contribution to society by showing how they use their expertise to address societal needs through engagement, partnerships, and initiatives aligned with their mission. Recognizing that schools vary in maturity and approach, the standards allow flexibility in how schools identify and evolve their focus areas over time. Evidence of impact provided for accreditation consideration may take many forms, from measurable results to compelling narratives or testimonials that illustrate how lives, communities, and organizations are improved through the school’s efforts.

Collectively, these nine standards and guiding principles serve as a beacon to quality assurance and quality improvement for business education, reinforcing AACSB’s mission to elevate the quality and impact of business schools globally.

Chapter 1: Strategic Management

This section of the standards provides a cohesive framework for how a school defines its direction, aligns its operations, and sustains the capacity necessary to fulfill its mission. Strategic planning, resource stewardship, and faculty investment are presented not as administrative functions, but as interconnected pillars that support quality, innovation, and long-term effectiveness. Each standard highlights one essential element while reinforcing their integration:

- **Standard 1: Strategic Planning** – Schools should articulate their mission, identifies priorities, and engages stakeholders in a dynamic planning process that guides decision-making and continuous improvement.
- **Standard 2: Physical, Digital, and Financial Resources** – Schools should ensure their facilities, technology infrastructure, and financial models are sufficient, stable, and aligned with their strategic direction and programmatic needs.
- **Standard 3: Faculty and Professional Staff Resources** – Schools should recruit, develop, and support a qualified and engaged workforce that delivers high-quality teaching, impactful scholarship, and mission-aligned engagement.

Collectively, these three standards establish the strategic foundation upon which all other aspects of quality business education depend. By aligning vision, resources, and people, schools build the capacity to innovate, adapt, and achieve meaningful impact across their communities and the broader landscape of business education.

STANDARD 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 1.1 The school maintains a well-documented strategic plan, including goals, strategic initiatives, measures of success and responsible parties to ensure high quality business education is maintained. The plan is developed through a robust and collaborative planning process involving key stakeholder input, which informs the school on resource allocation priorities, including maintenance of sufficient high-quality faculty. The school's strategic plan must be independent of the university's strategic plan, but also consonant with the university's stated strategic direction.**
- 1.2 The strategic plan articulates a clear and focused mission for the school that contains distinguishing characteristics of the school's essential identity, including the levels of degrees offered and populations intended to serve and the types of intellectual contributions it intends to produce to make a positive impact on academia, practice, or policy. As the school carries out its mission, it embraces innovation as a key element of continuous improvement and central to its mission.**
- 1.3 The strategic plan identifies how the school intends to make a positive impact on society through its teaching, its production of intellectual contributions, and its external engagement activities consistent with Standard 9.**
- 1.4 The school regularly monitors its progress against its planned strategies and expected outcomes and communicates its progress to key stakeholders. Ongoing assessment and refinement of the plan is regularly conducted. As part of monitoring, the school conducts formal risk analysis and has plans to mitigate identified major risks that may impair the school's ability to maintain high-quality business education.**

Strategic planning sets the direction for how the school pursues its mission, allocates resources, and sustains high-quality business education. A clear, focused plan defines the school's identity, the learners and communities it serves, and the priorities that distinguish its role within business education. Developed through a collaborative process, the plan aligns with, but remains independent from, the broader institution's strategy.

The plan guides decisions across programs, people, and investments; identifies the intellectual contributions the school seeks to produce; embeds innovation; and articulates how the school intends to make a positive societal impact. Regular monitoring, communication of progress, and ongoing risk analysis ensure accountability and adaptability. This foundation sets the stage for the expectations that follow.

Basis for Judgment

1.1 Well-documented Strategic Plan

- Strategic plans are for a defined period of time and may follow any format or structure; however, they should include essential elements common to all effective strategic plans (e.g., mission, goals, strategies/initiatives, expected outcomes, measures of success, and resource implications). For accreditation purposes, the period covered by the strategic plan does not have to coincide with the accreditation cycle. Strategic plans are developed and refined through engagement with key internal and external stakeholders.
- Strategic plans demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement through regular review and revision and through key stakeholder input.
- Strategic plans identify strategies for maintenance of high-quality learner experiences, including current and relevant curriculum and strategies for recruitment and retention of qualified faculty.
- For schools seeking accreditation, strategic plans must be made available to peer review teams. Schools should demonstrate that their strategic plans inform strategic decision making, resource allocation, performance assessment and include measures of success that effect discernable change.
- Strategic plans define the communities and learners that schools intend to serve, including the level of degree programs they offer. Schools also should identify non-degree programs and corresponding communities they intend to serve.
- Strategic plans clearly identify the type of intellectual contributions they expect faculty to produce to influence business education and to connect with the practice of business, consistent with their stated missions.
- Strategic plans identify the strategies through which schools intend to provide thought leadership within intellectual contributions.
- Strategic plans identify how schools support innovation in thought and in action. Innovation is a key element for accreditation peer review inspection.

1.2 Mission and Innovation

- School missions identify attributes, focus areas, and priorities that indicate how schools position themselves among the community of business schools. Missions inform strategic plans and should be reviewed and updated periodically in alignment with each school's normal planning cycle. Missions are articulated as part of strategic plans.

1.3 Strategic Impact

- Strategic plans identify focus area(s) and articulate how schools intend to make a positive impact on society through their teaching, production of intellectual contributions, and internal and/or external engagement activities, consistent with Standard 9.

1.4 Monitoring of the Strategic Plan

- Schools should be transparent in the conveyance of strategic plans to both internal and external key stakeholders and regularly report on progress toward achieving their missions, strategies, and expected outcomes.
- Schools should maintain ongoing risk analyses, identifying potential risks that could significantly impair their ability to fulfill their missions, as well as contingency plans for mitigating these risks. Risk analyses should be reviewed on a routine cycle and adjusted as needed to account for new and ongoing risks.
- Strategic plans should include measures of success to inform schools whether they are progressing against stated strategic initiatives.
- Schools should provide evidence of how their strategic plan is regularly reviewed and updated.

Suggested Documentation

1.1 Well-documented Strategic Plan

- Include a clear and focused mission statement or sets of statements that describes the mission, along with goals, strategies/initiatives, expected outcomes, measures of success, and resource implications for the period covered by the plan.
- Describe processes for creating and revising the strategic plan, including a description of how internal and external key stakeholders both inform the plan and are kept abreast of progress toward meeting plan goals.
- Include in the plan strategies for promoting a high-quality learner experience and curriculum currency and relevancy.
- Include in the plan a discussion of the faculty management model, including recruitment, retention, and development of qualified faculty.
- Describe how strategic plans and missions relate to and support the strategic plan and mission of any larger organization of which they are a part.
- Schools should provide current strategic plans for business units under review, which encompass strategies and expected outcomes to be pursued by the school consistent with the mission. Schools should be prepared to describe how their strategic plans support their university's broader strategic plan.
- Strategic planning cycles do not need to align with accreditation cycles. It is common for institutions to operate on different timelines for these processes. However, if a school is nearing the end of its current strategic planning cycle during the accreditation self-study year, peer review teams will expect to see evidence that planning for the next strategic cycle is underway.

1.2 Mission and Innovation

- Ensure strategic plans define the communities and learners the school intends to serve, including the level of degree programs the school offers.
- Ensure strategic plans clearly identify the types of intellectual contributions (e.g., basic, applied, or teaching and learning) and priorities of intellectual contributions the school intends to produce consistent with its mission.
- Schools should describe the focused nature of the mission for the school's stakeholders, relative to learners, employers, and other key stakeholders.
- Schools should describe how the school's strategic plan encourages and supports innovation across all school activities, including faculty and staff hiring plans, curricular and co-curricular content and activities, interdisciplinary efforts, and technologies employed in faculty research, teaching and taught within the curriculum.

1.3 Strategic Impact

- Include within strategic plans how schools will allocate human and financial capital to support the school's aspiration to make a positive contribution to society.
- Identify chosen area(s) of focus for societal impact and incorporate broad strategies and measures of success within the strategic plan to demonstrate the impact of these activities.
- Include examples of communications to internal and external stakeholders that highlight societal impact objectives and achievements.
- Schools should provide evidence demonstrating alignment between the school's mission and the expectations related to societal impact relative to Standard 9, Expectations of Societal Impact.
- Schools should provide descriptions of goals, initiatives, or metrics that illustrate how the school intends to achieve positive societal impact through teaching, intellectual contributions, and engagement.

1.4 Monitoring of the Strategic Plan

- Summarize and document annual progress toward meeting goals and measures of success of the strategic plan.
- Conduct periodic risk assessments to identify and evaluate factors that could affect a school's ability to achieve its mission, strategic objectives, and sustain accreditation. Assessments should be proportionate to school size, scope, and complexity and should include consideration of:
 - Strategic risks, such as changes in leadership, mission, or external environment.
 - Financial risks, including sustainability of funding sources and budgetary dependencies.
 - Operational risks, such as enrollment volatility, staffing capacity, and infrastructure reliability.

- Compliance and reputational risks, including adherence to institutional, governmental, and accreditation requirements.
- Emerging risks, such as technological disruption, cybersecurity, and global events that may impact operations.
- Schools should maintain documentation of risk assessment processes, and demonstrate that findings are incorporated into strategic and operational planning and that assessments are updated regularly or when significant changes occur.
- Schools should identify key internal and external stakeholders and describe how the strategic plan is shared with such stakeholders and how their input has been incorporated into the plan.

STANDARD 2: PHYSICAL, DIGITAL, AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The school manages its (2.1) physical, (2.2) digital, and (2.3) financial resources to sustain the school on an ongoing basis and to promote a high-quality environment that fosters success of all participants in support of the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

A business school's ability to achieve its mission depends on the strength and sustainability of its physical, digital, and financial resources. Together, they form the foundation for high-quality teaching, research, and engagement, enabling the school to adapt, innovate, and thrive in a rapidly changing environment.

AACSB recognizes that schools today operate within a dynamic ecosystem that demands agility in managing facilities, technology, and funding models. Modern learning environments are physical and digital—designed to foster collaboration, inclusion, and connection across geographies and modalities. Digital infrastructure must empower faculty, learners, and staff with the tools, data, and technologies needed for success. Financial models should be forward-looking and diversified, supporting strategic priorities and long-term sustainability. For accreditation purposes, schools are expected to demonstrate that their resources are sufficient, resilient, and intentionally aligned to their mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

Basis for Judgment

2.1 Physical Resources

- Schools should have learning spaces and environments that facilitate the achievement of their educational mission and maintain plans for updating space as appropriate over time.

2.2 Digital Resources

- Schools should provide technology infrastructure to support instructional activities for all modalities.
- Faculty should have access to sufficient current and emerging technologies for both teaching and research purposes consistent with their mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. Such access may be realized through partnerships with other schools or other third parties.
- Professional staff should receive adequate training and technology infrastructure for advising, career placement, and other mission-specific activities.

2.3 Financial Resources

- Strategic plans should identify realistic financial strategies, which provide, sustain, and continuously improve all aspects of quality business education consistent with the school's mission.
- Schools should identify realistic sources of financial resources for current and planned activities and carefully analyze costs and potential resources for initiatives associated with their missions and action items.
- Schools should have financial plans that ensure sufficient levels of faculty and professional staff and manage these resources to ensure effective recruiting, retaining, and development. Financial plans also should address necessary resources to sustain high-quality outcomes for learner support resources.

Suggested Documentation

2.1 Physical Resources

- For accreditation purposes, schools must describe plans for classroom instructional spaces, improvements that have been made to spaces and environments, and plans for future space enhancements and innovations.

2.2 Digital Resources

- Describe the technology infrastructure the school maintains to support all mission-centric activities of the school for all modalities of instructional delivery, including technology used in both face-to-face delivery and digital learning.
- Describe current and emerging technologies available and accessible to faculty to fulfill their teaching and research responsibilities.
- Describe training available and accessible to professional staff to learn and implement new technologies to support learner success.

2.3 Financial Resources

- Maintain high quality outcomes through strategic investments and planned strategic initiatives and vision. Such efforts should be grounded in reasonable available resources.
- Document financial management plans for recruiting, retaining, and developing appropriately qualified faculty and professional staff. Include documentation describing hiring practices, development, and evaluation systems for faculty to ensure high-quality outcomes relative to mission and strategies.
- Document financial plans to sustain high-quality outcomes for learner support resources.
- Financial outlooks are especially important to the accreditation peer review process. Schools should provide a summary of recent financial performance and the financial outlook for the next accreditation cycle. Highlight successes the school has had with obtaining funding, including grants, private funds, or alternative revenue streams that

have been generated through innovative activities and partnerships, or other similar successes that enhance the financial vitality of the school.

- Schools should describe the major resource commitments or development projects that have been undertaken and completed since the last accreditation review.
- Schools should complete Table 2-1 to describe the school's major planned strategic initiatives consistent with their mission and current strategic plans and expected sources of funds for those initiatives. This table should be in sync with the timing and cycle of the current strategic plan.

Table 2-1
Strategic Initiatives and Associated Expected Source of Funds
Aligned with Planning Cycle of Current Strategic Plan

Strategic Initiatives	Time Period for this Strategic Initiative	Total Estimated Investment	Expected Source of Funds (if known)

STANDARD 3: FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

3.1 Schools maintain and strategically deploy sufficient participating and supporting faculty who collectively demonstrate significant academic and professional engagement that, in turn, supports high-quality outcomes consistent with school missions.

3.2 Faculty are qualified through initial academic or professional preparation and sustain currency and relevancy appropriate to their classification, as follows: Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Academic (IA). Otherwise, faculty members are classified as Additional Faculty (A).

3.3 Faculty foster understanding of a range of perspectives within a respectful and open learning environment and demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional growth, as supported by schools.

3.4 Sufficient professional staff are available to ensure high-quality support for faculty and learners as appropriate.

3.5 Schools have well-documented and well-communicated processes to manage, develop, and support faculty and professional staff over the progression of their careers that are consistent with school missions, strategies, and expected outcomes.

AACSB recognizes multiple, mission-aligned pathways through which faculty contribute. High-quality business education depends on a faculty and professional staff who are well-qualified, current in their fields, and strategically deployed to advance school missions. Faculty contribute through multiple pathways—scholarly, applied, or instructional—and their ongoing engagement ensures relevance, rigor, and strong learner outcomes. Professional staff play a vital role in supporting the academic environment and enabling faculty and learners to thrive.

This standard emphasizes the importance of clear qualification criteria, sustained currency, and intentional alignment between faculty deployment and strategic priorities. It also underscores the need for well-documented processes that support faculty and staff development across all career stages, ensuring the capacity to deliver high-quality teaching, intellectual contributions, and learner support.

Basis for Judgment

3.1 Faculty Sufficiency

- Schools adopt and apply criteria for documenting faculty members as "participating" or "supporting" that are consistent with missions. Each school should adapt this guidance to its particular situation and mission by developing and implementing criteria that indicate how the school is meeting the spirit and intent of the standard. The criteria should be periodically reviewed and reflect a focus on continuous improvement. For schools seeking accreditation, the criteria should address the activities that are required to attain participating and supporting status and the depth and breadth of activities expected within a typical accreditation cycle to maintain participating and supporting status.
- Normally, Participating faculty members will deliver at least 75 percent of a school's teaching globally (i.e., across the entire accredited unit); participating faculty members will deliver at least 60 percent of the teaching within each discipline, regardless of whether the school has a degree, major, concentration, etc., in the discipline. Additionally, while participating faculty ratios are expected to be met by the discipline, they are not intended to be applied to degree programs, locations, and modalities. Instead, accreditation peer review teams would normally expect an appropriate blend of participating and supporting faculty to be deployed across these areas.
- Disciplines are defined by the school in the context of their mission. Normally, the disciplines should align with the degree programs and/or majors offered by the school. However, not every degree program must have an identified discipline.
- For schools seeking accreditation, instructional models such as mass lectures supported by teaching assistants, faculty not in residence but who may travel periodically to the school to deliver a particular program such as a DBA program, faculty shared across institutions, visiting faculty, and online program managers who deliver digital instruction must be clearly identified and documented as to how this method of instructional delivery leads to high-quality learning outcomes and high learner satisfaction.
- In cases where a substantial proportion of a business school's faculty resources hold primary faculty appointments with other institutions, schools should provide documentation of how this faculty model supports mission achievement, overall high quality, and continuous improvement, and how this model is consistent with the spirit and intent of this standard. In particular, the school must show that the faculty model is consistent with achieving the research expectations of the school.

3.2 Faculty Qualifications

- Faculty members can be Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Academic (IA). Faculty members should be assigned one of these designations based on the school's criteria and sustained engagement

activities that support currency and relevancy in their teaching field.¹ For schools seeking accreditation, faculty whose qualifications do not meet the criteria established by the school for SA, PA, SP, or IA status will be classified as “Additional” Faculty. Figure 1 provides a side-by-side comparison including various dimensions of faculty qualifications for ease of discernment among the four categories.

- Faculty maintain disciplinary and pedagogical currency appropriate to their teaching assignments, including an appropriate level of facility with instructional technology consistent with Standard 7
- Within SA, PA, SP and IA criteria, schools should articulate and apply clear expectations for teaching quality across all faculty qualification categories. See Figure 1 for initial qualifications and maintenance of qualifications, along with expectations for academic and professional engagement for each category. Figure 1 provides both a vertical and horizontal comparison of faculty qualifications by category of faculty. For schools seeking accreditation, Figure 1 should be considered as an integral part of the Basis for Judgment for faculty qualifications.

¹ Refer to the Interpretive Guidance for Standard 3 for information on special circumstances in which a faculty member may be classified differently across more than one discipline.

Figure 1
Criteria Across Dimensions by Faculty Qualification Category

Dimension	Scholarly Academic (SA)	Practice Academic (PA)	Scholarly Practitioner (SP)	Instructional Academic (IA)
Initial Qualifications	<p>Normally hold a terminal degree closely related to their teaching discipline (PhD, DBA, FPM, LLM, JD). Other terminal degrees are permitted if closely aligned and paired with sustained scholarly activity. Rare exception: individuals without terminal degrees may qualify if demonstrating scholarly engagement equivalent to terminally qualified faculty (normally ≤10% of faculty). ABDs qualify as SA for three years from ABD start; new terminal degree holders maintain SA for six years if progressing against the school's research expectations.</p> <p>Demonstrated teaching effectiveness or deep preparedness in a doctoral program or other training or experiences sufficient to be effective in instructional responsibilities where applicable.</p>	<p>Normally hold a master's degree or higher in a relevant field and bring deep, extensive, and sustained professional experience, typically at a senior or executive level. Includes two PA pathways: (1) terminally qualified academics moving into industry or practice-focused roles; (2) distinguished leaders from industry, government, or nonprofit sectors entering academia.</p> <p>Demonstrated teaching effectiveness or deep preparedness in a doctoral program or other training or experiences sufficient to be effective in instructional responsibilities where applicable.</p>	<p>Normally hold a master's degree or higher in a relevant field and bring substantive professional experience demonstrating applied disciplinary expertise. Demonstrate skills needed to produce applied or pedagogical intellectual contributions.</p> <p>Demonstrated teaching effectiveness or deep preparedness in a doctoral program or other training or experiences sufficient to be effective in instructional responsibilities where applicable.</p>	<p>Normally hold a master's degree or higher in a relevant field and bring substantive professional experience demonstrating applied disciplinary expertise.</p> <p>Demonstrated teaching effectiveness or deep preparedness in a doctoral program or other training or experiences sufficient to be effective in instructional responsibilities where applicable.</p>

Maintenance of Status	<p>Maintain SA status through sustained scholarly engagement that advances knowledge creation and dissemination and anchors the school's academic rigor. Must produce peer-reviewed journal articles consistent with the school's criteria, which may include basic, applied, or pedagogical research. Additional evidence of sustained currency may include research presentations, editorial or review service, competitive research grants, academic leadership, and active participation in scholarly conferences. SA faculty are expected to integrate scholarship into teaching, mentor junior faculty and research students, and contribute to the school's intellectual community and scholarly reputation.</p> <p>Demonstrate teaching effectiveness as defined by school criteria and in alignment with Standard 7</p>	<p>Maintain PA status through sustained, high-level professional engagement that builds and strengthens bridges between industry and academia. PA faculty are not required by AACSB standards to produce intellectual contributions but may have such an expectation established by school criteria. Expected activities include leadership in professional practice, consulting or applied research, executive education, board or advisory roles, entrepreneurship, and industry thought leadership</p> <p>Demonstrate teaching effectiveness as defined by school criteria and in alignment with Standard 7</p>	<p>Maintain SP status through sustained and balanced engagement across scholarly and professional domains, including the production of applied or pedagogical intellectual contributions such as peer-reviewed or peer-evaluated publications, teaching cases, industry reports, or white papers. Additional activities may include applied research projects, selective consulting, and active participation in academic and professional societies. SP faculty are expected to connect theory and practice in curriculum design and delivery, mentor students in applied learning experiences, and demonstrate continued academic and professional currency.</p> <p>Demonstrate teaching effectiveness as defined by school criteria and in alignment with Standard 7</p>	<p>Maintain IA status through sustained pedagogical and disciplinary engagement that supports high-quality instruction and learner success. IA faculty are not expected to produce scholarly publications as a condition of maintaining status. Expected activities include ongoing professional development in pedagogy, curriculum design or redesign, instructional innovation, assessment of learning outcomes, certification or licensure maintenance where applicable, and engagement with disciplinary or professional communities.</p> <p>Demonstrate teaching effectiveness as defined by school criteria and in alignment with Standard 7</p>
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Academic, Industry and Professional Engagement Expectations	<p>SA faculty are expected to engage actively in the academic and professional life of the school to advance its mission, strategy, and overall success. While the primary emphasis is on academic engagement and scholarship, SA faculty are also expected to maintain meaningful connection with industry and professional communities to ensure currency, relevance, and impact. Such engagement may include collaboration with external partners, participation in advisory activities, applied or industry-informed research, or other forms of interaction that support solving real management problems. Engagement with industry is expected to promote vibrancy in teaching and scholarship, inform research agendas where appropriate, and help raise the profile and reputation of the school.</p>	<p>PA faculty are expected to maintain strong and visible engagement with industry and professional communities and to serve as key connectors between external stakeholders and the academic enterprise. Professional engagement is primary and is expected to be purposeful, sustained, and aligned with the school's strategic priorities. PA faculty are expected to leverage their industry engagement to strengthen employer partnerships, inform curriculum, support experiential learning, and enhance the school's relevance and external reputation. Academic engagement supports these activities but is secondary to professional engagement.</p>	<p>SP faculty are expected to demonstrate balanced academic and professional engagement, maintaining active connection with both scholarly and practice communities. Professional engagement ensures continued applied relevance, while academic engagement supports the production of applied or pedagogical intellectual contributions. SP faculty are expected to integrate industry perspectives into curriculum, collaborate with external partners on applied projects, and contribute to scholarship that bridges theory and practice in ways that advance the school's mission and industry relevance.</p>	<p>IA faculty are expected to maintain engagement with disciplinary and professional communities sufficient to ensure instructional relevance and currency. Professional engagement supports understanding of contemporary practice and workforce expectations and may include interaction with industry partners, advisory councils, or professional associations. IA faculty are expected to apply these insights to curriculum delivery and course design, contributing to a vibrant, current, and practice-informed learning environment.</p>
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Basis for Judgment Standard 3.2 (Cont'd)

Ratios

- Normally, a minimum of 40 percent of a school's faculty resources are SA and 90 percent are SA+PA+SP+IA at the global level (i.e., across the entire accredited unit) and in disciplines in which the school offers degrees or majors. Where a school maintains generalist degrees such as BBA, General Business, and/or MBA with associated concentrations/areas of focus, then areas of concentration/areas of focus should normally be treated like disciplines with respect to meeting ratios.
- Schools seeking accreditation that emphasize research master's and doctoral degree programs are expected to have higher percentages of SA faculty, maintain a strong focus on SA faculty, and place high emphasis on faculty who undertake scholarly activities to maintain SA status as consistent with their peer institutions and their mission.
- In disciplines where the school seeking accreditation does not offer any degree programs or majors, the 40 percent SA ratio is not expected as a norm because those faculty would be supporting other degree programs. However, the 90% minimum is expected in all disciplines, whether or not a degree or major is offered, as this reflects the overall qualification status within a discipline and globally.
- For accredited schools, the ratios for faculty sufficiency and faculty qualifications purposes at the discipline level (in cases where degree programs or majors are offered) may be less than the 40 percent minimum when the reason for the deviation is directly related to the school making appointments to drive new, innovative, or interdisciplinary initiatives. In these instances, the burden is on the school to make its case as to how it maintains high-quality outcomes, evidence-based programs, student learning outcomes, and evidence of learner and/or employer satisfaction as appropriate. The peer review team will consider such departures on a case-by-case basis and employ professional judgment when these guidelines are not met.
- Schools seeking initial accreditation are expected to meet the faculty qualifications and faculty sufficiency ratios for all of Standard 3, including the 40% SA ratio across disciplines for which a degree, major or concentration (for generalist degrees) are offered and for the school overall. Initial schools would not normally be in alignment with Standard 3 by coupling lower SA ratios with high-quality outcomes, as is acceptable for schools that have already attained accreditation.

School Criteria

- Standards 3.1 and 3.2 establish minimum standards for faculty sufficiency and faculty qualifications for schools seeking accreditation. Schools may establish higher criteria but not lower criteria. Shared governance is encouraged to establish clear criteria and policies of participating and supporting faculty, as well as categories of SA, PA, SP, and IA. The criteria may be reviewed and updated as needed to remain at a level consistent with the school's mission and the standards of peer institutions.

- Schools should include policies for classifying not only faculty, but those who hold significant administrative appointments such as deans, associate deans, department heads, and/or center directors. These criteria should address both the appropriate degree and the maintenance of qualified status based on each individual's academic preparation and sustained engagement activities.
- For faculty with administrative responsibilities, criteria should reflect the proportion of time devoted to administration versus faculty duties. For example, expectations for a dean with substantial administrative responsibilities may differ from those for a department head with a smaller workload.
- Sustained engagement activities—such as research, scholarship, and professional practice—should be directly aligned with the faculty member's teaching responsibilities to demonstrate ongoing currency and relevance in their discipline. Criteria and policies must be consistent with the school's mission and comparable to peer institutions.
- Schools should define criteria for evaluating teaching currency and effectiveness and the spirit of high-quality teaching as expressed in standard 7, Teaching Effectiveness and Impact. Examples of criteria that demonstrate teaching effectiveness may include:
 - Faculty currency in subject matter expertise
 - Use of current and relevant technology
 - Meaningful and regular engagement with the business community
 - Student preparedness to enter the workforce or advance in their current employment
 - Innovative pedagogical approaches in instructional delivery
- Faculty who meet research or engagement expectations but do not meet the school's definitions for high-quality teaching would normally be classified as "Additional" faculty, and the school must develop a remediation plan to address deficiencies.

3.3 Learning Environment and Commitment to Professional Growth

- School encourages open inquiry and understanding of multiple perspectives relevant to their disciplines.
- School supports faculty in their ongoing professional development to ensure teaching effectiveness and relevance to current business practice.
- School regularly reviews faculty qualifications and currency to ensure alignment with mission and strategic priorities.

3.4 Professional Staff Sufficiency

- Sufficient professional staff are critical to support instructional, technological and learner support needs on an ongoing basis, regardless of whether they are housed in the business school or centralized within a larger, shared unit such as the university.

3.5 Faculty and Professional Staff Development

- Faculty expectations, evaluation, promotion, and reward processes are systematic, transparent, and support school missions.
- Workload allocation models are appropriate for faculty to fulfill all responsibilities competently.
- Schools have effective processes for providing orientation, guidance, mentoring, and developmental practices for faculty and professional staff.
- Sufficient professional development with respect to current and emerging technologies is provided to faculty and professional staff involved in the delivery of instruction and research process.
- Teaching assistants, tutors, or other staff who participate in alternative instructional models are appropriately prepared for classroom instruction and are managed and supervised to promote high-quality outcomes.
- Professional staff have access to development opportunities to retain currency in the areas they support.
- Processes for managing and developing professional staff and services are well defined and effective.

Suggested Documentation

3.1 and 3.2 Faculty Sufficiency and Faculty Qualifications

- Provide criteria for participating and supporting faculty, as well as SA, PA, SP, and IA faculty. Describe how these criteria align with the school's mission and include criteria for how the school assesses teaching effectiveness on a regular basis and the process for remediation of teaching effectiveness where appropriate.
- Schools should complete Table 3-1 for the most recent regular academic year prior to the visit year (often referred to as the "self-study year"), by discipline, to demonstrate alignment with Standard 3. The Interpretive Guidance provides additional information on completing Table 3-1.
- The metrics for faculty sufficiency should be based on a teaching metric reflective of the school's ordinary and usual measurement of time spent teaching (e.g., ECTS, student credit hours, courses, etc.). For schools seeking accreditation, the metric for faculty qualifications is the percentage of time devoted to mission, defined as 100% for full time faculty. For part-time faculty devoted to teaching responsibilities only, schools should allocate 10% of time devoted to mission for each course/module taught in the self-study year. Refer to the Interpretive Guidance for examples and additional information.
- Schools should complete Table 3-2 for the most recent regular academic year prior to the visit year. Schools should also provide narrative that describes the strategy for deployment of an appropriate blend of both sufficient participating faculty and qualified

faculty across degree programs, locations, and modalities, and how that strategy assures high-quality outcomes.

- Schools should include a discussion of any significant changes in faculty composition since the last accreditation review, and strategies and plans for recruiting and deploying qualified faculty within the next accreditation cycle.
- Schools must provide information on each faculty member for the peer review team as evidence to support the classification of each faculty member. This information should be provided electronically in the form of academic CVs or equivalent documents. Vitas should reflect only the period of time covered by the accreditation cycle under review and should be organized by discipline consistent with Table 3-1 for the convenience of the peer review team review.
- Provide a narrative describing instructional teaching models, such as lead teachers supported by teaching assistants, tutors, instructors, or other support staff. They should describe the qualifications of those who support these instructional models and provide evidence that describes how such models maintain high-quality outcomes and learner satisfaction.
- Table 3-2 is intended to provide a snapshot of how qualified faculty are deployed across degree programs for the unit seeking accreditation in the most recently completed regular academic year.
- Because Table 3-2 documents only a portion of the faculty member's contribution to the school's mission—the teaching component—schools are not required to meet the 40 percent SA ratio used to calculate faculty qualifications in Table 3-1, which includes all activities in which a faculty member engages (i.e., teaching, research, service, other) to contribute to the mission of the school. However, schools are expected to meet the 90 percent SA+PA+SP+IA ratio across degree programs for Table 3-2 in order to validate that the school deploys qualified faculty across degree levels. For schools seeking initial accreditation, this expectation is especially critical to validate deployment of qualified faculty across degree levels from the very beginning of the granting of accreditation.
- The deployment of the school's blend of SA, PA, SP, and IA faculty members must result from a strategic choice by the school and be consistent with the school's mission and strategic initiatives, and be carried out in a way that promotes high-quality learner success and achievement of learning competencies in all programs, locations, and modalities. While AACSB does not prescribe SA deployment percentages by program, location, or modality, a peer review team would normally expect a blend of faculty across degree programs, locations, and modalities and take into consideration the level of degree programs offered at other locations and in various modalities, where such distinction is appropriate. Additionally, research master's degrees and doctoral degrees everywhere should reflect a faculty complement with qualifications consistent with what is needed to provide high-quality experiences and outcomes to these learners. High-quality outcomes can be demonstrated through assurance of learning data provided by degree program.

- Table 3-2 is prepared at a macro-level across all degree programs, locations, and modalities; however, peer review teams may request supplemental breakout of Table 3-2 by a particular location or modality, where appropriate, as determined by the team. It is recognized that blended modalities are becoming increasingly common; therefore, modality in and of itself is often not a necessary breakout. Nevertheless, if the peer review team deems it appropriate to view Table 3-2 by modality, it is within their discretion to request the table for a particular location or by modality. A team may assess a school out of alignment with Standard 3 based on a material deficiency in faculty qualifications at one or more locations that are material in number of students or degrees.
- School should make criteria for faculty qualifications available for peer review team inspection, along with documents that describe the faculty governance model around determination of school criteria. Criteria for individuals with significant administrative responsibilities are clearly outlined in the school criteria.

3.3 Learning Environment and Commitment to Professional Growth

- Faculty should foster an environment encouraging open inquiry and demonstrate an understanding of multiple perspectives relevant to their disciplines.
- Schools should provide evidence of faculty engagement in scholarly, professional, or pedagogical activities demonstrating maintenance of currency in the discipline. Such professional development is expected to be a routine part of the AACSB culture of maintaining outstanding faculty.
- The school should provide a description of processes for periodic review of faculty qualifications and teaching assignments and must document actions taken to assist faculty with professional development or appropriate remediation where faculty are not current in their discipline, either in content or pedagogy. Regular participation in efforts to enhance teaching quality should be documented for each faculty member.

3.4 Professional Staff Sufficiency

- Professional staff structure should support high-quality outcomes.
- Schools should describe the professional staff structure with respect to advising, career placement, IT support, faculty instructional support, library support, and faculty research support.
- Schools should identify which resources are centralized and supported at the university level and which are maintained and supported within the school.

3.5 Faculty and Professional Staff Development

- Schools should establish processes for determining faculty performance expectations; orientation, guidance, and mentoring of faculty and professional staff; evaluation, promotion, and rewards; and professional development opportunities.
- Schools should describe processes for determining performance expectations for faculty for teaching, research, and service.

- Schools should describe processes for orientation, guidance, and mentoring of faculty and professional staff.
- Schools should describe evaluation, promotion, and reward processes, as well as ways that faculty are engaged in these processes.
- Schools should describe how faculty and professional staff are provided with professional development opportunities by the school (time and financial resources) to remain current in their discipline or focus area.

Exposure Draft

Table 3-1

**Faculty Sufficiency and Qualifications Summary for
Most Recently Completed Regular Academic Year, by Discipline**

Faculty Portfolio by Discipline <i>List by Individual Faculty Member Within Discipline</i>			Faculty Sufficiency Related to Teaching (e.g., SCH, ECTS, contact hours)		Normal Professional Responsibilities	Faculty Qualifications With Respect to Percent of Time Devoted to Mission					Teaching Effectiveness School Criteria Met	Brief Description of Basis for Qualification
Individual Faculty Member Name	Specialty Field	Highest Degree, Year Earned	Participating Faculty Teaching Productivity (P)	Supporting Faculty Teaching Productivity (S)		Scholarly Academic (SA)	Practice Academic (PA)	Scholarly Practitioner (SP)	Instructional Academic (IA)	Additional Faculty (A)	Check the box if the faculty meets the school established criteria for teaching effectiveness	
		Discipline A Degrees or majors ² are offered in this discipline <input type="checkbox"/> Degrees or majors are not offered in this discipline <input type="checkbox"/>										
Faculty A											<input type="checkbox"/>	
Faculty B											<input type="checkbox"/>	
Faculty C											<input type="checkbox"/>	
Total Discipline A												

² Concentrations/areas of focus may be treated as disciplines for generalist degrees. Refer to Standard 3.2 for this circumstance.

Discipline A Ratios Faculty Sufficiency Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline A: $P/(P+S) \geq 60\%$ 			Faculty Qualifications Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline A SA guideline: $(SA)/(SA + PA + SP + IA + A) \geq 40\%$ Discipline A SA + PA + SP + IA guideline: $(SA + PA + SP + IA)/(SA + PA + SP + IA + A) \geq 90\%$
<i>Show all other disciplines and ratios separately</i>			
Grand Total			
Overall Ratios Faculty Sufficiency Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall guideline: $P/(P+S) \geq 75\%$ 			Faculty Qualifications Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall SA guideline: $(SA)/(SA + PA + SP + IA + A) \geq 40\%$ Overall SA + PA + SP + IA guideline: $(SA + PA + SP + IA)/(SA + PA + SP + IA + A) \geq 90\%$

Table 3-2

**Deployment of Faculty by Qualification Status in Support of Degree Programs
for the Most Recently Completed Regular Academic Year**

Faculty percent of teaching by program and degree level (indicate metric used: credit hours, contact hours, courses taught, or another metric appropriate to the school)						
Degree Program³	Scholarly Academic (SA) %	Practice Academic (PA) %	Scholarly Practitioner (SP) %	Instructional Academic (IA) %	Additional (A) %	Total %
Bachelor's Program						100%
Research Master's Program A						100%
MBA Program						100%
Specialty Master's Program B						100%
Doctoral Program						100%

³ Bachelor's programs can be combined into one line, while master's and doctoral programs are listed individually.

Chapter 2: Learner Success

This section of the standards presents an integrated approach to ensuring that learners are fully prepared to thrive in a rapidly changing global environment. It views curriculum quality, learning assurance, and learner progression not as separate processes but as interdependent elements that collectively shape the learner experience and outcomes. Each standard emphasizes one component while reinforcing their alignment:

- **Standard 4: Curriculum** – Schools should design and deliver current, relevant, and coherent curriculum that equips learners with the knowledge, skills, and technological agility required for modern business practice.
- **Standard 5: Assurance of Learning** – Schools should define, measure, and improve learner achievement through systematic processes that ensure graduates attain the competencies necessary for career and lifelong success.
- **Standard 6: Learner Progression and Success** – Schools should support learners from entry through completion, ensuring access to the resources, advising, career preparation, and learning environment required for timely progress and workforce readiness.

STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM

4.1 Curricula must be continuously renewed to reflect *current and emerging* business theories, technologies, and practices. They should demonstrate innovation in design and delivery, integrating insights from business research, industry evolution, and societal trends. Curricula innovation should ensure that learners are future-ready—equipped with the agility, creativity, and applied competencies required to lead in an environment transformed by technological and organizational change. Curricula content appropriately distinguish competencies expected for bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs.

4.2 Schools manage curricula through assessment and other systematic review processes to ensure currency, relevancy, and appropriate use of digital, analytical and information technologies. Curricula are reviewed on a planned and consistent review cycle.

4.3 Curricula ensure that learners develop agility and an innovative mindset in adapting to evolving digital, analytical, and information technologies that shape business practice, preparing learners to be workforce ready in a technology-forward environment. In addition, curricula cultivate responsible and ethical use of technology.

4.4 Curricula promote and foster innovation, experiential learning, and a lifelong learning mindset.

4.5 Curricula are informed by current research and scholarship, ensuring that learners benefit from contemporary insights and discoveries in business. Faculty integrate relevant research findings, including their own intellectual contributions, into the learning experience to foster evidence-based understanding and application.

4.6 Curricula should be designed to promote meaningful engagement among learners, between learners and faculty, and between learners and the practice of business.

Sound curricula provide the foundation on which business schools fulfill their missions and prepare learners for meaningful impact. High-quality curricula reflect the integration of theory and practice, continuous innovation, and responsiveness to the evolving business landscape. They equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and mindsets necessary to lead responsibly in a world shaped by technological advancement, organizational transformation, and societal change.

AACSB recognizes that curricula renewal is an ongoing process driven by scholarship, engagement with industry, and awareness of emerging trends. In today's environment, digital

literacy is essential for business leadership. Schools are expected to prepare graduates who are agile, analytically capable, and ethically grounded in their use of digital, data-driven, and emerging technologies. Effective curriculum design balances disciplinary depth with adaptability, ensuring that learners can apply technological fluency, critical thinking, and innovation to solve complex problems and create value in a dynamic global economy.

Basis for Judgment

4.1 Curriculum Content

- Innovation is evident not only in *what* is taught, but in *how* learning occurs—through applied, experiential, and technology-enhanced pedagogies that prepare learners for evolving workforce demands.
- Schools should demonstrate a systematic process for maintaining and renewing curriculum content to ensure it reflects current and emerging business theories, technologies, and practices.
- Schools should demonstrate how current and emerging technology is appropriately infused throughout each degree program as appropriate for that degree and level of program (i.e., bachelor's, master's, doctoral). A learn-to-learn expectation is instilled in learners to facilitate agility in adaptation to emerging technologies in the future.
- Schools should demonstrate how curriculum innovation is intentional and mission-aligned, incorporating input from faculty research, industry partners, alumni, and employers to ensure relevance and responsiveness to external change.
- Schools should show how their curricula demonstrate integration of digital fluency (e.g., AI literacy, data-informed decision-making, digital collaboration) and emphasizes creativity, adaptability, ethical reasoning, and leadership.
- Schools should demonstrate how they regularly evaluate and refine their programs to ensure graduates possess the competencies needed to contribute to innovative and sustainable business practices.
- Normally, business degree programs at the **bachelor's level** include learning experiences that address core competencies characteristic of a successful business graduate of an AACSB-accredited school, as well as content from business disciplines, such as accounting, economics, finance, management, management information systems, marketing, and quantitative methods.
- **Graduate degree programs** will have higher-order learning experiences, such as synthesis and integration of information.
- **Specialized business master's degree programs** normally include an understanding of the specified discipline from multiple perspectives, an understanding of the specialization context, and preparation for careers or further study.
- **General business master's degrees** ordinarily include preparation for leading an organization, managing in a global context, thinking creatively, strategic mindset, making

sound decisions and exercising good judgment under uncertainty, and integrating knowledge across fields.

- **Doctoral degree programs** normally include advanced research knowledge and skills, an understanding of specialization context, and preparation for faculty responsibilities or positions outside academia. Doctoral degree programs include an appreciation for the production of research that contributes positively to society. Doctoral degree programs intended to prepare learners for academic positions devote significant time in the program of study to successful classroom instruction and management.

4.2 Curriculum Management

- Curriculum management should have sound governance, and faculty should be engaged in the process in terms of ownership and use of results for implementing changes and improvement.
- Curriculum management fosters and promotes innovation.
- Schools should have formalized, regular review cycles ensuring the consistency of review. Evidence should show how schools regularly review and update curricular content to maintain relevance and responsiveness to technological and workforce trends.
- Schools should demonstrate that curricula foster both agility and innovation in adapting to evolving digital, analytical, and information technologies that shape business practice. Learners are exposed to technological concepts, tools, and applications relevant to contemporary and emerging business environments. The curricula reflect intentional design to ensure graduates possess the ability to apply technologies creatively and responsibly in solving business problems.

4.3 Digital Agility

- The curricula provide learners with exposure to current and emerging digital, analytical, and information technologies relevant to business practice.
- Schools should review and update technology-related curriculum content to ensure currency and continued relevance.
- Schools should foster learner agility in adopting and adapting to new technologies and understanding their appropriate and responsible use, ensuring that human judgment and intelligence guide the application of digital intelligence.
- Schools should demonstrate learner ability in interpreting and evaluating outputs generated by these technologies and communicate insights effectively in a business context.
- Schools should demonstrate how technology-related learning is intentionally integrated across courses or learning experiences to support workforce readiness in a technology-forward environment.
- Schools should demonstrate how they review and update technology-related curriculum content to ensure currency and continued relevance.

4.4 Innovation, Experiential Learning, and Lifelong Learning

- Schools should adopt innovative approaches to curriculum, whether related to content, pedagogy, or delivery method, that demonstrates currency, creativity, and a growth mindset.
- Schools should provide a portfolio of experiential learning opportunities that promote learner engagement between faculty and the community of business practitioners.
- Schools should promote lifelong learning mindsets in learners, including creativity, intellectual curiosity, and critical and analytical thinking

4.5 Integration of Research and Teaching

- Schools should demonstrate that research and teaching are intentionally integrated, ensuring that learners are exposed to current and emerging knowledge derived from scholarly inquiry.
- Faculty should use research—both their own and that of others—to enhance the relevance, rigor, and depth of the curriculum. This integration may be evident through course content, classroom discussion, learning outcomes, and experiential learning activities that reflect the school's areas of scholarly strength. The emphasis should be on how research informs learning and contributes to the continuous improvement of the curriculum, which becomes increasingly important as degree levels progress.

4.6 Engagement of Learners with Each Other, Faculty, and the Practice of Business

Engagement Among Learners

- Curricula should include learning experiences that encourage collaboration, dialogue, and peer-to-peer learning. Learners should have opportunities to engage with classmates from diverse backgrounds and perspectives through activities that foster teamwork, communication, cultural competence, and the ability to integrate multiple viewpoints when solving complex problems.

Engagement Between Learners and Faculty

- Faculty engagement should extend beyond the delivery of course content to include mentoring, coaching, and active facilitation of learning. Faculty should be accessible and invested in learners' intellectual and professional development, encouraging inquiry, critical thinking, and ethical reflection. Meaningful learner-faculty engagement contributes to academic rigor, motivation, and a sense of belonging within the learning community.
- Learner-to-faculty interactions should involve all types of faculty members. For any teaching/learning model employed, learners have meaningful engagement with the faculty responsible for the course.

Engagement Between Learners and the Practice of Business

- Learners should be consistently exposed to the realities of contemporary business through opportunities that provide experience in real-world business settings and develop practical skills. These may include internships, consulting projects, live cases, industry-based simulations, guest lectures by practitioners, global immersions, and research collaborations. Engagement with practice helps learners understand the application of knowledge, develop professional judgment, and prepare them for leadership roles.
- Learners should have equal access to engagement with the practice of business irrespective of modality or location.

Suggested Documentation

4.1 Curriculum Content

- Describe processes for curriculum renewal, including stakeholder involvement (faculty, students, employers, alumni, advisory boards, and industry partners).
- Benchmarking or environmental scans illustrating how schools monitor emerging business and technology trends to inform curriculum decisions.
- Schools should describe how degree programs include learning experiences that develop competencies related to the integration of relevant technology and are consistent with school missions.
- Schools should provide narrative descriptions of current and emerging technologies for which graduates would be able to demonstrate a reasonable level of competency employed at each degree level (undergraduate, MBA, specialized master's, doctoral). This should not include ordinary and usual software programs such as word processing or presentation software.
- Schools should provide evidence of recent curriculum innovations such as new programs, redesigned courses, AI-integrated learning experiences, and/or interdisciplinary initiatives.
- Schools should provide examples of pedagogical innovations such as experiential learning, simulations, live case studies, apprenticeships, and/or industry partnerships.
- Schools should provide assurance of learning results or external validations demonstrating graduates' preparedness for the changing workforce.
- Schools should describe learning experiences appropriate to the areas listed in section 4.1 of the "Basis for Judgment," including how the areas are defined and how they fit into the curriculum. If a curriculum does not include learning experiences normally expected for the degree program type, schools should provide a rationale for this choice.

4.2 Curriculum Management

- Schools should consider how governance relates to curriculum management, including structure and activities of related committees or task forces.
- Schools should consider how governance and processes, practices, or activities ensure curricular currency and foster innovation.
- Schools should develop curriculum maps or course outlines demonstrating integration of digital, analytical, and information technology concepts across programs.
- Schools should create curriculum review processes that assess and update technology-related content to ensure workforce readiness.
- Schools should describe governance related to curriculum management, including structure and activities of related committees or task forces.
- Schools should describe how governance and processes, practices, or activities ensure curricular currency and foster innovation.
- Schools should provide curriculum maps or course outlines demonstrating integration of digital, analytical, and information technology concepts across programs.
- Schools should provide examples of learning experiences such as projects, simulations, case studies, and/or experiential learning) emphasizing technological agility and innovation.
- Schools should provide evidence of partnerships with industry, technology providers, or employers informing curricular updates related to technological advancements.
- Schools should summarize curriculum review processes that assess and update technology-related content to ensure workforce readiness.
- Schools should include examples of student outcomes or employer feedback confirming graduates' ability to innovate and adapt in technology-enabled work environments.

4.3 Digital Agility

- Curriculum maps identifying where and how learners engage with current and emerging technologies.
- Schools should provide selected syllabi or course materials demonstrating technology-enabled instruction or assignments.
- Schools should provide examples of student work showing appropriate technology use, interpretation of results, and communication of findings.
- Schools should provide descriptions of technologies, platforms, or tools used within courses or experiential learning.
- Schools should provide evidence of instruction related to responsible and ethical use of technology.
- Schools should provide documentation of curriculum review processes used to maintain currency in technology-related content

4.4 Innovation, Experiential Learning, and Lifelong Learning

- Schools should describe innovations in curriculum, as they have occurred, with respect to content, pedagogy, or delivery. Explain how these innovations demonstrate currency, creativity, and forward-looking curricula.
- Schools should document experiential learning activities that provide business learners with knowledge of, and hands-on experience in, the local and global practice of business across program types and teaching and learning models employed.
- Schools should describe how the school encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning and promotes characteristics of a lifelong learning mindset.

4.5 Integration of Teaching and Research

- Schools should include examples of course syllabi, assignments, or materials demonstrating incorporation of current research and faculty scholarship.
- Schools should provide examples of how faculty intellectual contributions inform course content, case studies, or projects.
- Schools should describe processes or policies ensuring that curriculum design and review are informed by current research developments in relevant disciplines.
- Schools should provide evidence of faculty development initiatives promoting research-informed teaching.
- Schools should include examples of student outcomes, projects, or feedback illustrating how exposure to current research enhances learning.

4.6 Engagement of Learners with Each Other, Faculty, and the Practice of Business

- Schools should describe curricular and co-curricular activities that promote each form of engagement.
- Schools should provide examples of faculty practices that enhance engagement, such as applied learning approaches, practitioner integration, and mentorship.
- Schools should summarize assessment results or feedback demonstrating the impact of engagement on learning outcomes or employability.
- Schools should provide evidence of partnerships or collaborations that support engagement with the practice of business, including data and feedback.

STANDARD 5: ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

5.1 Schools should use well-documented assurance of learning (AoL) processes that include direct and indirect measures for ensuring the quality of all degree programs that are deemed in scope for accreditation purposes. Both direct and indirect measures are tied to specific competency goals as opposed to simple satisfaction measures. Results of AoL work leads to curricular improvements.

5.2 Programs resulting in the same degree credential are structured and designed to ensure equivalence of high-quality outcomes irrespective of location and modality of instructional delivery.

5.3 Microlearning credentials that are “stackable” or otherwise able to be combined into degree programs should include processes to ensure high quality and continuous improvement.

5.4 Non-degree executive education that generates greater than five percent of a school’s total annual revenue should include processes to ensure high quality and continuous improvement.

Assurance of Learning (AoL) is the foundation of continuous improvement in business education. It provides evidence that learners achieve the competencies schools have identified as central to their missions and degree programs. Through systematic assessment and analysis, schools demonstrate that their programs lead to meaningful learning and that results are used to enhance curriculum quality and relevance.

AACSB recognizes that schools employ diverse approaches to assessing learning, reflecting their mission, strategies, and degree offerings. Both direct and indirect measures are valuable when appropriately aligned with program competencies and used to close the loop on improvement. AoL processes also help ensure consistency and quality across locations, modalities, and credentials, supporting the integrity and comparability of all programs offered under a school’s accreditation scope.

Basis for Judgment

5.1 Assurance of Learning Processes

- School should identify learning competencies for each business degree program as well as appropriate direct and indirect measures that are systematically and regularly assessed to demonstrate that learning competencies are achieved across degree programs. Competencies should derive from and be consonant with school missions, strategies, and expected outcomes.
- Competencies and curriculum management processes reflect currency of knowledge and expectations of stakeholders, including but not limited to organizations employing graduates, alumni, learners, the university community, and policymakers.
- Where competencies are not achieved, schools should provide evidence of actions taken to remediate the deficiencies.
- Schools should employ both direct and indirect measures; schools seeking accreditation are expected to include both types of measures across the entire portfolio of assessment of all its degree programs.
- The proportion of direct versus indirect measures by degree program is determined by each school, consistent with its mission and strategic initiatives. For schools seeking accreditation, it is acceptable for some programs to be assessed only through direct measures, while other programs (e.g., those that are small niche, specialized or interdisciplinary) may be assessed through only indirect measures. The school provides its rationale for determining which programs are measured through direct measures and which programs are measured through indirect measures.
- Results of direct and indirect assessment should lead to curricular improvements (i.e., courses and curriculum) as well as to the process itself.
- Schools should employ systematic AoL processes that include meaningful and broad faculty participation.
- For AACSB accredited schools, programs launched since the last review should have a robust AoL plan in place, including a timeline for gathering and analyzing data. The standards intend that, in the case of a newly launched degree program, schools should be given sufficient time to establish a systematic assessment process that adequately demonstrates student learning; in such a case, a robust assessment plan is of paramount importance.
- Schools seeking initial accreditation are expected to substantially demonstrate alignment with Standard 5 in terms of having a robust assurance of learning system, including a well-documented system that has both direct and indirect measures, achievement of learning outcomes across degree programs, and evidence of curriculum improvements that have emanated from the assurance of learning process.

5.2 Degree Equivalency

- Expectations for learner effort and outcomes for the same degree credentials should be equivalent in terms of depth and rigor, regardless of delivery mode or location.
- If competency-based education (CBE) credits are awarded by schools, the equivalent quality normally is assured via direct assessment of learners. CBE credit should reflect a small percentage of the total academic program.

5.3 Stackable Microlearning Credentials

- Credentials such as certificates, and badges that lead to a degree program will be evaluated at the degree program level.

5.4 Non-Degree Executive Education

- Non-degree executive education should normally be reviewed for overall quality, continuous improvement, and customer/client satisfaction if such programs generate greater than five percent of a school's annual revenue.

Suggested Documentation

5.1 Assurance of Learning Processes

- For each degree program, provide a portfolio of evidence across degree programs that includes direct and indirect assessment of learning, showing learner progress in meeting competency goals for each business degree program. The proportion of direct versus indirect measures within each degree program is determined by each school, consistent with its mission and strategic initiatives. Examples of programs that lend themselves to indirect measurement only are programs that are newer, smaller, niche, specialized, and interdisciplinary programs, or programs very closely tied to professional fields. Indirect evidence should be relative to the competencies stated for the degree program to which indirect evidence is applied.
- All schools seeking accreditation should complete Table 5-1 for each degree program. Table 5-1 is intended to be an at-a-glance snapshot for the benefit of the peer review team. Schools should supplement the table with a narrative where needed to provide a fuller picture of what is being measured and how.
- Schools can develop competency goals, which may be written such that they contain learning objectives within the competency goal; alternatively, schools may wish to state competency goals at a conceptual level and then include learning objectives where targets are explicated. Schools seeking accreditation may choose the format they prefer.⁴ The Interpretive Guidance provides examples of both varieties.

⁴ Schools may organize their generalist degree programs in a variety of ways, such as through majors, concentrations, specializations, focus areas, or areas of emphasis. Regardless of terminology, the school must ensure that learning is assessed at the level at which the degree designates a distinct disciplinary or functional area of study.

- Competency goals should be supported by curriculum maps. Schools should make curriculum maps available for review that show peer review teams where and when competency goals are expected to be evaluated.
- Where competencies are not achieved, schools should provide evidence of actions taken to remediate the deficiencies.
- Where assessment demonstrates that learners are not meeting learning competencies, schools should describe efforts they have instituted to improve such learning outcomes.
- Schools should provide evidence that faculty are sufficiently and meaningfully engaged in AoL processes.
- If the business school seeking accreditation is subject to formalized regional or country regulations or quality assurance organizations focused on the evaluation of learner performance, and these processes are consistent with AACSB expectations and best practices, relevant or redundant portions may be applied to demonstrate assurance of learning.⁵ The burden of proof is on such schools to document that these systems support effective continuous improvement in learner performance and outcomes. Schools seeking accreditation may consult the mentor or peer review team chair for further guidance.

5.2 Degree Equivalency

- Degree program structure and design expectations should be appropriate to the level of degree programs and demonstrate that expectations across educational programs that result in the same degree credentials are equivalent, regardless of delivery mode, location, or time to completion.
- Schools should be prepared to provide evidence of equivalent learning outcomes for identical degrees offered at different locations or in different modalities. Examples may include, but are not limited to, assurance of learning outcomes, graduation rates, retention rates, placement rates, employer and alumni surveys, and learner satisfaction statistics. If outcomes vary negatively based on a location or modality, peer review teams may identify this as a misalignment with standard five or standard three.

5.3 Stackable Microlearning Credentials

- Schools should provide a list of microlearning credentials that may be stacked into a degree and describe how the portfolio of microlearning credentials is aligned with the school's mission and strategy.
- Schools should explain how these credentials may lead to a degree and describe how quality is assured for these microlearning credentials.

⁵ Refer to the Standard 5 Interpretive Guidance, section titled *Essential Elements* for additional information.

5.4 Non-Degree Executive Education

- Schools should describe the portfolio of executive education programs and how the portfolio is aligned with the school's mission and strategy.
- Schools should provide a narrative discussing how the school ensures high-quality processes and outcomes in its executive education offerings in cases where a school's non-degree executive education revenue exceeds five percent of the school's total annual revenue.

Table 5-1
Assessment Plan and Results for Most Recently Completed Accreditation Cycle by Degree Program

Competency Goal	Measure			Data			Results	Problem Identified
Competency Goal #1	Measure	Direct or Indirect	Form of Measure	Target	Where assessed	When assessed		
	First							
	Curricular Intervention (Describe)							
	Second							
<p style="text-align: center;">Check One:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Loop is Closed <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Loop is Not Closed <input type="checkbox"/></p>								

(Add additional rows for other competency goals)

STANDARD 6: LEARNER PROGRESSION

6.1 Schools should have policies and procedures for admissions, acceptance of transfer credit, academic progression toward degree completion, and support for career development that are clear, effective, consistently applied, and aligned with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

6.2 Post-graduation success should be consistent with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. Public disclosure of academic program quality supporting learner progression and post-graduation success should occur on a current and consistent basis.

Learner progression is central to the mission of every business school. Ensuring that learners are effectively admitted, supported, and guided through their educational journey reflect commitment to quality, fairness, and impact. From admission through post-graduation, schools play a vital role in shaping learners' experiences and outcomes—both academic and professional.

AACSB recognizes that effective learner progression depends on transparent policies, consistent academic support, and meaningful career development opportunities. Schools are expected to demonstrate that their admissions, advising, and progression practices are equitable and aligned with their mission, and that learners are well prepared for success after graduation. Publicly available information on program quality and learner outcomes reinforces accountability and trust among stakeholders.

Basis for Judgment

6.1 Admissions, Progression, Degree Completion, and Career Development Support

- Policies and procedures related to degree program admission should be clear, effective, and transparent and aligned with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.
- Schools should have clear and documented processes for managing and supporting exceptions to admissions and progression policies.
- Schools should actively seek to attract and retain learners with a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives consistent with school missions. Normally, graduate business degree program admission criteria should include the expectation that applicants have or will earn a bachelor's degree prior to admission to the graduate program. Schools should be prepared to document how exceptions support quality.
- Schools should define and broadly disseminate policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting transfer credits or courses from other institutions. These policies should

ensure that the academic work accepted from other institutions is comparable to the academic work required for the school's own degree programs.

- Apart from collaborative provision programs, normally the majority of learning in business disciplines that count toward degree fulfillment (as determined by credits, contact hours, or other metrics) is earned through the institution awarding the degree. In this context, business disciplines do not include general education courses but do include courses in the major, required business courses, and business electives.⁶
- Schools should prepare and support learners to ensure academic progression toward degree completion, including clear and effective academic performance standards and processes, consistent with degree program competency goals.
- High-quality advising services should be available to learners on a consistent and timely basis.
- Strategies should be employed to identify and provide intervention and support for learners who are not progressing adequately, including non-traditional, underrepresented or otherwise at-risk populations.
- Schools should provide effective career development support for learners and graduates that is consistent with degree program expectations and mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.
- Learner support services, including academic assistance and advising, career advising and placement, alumni relations, public relations, fundraising, and admissions, as well as other mission-related activities, should be appropriate and available with a high degree of service-mindedness for appropriate consumers of these services.

6.2 Academic Program Quality and Post-Graduation Success

- Schools should seek to collect and maintain available post-graduation employment data, graduate school attendance data, or other measures that indicate post-graduate success.
- In addition to public disclosure information required by national or regional accreditors, schools should provide readily accessible, reliable, and easily understandable information to the public on the performance of their business learners, including learner achievement information and overall program quality, as determined by the school.

Suggested Documentation

6.1 Admissions, Progression, Degree Completion, and Career Development Support

- Schools should describe and provide admissions policies and processes and demonstrate that they are consistent with program expectations, aligned with the school's mission, and transparent to all participants.

⁶ Collaborative provision programs are formal agreements between an accredited school and a partner school. Treatment for such programs is discussed in the "Collaborative Provisions/Transfer Credit" section of the standards.

- Schools should describe the strategies in place to attract and retain learners with a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives consistent with Guiding Principle 9.
- Schools should describe and provide the processes in place if exceptions to the school's admission and/or progression policies are made and provide justification and the basis for doing so.
- Schools should describe the school's policies governing the acceptance of transfer credit and how quality is assured for transfer credit.
- Schools should describe academic advising services available to learners.
- Schools should describe how appropriate interventions are undertaken when learners are failing to thrive or progress toward successful and timely degree completion, including learners from non-traditional, underrepresented or otherwise at-risk populations.
- Schools should describe any information technologies used to support admissions, academic progression, and career development.
- Schools should describe processes in place to support career development activities such as career counseling, career days, workshops, career fairs, etc.

6.2 Academic Program Quality and Post-Graduation Success

- Schools should document post-graduate learner success. Success may be defined in a variety of outcomes besides traditional employment in a business field. Examples of such information include, but are not limited to, graduation rates, job placement outcomes, certification or licensure exam results, employment advancement, internships, entrepreneurial activity, and activity with positive societal impact, as well as case examples of successful graduates.
- Schools should provide relevant and timely public disclosure data documenting overall academic program quality. This information should be available on the websites of schools that have been accredited, where it is clearly displayed and distinguishable from university amalgamated data. Disclosures are not prescriptive but are informed by the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes, and may include post-graduate learner success outcomes, admission data, retention and time-to-degree data, particular program emphases, student learning outcomes, rankings data, experiential learning opportunities, meaningful societal impact, or other mission-specific outcomes.

Chapter 3: Pathways to Impact

A Framework for Integration

This section of the standards introduces a unified framework that views teaching, scholarship, and societal engagement not as discrete functions but as complementary dimensions of an integrated impact ecosystem. Each standard focuses on one dimension while reinforcing their interdependence:

- **Standard 7: Teaching Effectiveness and Impact** – Schools should consider how educational activities, pedagogy, and learner engagement strategies produce meaningful learning outcomes and prepare graduates to lead responsibly in a dynamic world.
- **Standard 8: Impact of Scholarship** – Schools should consider how research and intellectual contributions advance knowledge, inform practice, and create value for academia, industry, and society.
- **Standard 9: Societal Impact and Engagement** – Schools should consider how overall strategy and activities contribute positively to society, align with mission and global challenges such as sustainability, ethics, and economic inclusion.

Together, these standards position business schools as agents of positive change, whose impact extends well beyond the classroom and the journal page. By fostering synergy among teaching, research, and societal engagement, schools can magnify their collective contribution to the betterment of business and the world.

Business schools create impact through many pathways—by shaping the learning and mindsets of students, advancing knowledge through research and scholarship, and contributing to society through engagement and collaboration. Collectively, these pathways define how schools fulfill their missions and demonstrate their value to academia, business, policy, and society.

The standards in this section—Standard 7 (Teaching Effectiveness and Impact), Standard 8 (Impact of Scholarship), and Standard 9 (Societal Impact)—recognize that excellence in business education cannot be measured solely by academic rigor or operational performance. Rather, it must also be assessed by the school's ability to create meaningful, measurable, and sustained impact across the full spectrum of its activities. These standards together reinforce a single idea: impact is not a singular event or output, but the result of a continuous cycle of learning, discovery, and application.

A Broader Understanding of Impact

The evolution of AACSB's standards reflects a growing global movement to redefine how research, teaching, and engagement create value. As articulated in the Global Research Impact Framework, research impact encompasses the *actual or potential influence* of a school's activities—educational or scholarly—on stakeholders within and beyond academia. It may advance evidence-based

practice, inform policy, foster innovation, enhance teaching and learning, or otherwise create societal value.

Historically, the three dimensions of impact—teaching, scholarship, and societal engagement—have often been treated as separate spheres. However, their greatest strength lies in their intersections. Teaching becomes more impactful when informed by cutting-edge scholarship and real-world application. Research gains relevance when integrated into curricula and when co-created with practitioners and policymakers. Societal engagement achieves depth when grounded in rigorous research and when it enriches student learning. Together, these channels form a virtuous cycle of impact that amplifies a school's contribution to the global community.

Responding to a Changing Context

The world in which business schools operate is changing rapidly. The rise of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, emerging societal distrust of science, and increasing pressure on higher education to demonstrate tangible value all challenge schools to rethink how they define, measure, and communicate impact to a broader set of audiences. In this context, impact is not optional—it is essential to the continued relevance and legitimacy of business education.

AACSB's commitment to *multiple pathways to impact* acknowledges the diversity of missions, contexts, and stakeholders across all business schools. Accreditation enables institutions to demonstrate excellence in ways that align with their distinctive purposes—whether through educational transformation, research that influences policy or practice, advancement of disciplinary science, or direct contributions to societal well-being.

From Outputs to Outcomes to Impact

Measuring impact requires moving beyond outputs—such as publications or course completions—to examine the outcomes and implications that result from those activities. AACSB encourages a holistic approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators of impact, emphasizing that what schools choose to assess signal what they value. No single metric can capture the full scope of school influence; rather, a balanced and mission-driven mix of evidence provides the most authentic view of contributions.

To understand this continuum more clearly, it is useful to distinguish among outputs, outcomes, and impact—three interconnected levels that together illustrate how schools create and demonstrate value.

- **Outputs** are the *immediate, tangible products* of activity—what is produced. Examples include publications, instructional materials, course completions, events delivered, or partnerships initiated. Outputs are essential evidence of productivity and effort but, on their own, do not demonstrate whether meaningful change has occurred.
- **Outcomes** represent the *short- to medium-term results* that emerge from these outputs such as, improved learner performance, enhanced career readiness, expanded collaborations, or the adoption of research insights in practice. Outcomes signal

progress toward intended goals and reveal the effectiveness of a school's activities in achieving desired results, but they are often context specific and require narrative explanation.

- **Impact** reflects the *broader and longer-term influence* that arises when outcomes create enduring value for stakeholders and society. Impact occurs when teaching transforms how learners think and lead, when scholarship shapes theory or practice, and when engagement activities contribute to community well-being and global progress. Determining impact is often complex and multidimensional, and attribution can be challenging.

Impact also takes time. Some effects are immediate—such as improved student learning outcomes or industry partnerships—while others unfold over years, influencing theory, policy, or community well-being. These standards therefore emphasize long-term thinking, encouraging schools to tell the fuller story of how their activities create lasting value.

Connecting to AACSB's Global Mission

AACSB's mission to elevate the quality and impact of business schools globally calls for business schools to advance both academic excellence and societal relevance. The Multiple Pathways to Impact framework reflects this mission by recognizing that there is no single route to excellence; rather, schools can pursue impact through distinct but interdependent approaches consistent with their identity and global context. As business becomes increasingly interconnected and knowledge creation transcends borders, these standards affirm AACSB's belief that *global relevance*—the capacity to contribute meaningfully to diverse communities, economies, and cultures—is the true measure of impact in modern business education.

STANDARD 7: TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

7.1 Schools should have systematic, multi-modal assessment processes for evaluating and continuously improving teaching effectiveness.

7.2 Schools should have development activities in place to support faculty teaching effectiveness in all learning modalities and ensure that educators are adequately prepared to deliver curriculum that is current, relevant, forward-looking, globally oriented, innovative, and aligned with program competency goals.

7.3 Schools should establish clear expectations for teaching impact and demonstrate how they measure, recognize, and reward faculty whose teaching contributes meaningfully to learner success and school missions.

High-quality teaching is foundational to the mission and impact of a business school.

It is important to distinguish between teaching effectiveness and teaching impact.

Teaching effectiveness refers to point-in-time evidence of instructional quality as experienced by learners during or immediately following a course or program. It reflects how well teaching methods, content delivery, engagement, and learning support enable students to achieve intended learning outcomes in the short term.

Teaching impact refers to the longer-term influence of teaching on learners' development, application of knowledge, and professional or personal advancement over time. It is reflected in outcomes that emerge after program completion, such as graduates' ability to apply learning in practice, adapt to changing professional contexts, and create value in their organizations or communities.

Basis for Judgment

7.1 Teaching Effectiveness

- Schools should have systematic processes and criteria for evaluating teaching effectiveness as an integral component of the faculty review. Processes should include multiple methods of evaluating teaching effectiveness as well as clear processes that demonstrate how the information gathered is used to improve teaching effectiveness.
- Learners across all levels of degree programs (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree) should assess teaching effectiveness for their current degree program level through a school-designed survey with measures that are consistent with school-established criteria. Note that this evaluation is at the degree program level as opposed to single course evaluations, which would not be sufficient for evaluation of teaching effectiveness at the degree program level.

7.2 Support for Teaching Effectiveness

- Schools should provide development activities focused on teaching enhancement and incentives to continuously improve teaching effectiveness to all faculty who have teaching responsibilities across all delivery modes.

7.3 Teaching Impact

- Schools should define “teaching impact” in a manner consistent with mission, learner profile, and instructional portfolio.
- Teaching impact should be assessed using multiple forms of evidence. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - improvement in learning outcomes or demonstrated competencies of learners
 - contributions to learner engagement, progression, or career readiness documented success of experiential, applied, or innovative learning activities
 - recognition through internal or external teaching awards, peer evaluation, or industry feedback
 - alumni achievements (e.g., career progression, professional accomplishments, credential attainment, leadership roles) where the school can reasonably articulate a link to the learning experience
- Schools should have transparent and well-communicated processes that recognize and reward faculty who achieve meaningful teaching impact (e.g., annual reviews, merit systems, promotion and tenure, internal awards).
- Schools should identify evidence that shows how insights from teaching impact are used to strengthen pedagogy, curriculum, and learner support systems.
- Recognition and reward systems should be applied fairly and consistently across faculty roles and teaching modalities.

Suggested Documentation

7.1 Teaching Effectiveness

- Schools should describe how they evaluate teaching effectiveness across their various degree program levels.
- Schools should report teaching effectiveness results from the school designed survey across all levels of degree programs (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree).
- Schools should describe the school's survey administration processes, including timing, communication approach, and procedures to ensure adequate response rates and complete programmatic coverage.
- Schools should provide supplemental evidence, if used, that further supports learner satisfaction with instruction (e.g., focus groups, additional school-designed surveys, peer review of teaching).
- Schools should identify examples of improvements to teaching, curriculum design, or faculty development activities undertaken in response to learner feedback from the school designed survey and any supplemental evidence.

7.2 Support for Teaching Effectiveness

- Schools should document faculty participation in teaching enhancement initiatives over the past six years.
- Schools should describe incentives for faculty to continuously improve teaching effectiveness. These may include performance evaluation processes, awards, pedagogy grants, support to attend teaching conferences, or other recognitions and support.
- Schools should describe processes for remediating ineffective teaching when the school deems it necessary.
- Schools should describe faculty development activities that maintain faculty currency and strengthen their capacity to deliver high-quality, evidence-informed pedagogy and purposeful technology integration appropriate to the degree level and disciplinary content.

7.3 Teaching Impact

- Schools should summarize awards or other recognitions that faculty have received for outstanding teaching and professional support of learning.
- Schools should document innovative and/or effective teaching practices that have had significant, positive impact on learning.
- Schools should provide exemplars of learner success either with respect to the school's current learners or alumni.
- Schools should document examples of teaching impact, such as results of learner and/or employer satisfaction surveys, teaching awards (internal and external), teaching

credentials or certifications, scholarship of teaching and learning, mentoring, and participation in teaching seminars or presentations at teaching conferences.

- Schools should document other school-derived measures of teaching impact, consistent with the school's internal criteria for faculty qualifications relevant to standard 3.

Exposure Draft

STANDARD 8: IMPACT OF SCHOLARSHIP

8.1 Faculty should collectively produce high-quality, impactful intellectual contributions that, over time, develop into mission-consistent areas of thought leadership for the school.

8.2 Schools collaborate with a wide variety of external stakeholders to create and transfer credible, relevant, and timely knowledge that informs the theory, policy, and/or practice of business to develop into mission-consistent areas of thought leadership for the school.

Scholarship is a core expression of a business school's mission and a primary driver of its impact. Through research and creative inquiry, faculty advance knowledge, inform practice, and contribute to positive outcomes for business and society.

AACSB recognizes that there are multiple paths to impact. Rigorous and responsible research may take the form of basic, applied, or pedagogical scholarship—and each has the potential to shape theory, policy, practice, and learning in meaningful ways. Other types of scholarly activity also add value by fostering innovation, dialogue, and collaboration with external stakeholders. Over time, these collective intellectual contributions build areas of thought leadership that reflect the school's mission, strategy, and aspirations. Their quality is measured not only by scholarly rigor and peer review, but by their influence on knowledge, professional practice, learners, and communities.

Basis for Judgment

8.1 Production and Dissemination of High Quality, Impactful Intellectual Contributions

- The distribution of intellectual contributions across categories in the portfolio should be aligned with schools' missions, strategy, and aspirations for their reputations as thought leaders. As such, the types of intellectual contributions will vary across schools just as their missions vary.
- Schools should support faculty in dissemination of research to appropriate multi-audience channels, including journals, books, case studies, policy briefs, open-access outlets, and digital media channels. Schools should encourage faculty to translate findings into actionable insights for non-academic audiences.
- Schools should identify areas of thought leadership, outline goals for these contributions, and describe achievements over the last six years as well as plans for the next six years. Schools should provide examples of activities that could help a school, based on its mission, identify how it will be a thought leader for stakeholders important to them include organizing and holding regional, national, or international academic and/or

practitioner conferences; holding meetings for academic or professional organizations; publishing working-paper series; publishing academic journals; establishing a case study clearinghouse; or forming research relationships with private-sector, nonprofit, or government organizations.

- One important type of intellectual contribution is the publication of high-quality peer-reviewed journal articles. The production of peer review journal articles is a key way in which faculty maintain currency and expertise in their field. Thus, all schools should have some high-quality peer-reviewed journal articles in their portfolio of intellectual contributions. The type of peer review journal articles should be aligned with school missions. Schools that have primarily teaching missions may produce more high-quality applied and pedagogical research, while schools offering research master's and doctoral degrees are expected to produce a greater percentage of high-quality basic research.
- Schools should encourage, support, and reward the creation of intellectual contributions with impact beyond traditional scholarly metrics, and that also considers non-academic stakeholders, including policy, industry, and society more broadly.
- Schools should strive to have a significant cross section of faculty engaged in the production of intellectual contributions, relying heavily on participating faculty.
- Schools should assess and evaluate the quality of intellectual contributions and be clear about their future direction. Schools should periodically evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of metrics to determine whether they reflect the dimensions of excellence schools value and meaningfully predict future success.
- Schools should have policies that guard against publishing in predatory journals and uphold integrity, inclusivity, and responsible research practices.

8.2 Collaboration with Stakeholders

- Schools should have systems, processes, and resources that support engagement with relevant external stakeholders by the school, units within the school, faculty, and learners. These engagements should produce credible knowledge, contribute to new venture creation, and/or create commercialization opportunities that ultimately are useful for external communities, and apply to the practice of theory, business, or policies of the business education ecosystem. Collaborations with stakeholders should contribute to schools' reputations as thought leaders in their desired area.
- Especially important is the interaction between academics and industry to produce research that is timely, relevant, and meaningful to the practice of business. All schools are expected to have a substantial cross section of faculty engaged with industry.

Suggested Documentation

8.1 Production and Dissemination of High Quality, Impactful Intellectual Contributions

- Schools should clearly outline how they support and encourage faculty to produce intellectual contributions. This should include an outline of financial support, incentives and rewards, performance expectations, development opportunities, and other initiatives

that ensure faculty are developed and/or supported to develop quality intellectual contributions for a wide spectrum of stakeholders and audiences.

- Schools should describe their processes to identify high-quality research and scholarship, including descriptions of how they guard against promoting publications in predatory journals and uphold integrity, inclusivity, and responsible research practices.
- Using Table 8-1, schools should provide a six-year portfolio of evidence that summarizes the intellectual contributions aggregated in a way that reflects their intellectual contributions.
- In Table 8-1 (A), provide the total number of intellectual contributions produced by faculty who are employed by the school in the year of record. These intellectual contributions are identified by portfolio, type, and percentage of faculty producing them. The table should be organized using the same disciplines as reflected in Table 3-1.
- In Table 8-1 (B), schools should outline how their intellectual contributions are aligned with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.
- In Table 8-1 (C), schools should identify how they measure the quality of their intellectual contributions and apply these measures to analyze the six-year portfolio. Include an evaluation against current and future desired states and any changes that will be implemented as a result.
- In Table 8-1 (D), using qualitative and/or quantitative metrics, schools should provide an analysis of the impact made by the school's portfolio of intellectual contributions.
- Schools should identify thought leadership aspirations and evaluate progress toward these goals as well as plans in place for the next six years.

8.2 Collaboration with Stakeholders

- Schools should outline the processes, systems, and resources in place to facilitate engagement between schools, units within the schools, faculty, learners, and relevant external stakeholders. They should describe how these engagements encourage the creation and/or co-creation and communication of relevant and timely knowledge.
- Schools should describe how they incorporate substantial and meaningful interaction between faculty producing research and scholarship and industry.

Table 8-1

Intellectual Contributions Over the Most Recently Completed Accreditation Cycle

Part A: Summary of Intellectual Contributions – Over Last 6 Year Accreditation Cycle								
Aggregate and summarize data by discipline. Do not list by individual faculty member.	Portfolio of Intellectual Contributions				Types of Intellectual Contributions			% of Faculty Producing Intellectual Contributions
	Basic or Discovery Scholarship	Applied or Integration/Application Scholarship	Teaching and Learning Scholarship	Total	Peer-reviewed journal articles	Additional peer- or editorial-reviewed intellectual contributions	All other intellectual contributions	Total
(List disciplines separately)								
Total								
Part B: Alignment with Mission, Strategies, and Expected Outcomes								
Provide a description of how the portfolio of intellectual contributions by faculty and by units within the school, where appropriate, align with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.								
Part C: Quality of Six-Year Portfolio of Intellectual Contributions								
Identify the qualitative and quantitative measures of quality used by the school and apply these measures to analyze and evaluate the portfolio of intellectual contributions.								
Part D: Impact of Intellectual Contributions								
Analyze the impact of the portfolio of intellectual contributions on the theory, practice, and/or teaching of business, including qualitative and quantitative evidence. Include a description of how the school incorporates a substantial cross section of faculty interacting with industry to produce relevant and meaningful scholarship.								

STANDARD 9: SOCIETAL IMPACT AND ENGAGEMENT

9.1 Schools should identify one or more focus areas for their societal impact efforts, clearly articulate these in their missions and strategic plans, and demonstrate alignment of resources and activities with their chosen area(s).

9.2 Curricula should include program elements related to the chosen focus area(s), ensuring that learners develop the knowledge, skills, and mindset to contribute positively to society.

9.3 Schools should produce scholarly work—basic, applied, and/or pedagogical—that demonstrably advances understanding, practice, or policy in their chosen societal impact area(s).

9.4 Schools should demonstrate positive societal impact through purposeful engagement with internal and external stakeholders—such as industry, government, community organizations, and alumni—focused on its chosen societal impact area(s), and aligned with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

Business schools play a vital role in shaping a more sustainable and equitable global society. This standard emphasizes the importance of intentional, mission-aligned strategies through which schools contribute to the positive transformation of business and communities. Schools are encouraged to define and pursue focus areas where their expertise, scholarship, and partnerships can create meaningful and measurable societal value.

Table 9-1 provides a framework for schools seeking accreditation to categorize and evidence their societal impact across curriculum, scholarship, and engagement. The table should highlight the outcomes and demonstrated impacts of the school's activities and initiatives, rather than serving as a simple inventory of efforts.

Schools may use terminology that best reflects their context to describe their chosen societal impact focus area(s). AACSB recognizes that institutions are at different stages of maturity in developing and measuring societal impact. This is an evolving and iterative area, and schools may refine or adjust their focus areas over time as their strategies and contexts evolve. Table 9-1 is designed to accommodate such changes for schools seeking accreditation.

The overarching expectation is that schools will tell compelling, evidence-based stories of how they leverage their business education expertise to create positive, demonstrable change in society. While quantitative indicators may be included, qualitative evidence, such as impact narratives, stakeholder testimonials, and illustrative case examples, can be equally powerful in capturing the depth and significance of societal impact.

Basis for Judgment

9.1 Strategically Chosen Focus Area(s)

- Schools should identify one or more focus areas for their societal impact that are clearly articulated in their missions and strategic plans as specified in Standard 1. Schools may choose one focus area that is then reflected in curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities; or, they may choose different focus areas for each of the three areas of curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities.
- Schools should demonstrate how the chosen focus area(s) are supported by measurable goals, aligned resources, and activities that demonstrate strategic intentionality and follow-through.
- Schools should provide evidence that societal impact priorities are integrated into decision-making processes, budgeting, and faculty and staff incentives.
- Schools should show how work in societal impact is grounded in using their business school expertise to make a positive impact on society as opposed to a list of charitable activities or good deeds. Strategic plans should explain how schools rely on their business school expertise to make a positive impact on society in curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities.

9.2 Societal Impact in Curriculum

- Schools should select at least one focus area related to societal impact within the curriculum. The curriculum reflects their societal impact focus areas through required and/or elective courses, co-curricular opportunities, and/or experiential learning. The focus area for curriculum may be the same as the focus area for scholarship and/or engagement, or it may be entirely different from the focus areas chosen for scholarship and/or engagement.
- Schools should demonstrate innovation and relevance in embedding societal impact into their curricula by designing learning experiences that go beyond traditional course delivery, such as integrating emerging societal issues (e.g., sustainability, technology and ethics, diversity of perspectives, global responsibility), leveraging new pedagogical approaches or technologies, and partnering with organizations or communities to provide authentic, impact-focused projects. Schools should regularly review and refresh curricular content to ensure that societal impact themes remain current, actionable, and aligned with evolving stakeholder expectations and school missions.

9.3 Societal Impact in Scholarship

- Schools should demonstrate how their research strategies clearly articulate how their intellectual contributions align with and advance the societal impact focus area(s) identified in their missions and strategic plans. Focus areas for scholarship may be the

same as focus areas for curriculum and/engagement, or they may be entirely different from focus areas chosen for curriculum and/or engagement.

- Schools should provide evidence of positive societal impact from their scholarship, such as changes in organizational practices, public policy, community outcomes, or educational innovation, supported by qualitative and/or quantitative indicators.

9.4 Societal Impact in Engagement

- Schools should demonstrate positive societal impact through activities and partnerships, internal and external, that are aligned with mission and strategy. Their strategic plans should state the focus areas applicable to their engagements with external stakeholders. Focus areas for engagement may be the same as focus areas for curriculum and/or scholarship, or they may be entirely different from the focus areas chosen for curriculum and/or scholarship.
- Examples may include collaborations with business, government, NGOs, and communities to advance solutions in the chosen focus areas.
- Schools should show that engagement efforts lead to meaningful outcomes, not just participation, and that these outcomes are regularly reviewed for continuous improvement.

Suggested Documentation

9.1 Strategically Chosen Focus Area(s)

- Provide excerpts from the strategic plan showing chosen focus area(s) for societal impact and related objectives, initiatives, and measures of success.
- Ensure Table 9-1 reflects at least one focus area for each of curriculum, scholarship, and engagement categories.
- Summarize annual or periodic reports to stakeholders demonstrating progress toward societal impact goals and lessons learned. This may be combined as part of overall strategic plans. Separate strategic plans for societal impact are not required.

9.2 Societal Impact in Curriculum

- Provide evidence that societal impact themes are embedded in the curriculum through innovative and mission-aligned approaches, for example, new course content, faculty and student projects, experiential learning, interdisciplinary modules, or the integration of emerging technologies (such as AI, data analytics, or sustainability tools) that prepare learners to address evolving societal needs.)

- Provide evidence that curricular content and pedagogy are regularly reviewed and refreshed to ensure continuing relevance to contemporary societal challenges and alignment with stakeholder expectations.
- For schools seeking accreditation, ensure Table 9-1 documents outcomes with respect to strategically chosen focus areas for societal impact in curriculum.

9.3 Societal Impact in Scholarship

- Provide excerpts from the strategic plan identifying societal impact focus area(s) related to the production of scholarship that is intended to make positive contributions to societal issues.
- Summarize a representative set of scholarly outputs (basic, applied, and pedagogical) that illustrate alignment with and contributions to the chosen societal impact area(s).
- Provide evidence of societal impact from research, such as documented changes in policy or practice, community benefits, citations or engagement metrics in practitioner outlets, or stakeholder testimonials demonstrating influence beyond academia.

9.4 Societal Impact in Engagement

- Outline major relationships with external stakeholders that schools, units within schools, faculty, and learners have in place; the rationale for the relationships; and the intended outcomes.
- Provide evidence of engagement initiatives and partnerships, including outcomes or impact assessments such as case studies, metrics, testimonials, and/or trend data.
- Schools should explain how engagement with business and broader society aligns with and supports their missions, strategies, and expected outcomes as well as their aspirations to have a positive societal impact.
- Schools should include an evaluation of the school's societal impact over the most recent accreditation cycle, including identification of their aspirations in this area, exemplars of societal impact arising from engagement with non-academic external stakeholders by learners, faculty, teams, or centers that are supporting external communities, enhancing the practice of business, and/or addressing real-world problems and improving society. Include an assessment of how effective the school has been toward having its desired impact and plans for activities over the next accreditation cycle.

Table 9-1

**Impact of Societal Impact Activities and Initiatives Across all Areas of the Standards
Over the Most Recently Completed 6-year Accreditation Cycle**

This table is intended to be the primary documentation for the school's societal impact story. Here is where the school identifies its focus areas for making a positive societal impact in curriculum, scholarship, and engagement with internal and/or external partnerships. For each of these three areas, what are the school's strategic goals, what progress did the school make over the last accreditation cycle, and what are the school's intended future plans for further impact?

Part A: Provide a narrative linked to the school's strategic plan that describes the school's strategic vision and intended long term societal impact for curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities. What impact (change) does the school hope to bring about over time in each of these three areas?

Part B: Describe the school's identified focus areas for curriculum, scholarship, and engagement and the outcomes the school has achieved. If the school has had many years of working on a given focus area, describe how the school has made an impact in each of these areas.

- Identify the school's focus area for curriculum related to societal impact and describe the progress the school has made in achieving its strategic goals in this area.
- Identify the school's focus area for scholarship related to societal impact and describe the progress the school has made in achieving its strategic goals in this area.
- Identify the school's focus area for engagement with internal and external partnerships related to societal impact and describe the progress the school has made in achieving its strategic goals in this area.

Part C: Describe the school's future plans for continuing their societal impact efforts moving forward.

AACSB ACCREDITATION

Introduction to AACSB Accreditation

AACSB was founded in 1916 and established its first standards for degree programs in business administration in 1919. Today AACSB International (AACSB) is the largest business education network and global standard-setting body for business education. Our membership unites business educators, businesses, and nonprofit and public-sector organizations to share thought leadership and best practices that drive innovation, deepen engagement, and amplify the collective impact of business schools. We connect the best minds in business education—and the best minds in business—to work as one to achieve a common goal: to create the next generation of great leaders.

AACSB's mission is to elevate the quality and impact of business schools globally. AACSB strives to continuously improve engagement among business, faculty, institutions, and learners, so that business education is aligned with business practice. To fulfill this goal, AACSB will encourage and accelerate innovation to continuously improve business education. As a result, business education will have a positive impact on business and society, and AACSB will amplify that impact. In achieving its mission and vision, AACSB emphasizes and models the values of members first, inclusivity, global unity, excellence, and curiosity.

The vision of AACSB is to achieve positive societal impact through business schools. Business and business schools are a force for good, contributing to the world's economy and to society. AACSB plays a significant role in making that benefit better known to all stakeholders by serving business schools, learners, business, and society. Our standards contain an imperative that AACSB-accredited business schools demonstrate a positive impact on society in furtherance of this vision.

AACSB adopted additional standards for undergraduate and graduate degree programs in accountancy in 1980 to address the special needs of the accounting profession. Accounting accreditation is optional and considered “supplemental” to the school's business accreditation. Schools holding supplemental accounting accreditation must meet all of the business Global Standards, plus the accounting standards, which are maintained separately from this document.

AACSB accreditation processes are ISO 9001:2015 certified globally and support and uphold the Code of Good Practice for Accrediting Bodies of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA).⁷ Additionally, AACSB is committed to upholding the guidelines of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

⁷ See www.aspa-usa.org

Philosophy of AACSB Accreditation

The business environment is undergoing profound changes, spurred by powerful demographic shifts, global economic and societal forces, and emerging technologies. At the same time, society is increasingly demanding that companies become more accountable for their actions, exhibit a greater sense of social responsibility, and embrace more sustainable practices. These trends send a strong signal that what business needs today is much different from what it needed yesterday or will need tomorrow.

Not surprisingly, the same factors impacting business are also changing higher education. In today's increasingly dynamic environment, business schools must respond to the business world's changing needs by providing relevant knowledge and skills to the communities they serve. They must innovate and invest in intellectual capital; they must develop new programs, curricula, and courses; and they must continually update programs to ensure currency and relevancy of the curriculum. Moreover, declining public support for higher education has placed business schools under additional economic pressure, which has widespread implications on all components of the business school, from the range of academic offerings and co-curricular programs, to the number and type of faculty and professional staff available to support business school operations, to class size, new modalities for delivering instruction, and collaborative and innovative partnerships.

In this context of constant change, standards and processes for accreditation must be designed not only to validate quality business education and impactful research, but also to provide leadership, encouragement, and support for change in business schools. The standards should also provide a platform for business schools to work together to elevate the quality and impact of business schools globally—and create a shared sense of responsibility to impact society positively.

The fundamental purpose of AACSB accreditation is to encourage business schools to hold themselves accountable for improving business practice through a commitment to strategic management and innovation, learner success and engagement, and multiple pathways to impact. AACSB achieves this purpose by defining a set of criteria and standards, coordinating peer review and consultation, and recognizing high-quality business schools that meet the standards and actively engage in the process.

AACSB remains deeply committed to fostering a vibrant and dynamic learning environment in collegiate business education. Encouraging the exchange of varied perspectives in a welcoming and engaging environment enriches the educational experience and prepares graduates to engage effectively in a global business landscape. When business schools expand opportunities and implement strategies to support broader participation, they cultivate an environment that drives success and strengthens excellence in business education.

As a global accreditor, AACSB recognizes that schools can be constrained by a variety of external factors, such as governmental regulatory systems and laws, collective bargaining agreements, formal labor regulations, and other environmental factors. It is within the spirit of the standards that

these external factors are taken into consideration by peer review teams and governing bodies of AACSB.

One of the guiding principles of AACSB accreditation is the encouragement of a variety of paths to achieving high-quality outcomes in business education. Accreditation decisions are made through a process that relies on the professional judgment of peers who conduct reviews that are guided by each business school's stated mission. It is also critically important that AACSB accreditation demands evidence of continuous quality improvement in three vital areas: engagement, innovation, and impact.

Engagement, Innovation, and Impact

Engagement. Business schools thrive when they are deeply connected to both the academic community and the world of business practice. Meaningful engagement with industry, employers, policymakers, and community partners is essential for designing curricula and experiences that develop workforce-ready graduates who can contribute positively to organizations and society. At the same time, academic engagement—through research, disciplinary participation, and collaboration within the global scholarly community—ensures intellectual rigor, currency of knowledge, and the advancement of business theory and practice. High-quality business education requires the intentional integration of both forms of engagement; neither alone is sufficient. AACSB accreditation therefore promotes a dynamic intersection of academic and professional engagement that reflects a school's mission, strengthens relevance, and ensures that learners are prepared for an evolving world of work.

Innovation. High quality business schools continuously innovate in pedagogy, curriculum, research, partnerships, finance and operations and other mission-consistent areas to anticipate the needs of learners and society in a rapidly changing environment. The standards must set demanding but realistic thresholds, challenge business schools to innovate, and inspire educators to pursue continuous improvement in educational programs and other mission-based activities of the business school. Global Standards and associated processes should foster quality and consistency, but not at the expense of the creativity and experimentation necessary for innovation or entrepreneurial pursuits. AACSB encourages schools to pursue bold, forward-looking innovation, recognizing that genuine innovation carries both the possibility of success and the risk of unintended outcomes. Not every experiment will work as intended—and that is not inherently a negative. What matters is that schools take thoughtful, evidence-informed risks and manage those risks in ways that safeguard the overall quality and integrity of their business programs. When innovations are strategically conceived, rationally developed, and responsibly implemented, less-than-positive results should not, on their own, impede a favorable accreditation review. Concerns arise only when the outcomes of an innovation materially compromise the school's ability to deliver high-quality programs or fulfill its mission.

Impact. Impact is ultimately about change—how a business school's teaching, scholarship, and societal engagement make a meaningful difference. AACSB-accredited schools are expected to show that their mission, strategy, and resource choices lead to tangible improvements for learners, for the advancement of knowledge, and for business and society.

Teaching impact is foundational: all faculty are expected to deliver high-quality instruction that strengthens learning and prepares graduates for professional and societal contribution.

Scholarly impact can take many forms. AACSB recognizes multiple pathways—including basic, applied, pedagogical, and practice-oriented research—and encourages schools to use mission-appropriate indicators to demonstrate influence.

AACSB-accredited schools also have the opportunity to apply their expertise to benefit society in ways aligned with their mission. Regardless of form, meaningful impact stems from clear strategic choices and sustained action.

The Role of Peer Review Judgment

One of the values of AACSB accreditation arises from the experience, professionalism, professional judgment, and discretion of the peer review team members. Peer review teams are tasked with two goals for a peer review visit: (1) confirm alignment with the standards, and (2) provide consultative advice with respect to the continuous improvement charge of an AACSB-accredited school.

Peer review teams must exercise judgment when schools do not align with one or more standards. Peer review evaluations are based on the quality of the learning experience and outcomes, not rigid interpretations of standards. In places where a school does not align with the spirit of a standard, the school should justify the variance and provide evidence of high-quality learning experiences and outcomes despite misalignment with the standard.

The provision of consultative advice from highly experienced peers is a hallmark of the peer review process. Schools are encouraged to engage openly with the peer review team, seeking insight into challenges and benefiting from the team's collective experience. While schools are not required to implement this advice, it is offered in the spirit of collegiality and shared commitment to continuous improvement.

In applying such professional judgment, peer review teams must also recognize the diverse contexts in which business schools operate around the world. AACSB's standards are global in scope, but their implementation must respect local missions, cultures, and educational environments. This principle underpins the following guidance on global standards with local application.

The Accredited Entity

AACSB accreditation is granted to the agreed-upon entity—either the institution or a single business unit within a larger parent university (or other academic institution), with institutional accreditation being the default accredited entity. In all cases, the AACSB brand will only be applied to the agreed-upon entity.

Institutional Accreditation

Under institutional accreditation, all business degrees within the institution, regardless of whether they are housed within the business school or elsewhere in the university, are to be included in

the scope of the AACSB accreditation review, unless otherwise excluded (see “Programmatic Scope” below).

Single Business Unit Accreditation

An alternative to institutional accreditation is the accreditation of a single business academic unit (referred to as “unit of accreditation”). Typically, such units are part of a larger parent university (or other academic institution) from which they derive degree-granting authority. Redefining the accreditation entity from institution to a single unit is subject to the receipt and approval of documentation that verifies that the unit has a sufficient level of independence in two areas: branding, and external market perception, as it relates to the single unit and the parent institution. The decision as to whether the school has made a successful case for a single unit of accreditation lies with AACSB.

- **Branding.** The unit seeking to be recognized independently of the larger parent organization must demonstrate and document that it is branded separately to the level that external stakeholders clearly distinguish between degrees offered within the unit and those within other academic units in the university. To demonstrate such independence of brand, the unit should demonstrate that its outreach activities and products clearly distinguish it from the other academic units offering business degrees. Evidence may include (1) public relations related to market positioning; (2) promotional materials such as websites, electronic and print advertising, and recruiting materials and activities that clearly distinguish it from other academic units in the university offering business degrees; (3) business school name, faculty, and degree titles that clearly distinguish the unit from the other academic units offering business degrees; and (4) other brand differentiation between the unit seeking independent accreditation and other academic units offering business degrees within the parent organization.
- **External Market Perception.** The unit to be accredited must demonstrate that there is no brand or market confusion between degrees offered by the unit and those offered by other units offering business degrees under the parent organization. This criterion is focused on the extent to which the external markets (learners, employers, other stakeholder groups, and the public) perceive that the business academic unit is differentiated from other academic units within the parent organization. This differentiation may include elements such as learner markets served, admissions requirements that are different between the unit and other academic units in the university offering business degrees, the level of degrees offered, placement histories, starting salaries, and employer and community perceptions.

A request for unit of accreditation is made prior to the submission of the school’s eligibility application for schools in the initial accreditation process. For accredited schools, an application for unit of accreditation may be submitted at any time. The request is reviewed by AACSB staff and peers of the appropriate accreditation committee, and a decision is made by that committee and communicated to the school. If the unit of accreditation application is approved, only the degrees within that unit are considered accredited by AACSB, subject to programs that may be excluded as discussed in the following section. The school must clearly distinguish for the public where a unit of

accreditation exists to ensure the market is fully aware of which degrees have been quality assured by AACSB accreditation. If the unit of accreditation is not approved, the school may still pursue institutional accreditation if the eligibility application is approved.

Programmatic Scope

Once the accredited entity is determined, the next step is to gain agreement on which programs within the accredited entity will be included in the scope of accreditation. This is referred to as “programmatic scope.” Programmatic scope will normally include all business degree programs at the bachelor’s level or higher within the accredited entity. Schools may request exclusion of certain degree programs, subject to approval by the appropriate AACSB committee.

- **Included Programs.** Included programs are degree programs in which 25 percent or more of the content for baccalaureate degree programs, or 50 percent or more of the content for post-baccalaureate degree programs, relates to business disciplines such as accounting, economics, finance, legal studies, management, management information systems, marketing, and quantitative methods.⁸
- **Excluded Programs.** Excluded programs are programs with business discipline content below the thresholds noted above, or for which a specific exclusion request has been granted by AACSB.

For all AACSB-accredited entities, as well as those seeking initial accreditation, it is the school’s responsibility to annually review and update the list of degree programs included in the scope of accreditation review as part of AACSB’s *Business School Questionnaire* so that the list of approved program exclusions can be maintained on a continual basis by AACSB. Once a degree program has been granted a formal exclusion by AACSB, the program remains excluded for future peer review visits unless the program undergoes substantial curricular changes that could bring the program into scope. Schools may check their included and excluded programs at any time within myAccreditation.

New business degree programs introduced by the approved entity within their home country may be indicated as AACSB accredited until the next continuous improvement review, at which time the peer review team will review the new program for alignment with the standards. However, degree programs introduced in between accreditation visits at other locations outside their home country for which the program content and/or the faculty who will deliver the program have not been previously quality assured must be disclosed through a substantive change disclosure, to be reviewed by the Continuous Improvement Review Committee (“CIRC,” for accredited schools) or the Initial Accreditation Committee (“IAC,” for schools in the initial accreditation process), as appropriate for guidance. CIRC and IAC will take into consideration how significant the degree program is in providing guidance and may request a desk review or even a visit of the new location of the program in between accreditation cycles before the program at the new location can be considered

⁸ The percentage of business content is calculated by dividing the maximum total number of business credits that can be taken in a degree (including electives) by the total number of credits required to earn the degree. For example, a 120-hour bachelor’s degree with 30 or more hours of business credits would normally be included in scope.

AACSB accredited. New business degree programs introduced by other academic units that were not originally within scope may not be indicated as accredited prior to the next review.

Degree programs in teach-out stage at the time of the accreditation visit are normally included in the scope of review, though the peer review team recognizes that the program is in teach-out mode.⁹ The review is concerned with whether the program still has sufficient and qualified faculty and other elements in place to ensure the remaining program is delivered in a high-quality manner.

Collaborative Provisions/Transfer Credit

Schools may engage in collaborative provisions with other institutions. A collaborative provision refers to a partnership agreement between two or more institutions. Apart from collaborative provision programs described below, Standard 6 specifies that normally the majority of learning in business disciplines that count toward degree fulfillment (as determined by credits, contact hours, or other metrics) is earned through the institution awarding the degree. In this context, business disciplines do not include general education or liberal arts courses, but do include courses in the major, business electives, and required business courses. Practically speaking, this means that absent a collaborative provision, transfer credit related to business disciplines is normally limited to less than half of the program requirements.¹⁰

An exception to the transfer limits may exist when collaborative provisions exist. There is a wide array of collaborative provisions, each with varying implications on a school's AACSB accreditation. Below are the most common types of collaborative provisions, whether they are normally included or excluded from the AACSB accreditation scope, and, if included, the implications on a school's accreditation.¹¹ This list may evolve over time.

AACSB recognizes that schools may use various terms to describe collaborative arrangements with other institutions. However, in some cases, the substance of the arrangement may differ from its stated name. For example, an agreement referred to as an "articulation agreement" may, upon closer examination, function more as a dual degree or joint degree arrangement in practice. In such cases, AACSB will make the final determination regarding the classification and treatment of the collaboration for purposes of accreditation scope and review.

The table below is presented from the perspective of the AACSB-accredited school awarding the degree, denoted as "School A." "School B" denotes a partner school that may or may not be AACSB accredited, as AACSB allows partnerships between accredited and non-accredited schools. The reader of these standards could be either School A or School B, depending on context.

⁹ "Teach-out" programs are programs that a school has formally decided to discontinue in the near future, but existing learners are allowed to complete their programs.

¹⁰ The maximum credit in business disciplines that can be transferred in is calculated by dividing the maximum total number of business credits earned at the institution awarding the degree (including electives) by the total number of credits in the major. For example, in a 120-hour bachelor's degree with 60 or more hours of business credits required to complete the degree program, a maximum of 30 hours of credits in business disciplines could be transferred in. Schools can always choose to set more restrictive limits.

¹¹ The collaborative provision types were adapted from the [EQUAL Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#).

Collaborative Provision Type	Definition	Coursework Included in Scope of School A ¹² , or Excluded from Scope of School A ¹³
Joint Degree	A collaborative program where a learner who completes the program receives a single degree from both (all) schools, such as an MBA from School A and School B where the names of both schools appear on the credential or qualification.	All business coursework taken at School B is included in the scope of School A.
Consortium Degree	A collaborative program where learners earn one degree from a coalition of two or more schools with the intent of sharing resources, improving finances, and educating students. Usually, consortia are between schools in the same general geographic location, but some result from the melding of virtual campuses.	Business coursework taken within the schools that make up the consortium is included in the scope of School A.
Dual/Double Degrees	A collaborative program where a learner who completes the program receives separate distinct degrees from the collaborative schools. ¹⁴	Business coursework taken at School B is excluded from the scope of School A.
Articulation, Twinning, Top-Up, or Progression Agreement	A collaborative provision where an institution accepts learners having completed courses in another institution into its own degree program. They are typically considered transfer students, with the latter being the awarding institution and are subject to the transfer provisions of School A.	Business coursework taken at School B is excluded from scope of School A.
Validation	Validation most often operates similarly to an accreditation (endorsement/authentication) of School B's program(s) delivered in the name of School A.	Business coursework taken at School B is excluded from scope of School A.
Franchise	A form of collaborative provision where a program developed by and leading to an award of the institution (the franchisor) is predominantly delivered and/or supported by one or more collaborative organizations (the franchisee/s). Typically, a franchisee may provide some or all the teaching and may use local teaching and administrative support staff. The qualification bears the name of School A. Franchise agreements typically involve regular oversight by School A during program delivery.	Business coursework taken at School B is included in scope for School A if School A is awarding the degree.
Study Abroad/ Exchange	A collaborative agreement where learners from one university attend another university for a period of time, such as a semester or year, but their final degree is from their original school. Example: Learners from School A attend a semester abroad at School B, but their degree and program are considered to be part of School A.	Business coursework taken at School B is normally considered transfer credit and thus excluded from scope of School A.
Offshore Arrangement	Denotes educational provision leading to an award/degree in a country other than that of the awarding institution. Typically, the awarding institution provides the majority of teaching and may use their own or local administrative staff. Offshore does not include multi-campus provision of the awarding institution, whether located in the same or different countries.	Business coursework taken at School B is included in scope of School A.

¹² If business coursework taken at School B(s) is deemed in-scope per the table, this means School A must demonstrate alignment with AACSB standards as usual. Formal Assurance of Learning (AoL) must be completed on the business courses at School B for programs that are in scope, and all faculty from both School A and B delivering courses in business disciplines must be reported in Table 3-1 within the appropriate discipline(s) and Table 3-2 within the appropriate program(s). If School B is not AACSB accredited, School B's faculty should be classified in Table 3-1 based on School A's faculty sufficiency and qualification criteria. If School B is AACSB accredited, faculty qualification status may be carried over to School A's Table 3-1. In either case, the intellectual contributions associated with School B's faculty are excluded from Table 8-1.

¹³ If business coursework is excluded per the table, the faculty at School B are not required to appear in School A tables, nor is formal AoL required for the portion of the program completed at School B. However, School A must ensure that the academic work accepted from School B is comparable to work completed at their own school. If School B is AACSB-accredited, quality is automatically assured, and the school simply notes the partnership is with an AACSB-accredited institution.

¹⁴ For example, a student receives a BS in accounting from School A and a BS in marketing from School B.

Accreditation Eligibility Criteria

Overview of the Accreditation Journey

A collegiate business school offering at a minimum a baccalaureate degree in business or a field closely related to business may apply for AACSB accreditation, provided the below eligibility criteria are met.¹⁵ As a first step, the business school must first be a member of AACSB.

After joining AACSB as a member, a school seeking accreditation must complete and have an eligibility application accepted, which demonstrates that a school is reasonably able to align with AACSB guiding principles and Global Standards within the maximum time frame allowed. In the section that follows 11 criteria are outlined that must be met for an eligibility application to be accepted.

After acceptance of the eligibility application, the school formally enters the initial accreditation process, during which a mentor is appointed to guide and assist the school throughout its accreditation journey. During the journey, the school is periodically evaluated on the progress it is making in fully aligning with AACSB's guiding principles and Global Standards through a process of self-evaluation and peer review. A school that does not make sufficient progress in aligning with the guiding principles and Global Standards within seven years must withdraw from the initial accreditation process and may apply to re-enter in the future.

A school may be invited to an initial accreditation visit by the Initial Accreditation Committee once the committee determines the school is aligned with the guiding principles and Global Standards. An initial accreditation visit is planned, and if successful, the school will earn AACSB accreditation. After earning AACSB accreditation, the business school undergoes periodic peer reviews of its ongoing quality, continuous improvement, and continued alignment with the guiding principles and Global Standards to maintain its accreditation.¹⁶

Criteria for an Eligibility Application to be Accepted:

1. **Good Standing Requirement.** The school must be a member in good standing with AACSB and the institution's governing bodies at local, regional, and/or national levels. Good standing means the school is not on probation or under an investigation related to a significant legal or ethical breach, or a breach of the governing bodies' rules and processes; nor are there any ethical or reputational concerns with the school, the university or its leadership. Additionally, the school is current with AACSB membership dues.
2. **Degree Program Requirement.** The school must offer at least one baccalaureate and/or graduate degree program (or equivalent) in business, management, or accounting

¹⁵ Examples of fields closely related to business include, but are not limited to, data science, information technology, data analytics, and cybersecurity. As the landscape for what is considered business education shifts and new degree programs emerge, it is the intention of the standards to be flexible enough to accommodate such emerging programs.

¹⁶ A full description of the processes and procedures a school follows during the initial accreditation period can be found in AACSB's *Initial Accreditation Handbook* available on myAccreditation.

independently through their institution, and not in partnership with another institution(s). Additionally, a majority of the degrees awarded by the school must be at the bachelor's level or above.

3. **Strategic Planning Requirement.** The school must have a strategic plan independent of but supportive of the university (if applicable) and consonant with the university's stated strategic direction that outlines the school's mission, strategic goals, and key initiatives. It is expected that the plan will likely mature and evolve during the initial accreditation process. Of paramount importance is that the plan provided at the initial application stage should provide early evidence to demonstrate that the school has identified its strategic priorities, established a framework for achieving them, and begun implementing actions aligned with its mission.
4. **Leadership of the Accredited Entity.** AACSB acknowledges that a multitude of leadership structures for in-scope accredited programs exists globally. It is not AACSB's intention to prescribe the leadership structure of the accredited entity (defined for these purposes as the collective group of in-scope accredited programs.) Governance structure is a purview of the institution and is a function of the institution's strategic goals and resources. Normally, the leader of the accredited entity is the dean (or dean-equivalent). If the leadership of the accredited entity is someone other than the dean (or dean equivalent), the leader of the accredited entity maintains sufficient autonomy to establish and lead a strategic vision for the accredited entity, as well as authority over resources adequate to achieve its strategic objectives.
5. **Financial Resources Requirement.** The school must demonstrate sufficient financial resources from all sources derived to ensure its long-term viability and ability to achieve its strategic goals and initiatives. Evidence of financial soundness should include at least six years of operating budgets, endowment information, and other routine sources of income that collectively demonstrate the school's capacity to sustain high-quality business education and maintain the activities expected of an AACSB-accredited school.
6. **Enrollment Stability Requirement.** The school must provide six years of enrollment data by degree program to demonstrate stable or positive enrollment trends. The data should provide reasonable assurance that the school is not experiencing significant or sustained enrollment decline that could impact its financial health, faculty sufficiency, or ability to deliver high-quality business education.
7. **Faculty Sufficiency Requirement.** The school must have a minimum of 16 full-time faculty members (excluding visiting faculty) at the time it submits an eligibility application to demonstrate reasonable sufficiency to support high-quality business education and to sustain the activities expected of an AACSB-accredited school, including teaching, research, and service consistent with its mission. A school with less than 16 full-time faculty may submit its hiring plan for committee consideration along with its eligibility application. However, a school will not be invited to a visit without 16 full-time faculty in place at the time the IAC makes the invite decision.

8. **Faculty Qualifications Requirement.** A minimum of 35% of full-time faculty in the school must have a terminal degree in their teaching discipline or closely related to their teaching discipline at the time the school submits an eligibility application.
9. **Assessment of Learning Readiness Requirement.** The school must demonstrate a foundational understanding of learning assessment. The school should provide evidence of current practices used to assess student learning outcomes to show its capacity to develop a systematic AoL process consistent with AACSB accreditation expectations.
10. **Demonstrated Learner Success.** A majority of in-scope degree programs in existence at the school have produced graduates during at least two consecutive years. For programs that are newly established and have not yet graduated two full cohorts, the absence of two years of graduates will not, in itself, preclude acceptance of an Eligibility Application. However, prior to being invited to an initial accreditation visit, the school must demonstrate that the majority of degree programs have produced at least two years of graduates and that sufficient outcome data are available to assess program quality and learner success.
11. **Faculty Scholarly Productivity Requirement.** The school's full-time faculty must *collectively* demonstrate sustained scholarly productivity consistent with its mission. As a minimum threshold for entering the initial accreditation process, 75% of the school's terminally-qualified full-time faculty should have produced intellectual contributions over the past six years, with the majority of those 75% having produced at least one peer-reviewed journal article over the preceding six years.
12. **Attestations and Acknowledgements.** At the time the eligibility application is submitted the school agrees to the following attestations and acknowledgements:
 - The school provides evidence that it has attended an Eligibility Application Workshop within two years of the date of submitting its eligibility application.
 - The school agrees to complete AACSB's *Business School Questionnaire* modules annually. A school that consistently fails to complete the Business School Questionnaire may be removed from the initial accreditation process.
 - The eligibility application is supported in writing by both the chief executive officer and the chief academic officer of the school, regardless of the entity seeking AACSB accreditation.
 - The school formally acknowledges an understanding of the timeline involved in the initial accreditation process, including critical time limits at various stages of the initial accreditation process.
 - The school agrees to notify AACSB through a formal substantive change notice when a material change occurs that could affect its ability to meet the standards, the defined scope of accreditation, or continued participation in the initial accreditation process.

Substantive changes will be reviewed by the Initial Accreditation Committee to determine any actions necessary to maintain the school's eligibility status.

- The school acknowledges an understanding of the Guiding Principles of AACSB accreditation and agrees to provide evidence of alignment as part of the of the initial accreditation journey.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles underpin the shared ideals of AACSB accreditation. They guide accredited schools in behaviors, values, attitudes, and choices as they relate to strategy and operations of the business school. By pursuing and achieving AACSB accreditation, each accredited school stands by and supports these guiding principles.

For initial applicants, alignment with these guiding principles is viewed as a critical step in the initial accreditation journey.

Once a school achieves accreditation, AACSB peer review teams will continue to evaluate the school's adherence to the guiding principles and determine whether changes in its strategy could affect its ability to continue to fulfill its mission. If a school is determined to be significantly in violation of any of the guiding principles below, the school will be subject to accreditation policies and procedures in place at the time the violation occurs. In the below principles, "school" refers to the accredited entity.

1. **Ethics and Integrity.** The school encourages and supports ethical behavior and integrity by learners, faculty, administrators, and staff in all its activities. The school is expected to have appropriate policies and procedures that attest to a strong emphasis on ethical behavior as well as a mechanism for identifying and remediating behavior by those associated with the conduct of the business school. Any school that deliberately misrepresents data contained within any accreditation report or within AACSB's *Business School Questionnaire* is subject to revocation of accreditation status or termination of an initial accreditation application. Similarly, AACSB may take actions to conduct an off-cycle visit to the school if serious ethical concerns are uncovered. Ethical concerns may be conveyed to AACSB through our formal complaint process. Formal complaints must be related directly to a violation of the AACSB Global Standards as opposed to personnel issues, which are handled at the local school level.¹⁷
2. **Societal Impact.** Societal impact as an expectation of all accredited schools reflects AACSB's vision that business education is a force for good in society and makes a positive contribution to society, as identified in the school's mission and strategic plan. This includes an expectation that the school identifies within its strategic plan specific focus areas for

¹⁷ The AACSB Complaint Process is available on the AACSB website at www.aacsb.edu.

curriculum, scholarship, and internal and/or external engagement activities designed to advance their societal impact aspirations.

3. **Mission-Driven Focus.** AACSB accreditation focuses on outcomes achieved through mission-related activities of the institution. As part of maintaining a robust strategic plan, each school identifies its specific mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. The school, then, is evaluated by peers against its stated mission to determine if its activities are aligned with its stated mission. This allows a wide variety of schools to maintain AACSB accreditation.
4. **Peer Review.** Accredited schools agree to a periodic peer review visit and schools in the initial accreditation process agree to a mentor visit. The peer review process is a defining characteristic of AACSB accreditation. All schools agree to continued adherence to Global Standards and guiding principles and provide timely, accurate information in support of the accreditation process. Peer review is characterized by professional judgment, collegiality, and a commitment to AACSB's guiding principles. Because the Global Standards are more principles-based than rules-based, more subjectivity is introduced into the peer review process. Consequently, the experience and training of the peer review team members and mentors is critical, which is why peer review volunteers are required to participate in formal training.

Schools are strongly encouraged to establish and maintain clear and constant communication with the peer review team and share materials early so that any areas of substantive difference can be discussed prior to the visit. Peer review judgment, through the visit and the subsequent committee evaluation and ratification by the Global Accreditation Committee, and absent a formal appeal by the school, is what ultimately prevails. Accredited institutions may be subject to an off-cycle peer review visit or other board action if significant ethical breaches of integrity or conduct arise at any time.

5. **Continuous Improvement.** The school demonstrates a systematic commitment to a culture of continuous improvement that yields high-quality outcomes. Processes for assessment, feedback, and enhancement are embedded across all activities, ensuring consistency of performance over time and accountability for results. Continuous improvement is evidenced through ongoing evaluation and enhancement of programs, research, engagement, and operations. Strategic thinking is embraced, and best practices are sought in support of continuous improvement.
6. **Collegiality.** The school maintains a collegiate environment. Mutual respect, collaboration, and trust are pursued to enable the business school to promote a positive culture that is supportive of the school's strategic mission and goals, faculty development, learner success, and thought leadership. The school promotes shared governance and active participation by a cross-section of faculty in university and school service.
7. **Agility and Innovation.** The school cultivates a forward-looking, adaptive mindset that embraces continuous improvement and encourages creative problem-solving. It proactively monitors emerging trends in business education, technology, and industry practice, and responds in a timely and thoughtful way. Through strategic agility and a commitment to

innovation, the school updates curriculum content, pedagogical approaches, and faculty capabilities to ensure the ongoing currency, relevance, and distinctiveness of its educational offerings.

8. **Global Mindset.** The curriculum imbues the understanding of other cultures and values, and learners are educated on the global nature of business and the importance of understanding global trends. The school fosters sensitivity toward a greater understanding and acceptance of cultural differences and global perspectives. Graduates should be prepared to pursue business careers in a global context.
9. **Community and Connectedness.** A strong sense of community and meaningful connections enhance the educational experience and contribute to excellence in business education. Every institution operates within a unique cultural and historical context shaped by its traditions, values, societal influences, and regulatory contexts. Schools are expected to cultivate an environment that values engagement, mutual respect, and collaboration among all students, faculty, and stakeholders. Learners should be exposed to cultural practices different than their own. By fostering awareness and appreciation of different cultures, perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, schools prepare graduates to navigate complex global and professional landscapes with openness and understanding.

Glossary of Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout the AACSB Global Standards for Business Education. They are defined to ensure consistent understanding and application across all accredited and in-process schools. Additional interpretation and examples appear in the *Interpretive Guidance*.

A

Accreditation Cycle: The defined period during which a school maintains accreditation before its next continuous improvement review. The standard cycle is six years.

Administrative Appointment: A significant leadership role within the school (e.g., dean, associate dean, department chair, center director) that carries managerial and strategic responsibilities in addition to academic duties.

Agility: The capacity of the school, its curriculum, or its learners to adapt quickly to emerging business trends, technologies, and environmental changes.

All Other Intellectual Contributions (Table 8-1): All other intellectual contributions include outputs that are not validated by peers or those recognized as subject matter experts. Refer to Interpretive Guidance for Standard 8 for examples.

Applied Scholarship: Research that seeks to improve business practice or policy by applying theory to real-world problems.

Assurance of Learning (AoL): A systematic process of defining learning goals, assessing student achievement of those goals, and using the results to improve curricula, pedagogy, and learner success.

B

Basis for Judgment: The interpretive criteria by which peer review teams and accreditation committees evaluate a school's achievement of each standard.

Basic Scholarship: Research that contributes to the creation or refinement of theory, concepts, or frameworks that advance knowledge in business and management disciplines.

Benchmark: A reference point or performance expectation used for comparison in assessing outcomes, progress, or quality.

C

Continuous Improvement: An ongoing process of assessing performance, identifying opportunities for enhancement, implementing changes, and measuring results to strengthen quality and impact.

Competencies: Competencies state the educational expectations for each degree program. They specify the intellectual and behavioral capabilities a program is intended to instill, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected as an outcome of a particular program. In defining these competencies, faculty members clarify how they intend for graduates to be competent and effective as a result of completing the program. Not all content areas need to be included as competency goals. Competency goals should be aligned with the mission of the school.

Competency-based Education: Refers to courses where learners progress at their own pace, based on their ability to demonstrate proficiency with a specific skill or competency. CBE includes credit for prior learning.

Curriculum: A curriculum is composed of program content, pedagogies (teaching methods, delivery modes), and structures (how the content is organized and sequenced to create a systematic, integrated program of teaching and learning), and identifies how the school facilitates achievement of program competency goals. A curriculum is influenced by the mission, values, and culture of the school.

Curriculum Content: Curriculum content includes theories, ideas, concepts, skills, and knowledge that collectively make up a degree program.

Curriculum Innovation: The intentional design or modification of courses, programs, or learning experiences to reflect current business realities, emerging technologies, or new pedagogical methods.

Curriculum Management: Refers to the school's processes and organization for development, design, and implementation of each degree program's structure, organization, content, assessment of outcomes, pedagogy, etc. Curriculum management captures input from key business school stakeholders and is influenced by assurance of learning results, new developments in business practices and issues, and revision of mission and strategy that relate to new areas of instruction.

D

Digital Resources: technology infrastructure needed to support all instructional delivery modes and for faculty to conduct research and other scholarship consistent with the school's mission.

Direct Measures: Refer to evidence from learner work such as examinations, quizzes, assignments, and internship or externship feedback that is based on direct observation of individual performance behaviors or outcomes.

E

Engagement: The school's meaningful interaction and partnership with internal and external stakeholders—such as businesses, government, alumni, and communities—to advance its mission and societal impact.

Executive Education: Refers to educational activities that typically do not lead to a degree but have educational objectives at a level consistent with higher education in business. Examples include corporate training or professional development seminars. Where executive education programs are degree-granting, normal assurance of learning processes and other standards apply.

Expected Outcomes: conveyed as broad or high-level statements describing the impact the school expects to achieve as it pursues its mission through educational activities, scholarship, and other endeavors. Expected outcomes translate the mission into strategic goals against which the school evaluates its success.

Experiential Learning: A pedagogical approach that integrates practical, hands-on experience—such as internships, simulations, consulting projects, or entrepreneurship—with academic learning.

F

Faculty Qualification Categories: The four categories used by AACSB to classify faculty based on initial academic preparation and sustained engagement: Scholarly Academics (SA), Practice Academics (PA), Scholarly Practitioners (SP), and Instructional Academics (IA).

Financial Resources: Funding from all sources derived to operate the school on a quality basis and achieve its strategic initiatives, goals, and expected outcomes.

Financial Vitality: The demonstrated ability of a school to sustain its mission, strategies, and operations through sound financial management and resource allocation.

Focused Mission: The term focused implies the mission should yield distinctive aspects of the school's strategies, outcomes and accomplishments that are special or notable.

G

Global Mindset: An orientation that values diverse perspectives and prepares learners to understand and operate effectively in cross-cultural and international contexts.

I

Impact: The positive, demonstrable difference a school makes on learners, organizations, and society through its teaching, research, and engagement activities.

Inclusive Environment: A learning and working environment that encourages broad participation and respects varied perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds.

Indirect Measures: refer to evidence attained from input that is not based on direct observation of individual performance behaviors or outcomes.

Initial Preparation: The academic and professional background that qualifies an individual for a faculty or professional staff position at the time of hire.

Innovation: The introduction or meaningful refinement of ideas, methods, or practices that enhance the school's relevance, effectiveness, or efficiency.

Institutional Accreditation: Under institutional accreditation, all business degrees within the institution, regardless of whether they are housed within the business school or elsewhere in the university, are to be included in the scope of the AACSB accreditation review, unless otherwise excluded.

Intellectual Contributions: Original works of scholarship—basic, applied, or pedagogical—that advance knowledge, improve practice, or enhance teaching and learning in business disciplines.

For Table 8-1 purposes, there are three categories of intellectual contributions:

- **Basic or Discovery Scholarship** is directed toward increasing the knowledge base and the development of theory.
- **Applied or Integrative/Application Scholarship** draws from basic research and uses accumulated theories, knowledge, methods, and techniques to solve real-world problems and/or issues associated with practice.
- **Teaching and Learning Scholarship** explores the theory and methods of teaching and advances new understandings, insights, content, and methods that impact learning behavior.

L

Learner Progression: The advancement of learners through a program of study, measured by indicators such as retention, completion, and post-graduation success.

Lifelong Learning Mindset: An orientation toward continual professional and personal growth through ongoing education and skill development.

M

Microlearning Credentials: Certifications granted by assessment of mastery of a specialized competency. Such credentials may sometimes be “stackable,” or combined to collectively satisfy the requirements of a degree program. Minors, certificates, and badges are common microlearning credentials.

Mission: A single statement or set of statements serving as a guide for the school and its stakeholders. These statements capture the school's core purposes, express its aspirations, and describe its distinguishing features.

Mission Alignment: The extent to which the school's programs, activities, and resource decisions consistently support its stated mission and strategic priorities.

Mission Differentiation: The distinct characteristics that define a school's identity, focus, and contribution to business education within its regional or global context.

O

Other Peer-or Editorial-reviewed Intellectual Contributions (Table 8-1): Scholarly outputs quality assurance by either peers or subject matter experts recognized as having particular practical or academic expertise in that field. Refer to Interpretive Guidance for Standard 8 for examples.

Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact: Outputs are the immediate products of activities (e.g., publications, graduates, partnerships). Outcomes are the short- to medium-term effects of those outputs (e.g., improved learning, enhanced employability). Impact reflects the longer-term, demonstrable benefits to business, society, or the environment.

P

Participating: Faculty member that actively and deeply engages in the activities of the school in matters beyond direct teaching responsibilities. Normally, the school considers participating faculty members to be ongoing members of the faculty, regardless of whether their appointments are full-time or part-time, whether their positions with the school are considered their principal employment, and whether the school has tenure policies.

Pedagogical Scholarship: Research that improves the theory, practice, or effectiveness of teaching and learning in business and management education.

Peer Review Team (PRT): A group of qualified academic and professional peers appointed by AACSB to evaluate a school's adherence to the standards and provide recommendations on accreditation status.

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles (PRJ) (Table 8-1): Scholarly publications that were submitted for critique and evaluation by one or more academics who have expertise in the discipline and/or methodology of the subject matter. Publications in law reviews may be included in this category.

Physical Resources: Buildings, furniture and fixtures, technology labs, collaboration space, libraries (including virtual), and any other physical infrastructure directly used by the school.

Predatory Journals and Publishers: defined as "entities that prioritize self-interest at the expense of scholarship and/or are characterized by false or misleading information; deviation from best editorial and publication practices; a lack of transparency; and/or the use of aggressive and indiscriminate solicitation practices."¹⁸

Professional Staff: Non-faculty employees who make significant contributions to the school's mission through roles in administration, advising, technology, research support, or operations.

¹⁸ Definition adopted from "Predatory Journals: no definition, no defence." (Nature 2019, December 11). Retrieved from <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03759-y>

R

Research Master's: degrees that focus heavily on research methods and independent research projects as the primary program content.

Research Portfolio: The collective body of intellectual contributions produced by the school's faculty and professional staff, demonstrating alignment with mission and evidence of impact.

Risk Assessment: A structured evaluation of potential factors—financial, operational, reputational, or environmental—that could affect the school's ability to achieve its mission and sustain quality.

S

Scholarly Work: Any intellectual contribution that demonstrates rigor, relevance, and alignment with the school's mission, encompassing basic, applied, and pedagogical research.

Society: refers to external stakeholders of relevance to the business school given its mission. Examples include nonprofit and private-sector organizations; business, government, and community groups; and the broader social, economic, business, and physical environments. These external stakeholders and broader environments may be at a local, regional, national, or international scale.

Societal Impact: The school's contribution to the public good through education, research, and engagement that address social, economic, and environmental challenges consistent with its mission.

Stakeholders: Individuals and organizations who have a vested interest in the school's success, including learners, faculty, staff, alumni, employers, partners, and accrediting bodies.

Strategic Plan: A documented roadmap that articulates the school's mission, vision, goals, strategies, and measures of success over a defined time horizon.

Strategies: overarching statements of direction derived from the strategic management processes of the school. Strategies describe how the school intends to achieve its mission and expected outcomes.

Supporting: faculty member that does not normally participate in the intellectual or operational life of the school beyond the direct performance of teaching responsibilities.

T

Technology Agility: The ability to integrate and adapt current and emerging technologies—including artificial intelligence, analytics, and automation—to enhance learning, research, and administration.

Thematic Focus Area: A priority area identified by the school (e.g., sustainability, entrepreneurship, digital transformation) that shapes its societal impact strategy and informs related teaching, research, and engagement activities.

Thought Leadership: Evidenced when a business school is recognized as a highly respected authority in an area or areas of expertise, and is thus sought after by relevant stakeholders, including learners, business, academics, government, nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, and/or broader society.

U

Unit of Accreditation: The organizational entity (e.g., business school, college, or faculty) that has applied for or achieved AACSB accreditation and is responsible for meeting the standards.

W

Workforce Readiness: The degree to which graduates possess the competencies, mindset, and ethical grounding needed to contribute effectively in professional and organizational settings.