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AACSB Global Standards for Business Education ™

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/ Acknowledgements

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/ Preamble

Global Standards: Purpose, Vision, and Role in AACSB Accreditation

Business education plays a vital role in shaping leaders, organizations, and societies. The AACSB Global Standards for Business Education™ (Global Standards) articulate a shared vision for excellence that supports quality across diverse geographies, cultures, and institutional components.

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-centricity, 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 it 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 provide a framework that is both aspirational and practical. The Standards establish 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 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:

01

To present the Global Standards for Business Education, applicable to all schools seeking to enhance quality improvement, relevance, and societal impact.

02

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.

AACSB Global Standards for Business Education ™

One set of standards, two purposes



Quality Improvement for all business schools

AACSB ACCREDITED

Quality assurance and accreditation for schools that meet all standards

About The Global Standards

Introduction to Global Standards

The 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 signify global quality and represent 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 common language 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.

Therefore, 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 that do not pursue 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, therefore are expected to exercise discernment, respect institutional missions, and appreciate differing perspectives when evaluating how schools interpret and apply the standards in their local contexts. The goal of the accreditation review process is not uniformity; it is 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, accreditation represents the process of alignment with all the Global Standards. To support this process, AACSB provides a supplemental resource, the Interpretive Guidance, to assist in applying 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.

AACSB Global Standards for Business Education ™

Guidelines on accreditation processes and requirements

Interpretive Guidance

Regional Interpretive Guidance

Examples from business schools and businesses



Structure of the Global Standards

Each of the standards consists of three sections

01
Standard

02
Basis for Judgment

03
Suggested Documentation

Standard

The standards identify the core component of each topical area. All business schools are encouraged, and accredited business schools are expected, to meet the elements of the standards. For accredited schools, deviations from the standards that are revealed during a peer review team visit must be justified and acceptable to the accreditation peer review team and subsequent accreditation committees. While the standards are intended to set the minimum expectations for quality in a business school, the Basis for Judgment and Suggested Documentation are intended for accredited schools and schools formally engaged in the initial accreditation process.

Each standard is shown in bold to identify it as language that the AACSB Accreditation Council oversees. We refer to the portion labeled "Standard" as the "Standard Proper." The Standard Proper cannot be changed without a majority vote of the Accreditation Council, as distinguished from the Basis for Judgment and Suggested Documentation, which are under the purview of the Global Standards Committee and are updated annually, along with the separate document titled Interpretive Guidance.

Basis for Judgment

This section provides guidance to accreditation peer review teams on which factors they should collectively consider when determining whether a school aligns 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, written for the school's benefit, indicates 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 alignment with the standard.

For each standard, schools in the initial accreditation process are expected to have all documentation listed in this section available upon request by the accreditation peer review team. Accredited schools, however, are not expected to provide such detail during continuous improvement reviews. Instead, the suggested documentation should be viewed by accredited schools as illustrative and non-exhaustive. Accredited schools may provide alternative evidence that credibly demonstrates alignment with the intent of the standard, consistent with their mission, governance structures, and regional or regulatory context. This practice is consistent with AACSB's philosophy that continuous improvement 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 guiding principles and the expectations for accredited schools embodied within 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 report template provided by AACSB, along with school conversations with the accreditation peer review team, collectively guide the accredited school on what specific evidence the peer review team is interested in seeing; however, unless otherwise noted, all schools in the initial accreditation process are expected to provide tables shown within the Suggested Documentation for relevant standards. 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 to identify opportunities to improve relevance, maintain currency, and increase value, according to the AACSB Global Standard-Setting Framework[1].

Consistent with this 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 Global Standards) is updated annually by the AACSB Global Standards Committee. Note that, with respect to the updating of these two documents, the official AACSB Global Standards (shown in bold for each standard) are the responsibility of the Accreditation Council; however, all other components of the Global Standards for Business Education, including the Guiding Principles, Basis for Judgment, Suggested Documentation, and the Interpretive Guidance document, may be updated as needed, subject to the approval of the Global Standards Committee.

1 The AACSB Global Standard-Setting Framework may be found in the AACSB Accreditation Policies and Procedures Handbook.

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Global Standards Overview

The Global Standards consist of nine standards divided into three sections:

01
Strategic Management

- Strategic Planning
- Physical, Digital, and Financial Resources
- Faculty and Professional Staff Resources

02
Learner Success

- Curriculum
- Assurance of Learning
- Learner Progression

03
Pathways to Impact

- Teaching Effectiveness and Impact
- Impact of Scholarship
- Societal Impact and Engagement

Engagement | Innovation | 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.

Standard 1

AACSB recognizes that a wide range of missions can reflect high quality, positive impact, and innovation. What matters most is clarity of purpose and alignment among mission, strategy, and expected outcomes. Schools engage stakeholders in developing and periodically reviewing forward-looking strategic plans that guide resource allocation, support continuous improvement, and sustain long-term success in a dynamic business environment.

Standard 2

Financial sustainability is essential to maintaining quality and advancing the school's mission. Schools must demonstrate sound financial planning, sufficient resources, and clear alignment between financial strategy and strategic priorities to support continuous improvement, innovation, and long-term vitality.

Standard 3

Faculty and professional staff are essential to advancing the school's mission. The emphasis is on meaningful participation, appropriate deployment, and the sustained production of intellectual capital that ensures currency, rigor, and relevance. Schools demonstrate that faculty resources are sufficient to support high-quality teaching, scholarship, and engagement, supported by clear expectations and continuous improvement processes. The standard accommodates diverse learners and delivery models while maintaining a focus on quality outcomes.

Standard 4

The currency and relevance of curriculum will focus on competencies and what learners will be expected to be able to demonstrate upon completion of their programs 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.

Standard 5

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.

Standard 6

A core expectation is that schools intentionally support learners from admission through completion. Effective learner progression is demonstrated through clear policies, advising and support systems, monitoring of student advancement, and continuous improvement efforts that promote retention, timely graduation, and overall learner success.

Standard 7

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.

Standard 8

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.

Standard 9

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 missions. 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.

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 the integration of the three standards in this section.



Standard 1

Strategic Planning

Schools articulate their missions, identify priorities, and engage stakeholders in a dynamic planning process that guides decision-making and continuous improvement.



Standard 2

Physical, Digital, and Financial Resources

Schools ensure their facilities, technology infrastructures, and financial models are sufficient, stable, and aligned with their strategic direction and programmatic needs.



Standard 3

Faculty and Professional Staff Resources

Schools recruit, develop, and support qualified and engaged workforces that deliver high-quality teaching, impactful scholarship, and mission-aligned engagement.

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

1 Strategic Planning

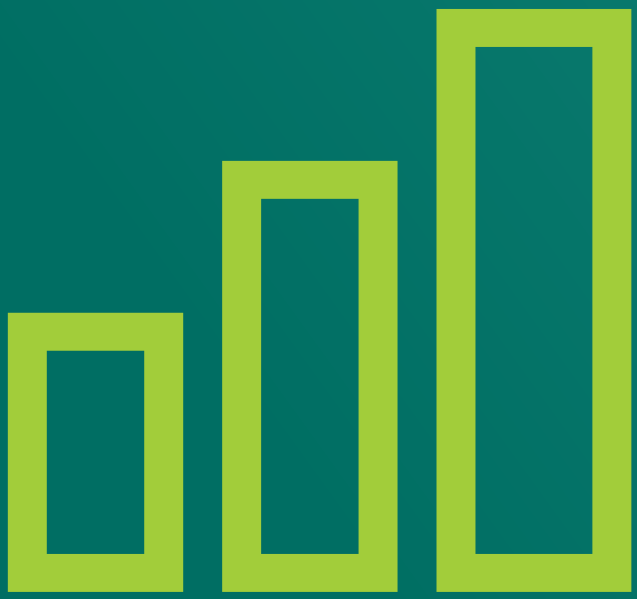
Standard 1: Strategic Planning

1.1. The school maintains a well-documented strategic plan, developed through a robust and collaborative planning process involving key stakeholder input. The plan informs the school on resource allocation priorities, including maintenance of sufficient high-quality faculty. The strategic plan is developed at the school level and reflects the school's distinct mission and priorities, while remaining aligned with and supportive of 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. As the school carries out its mission, it embraces innovation as a key element of continuous improvement and as central to its mission.

1.3. The strategic plan identifies its chosen focus area(s) for making a positive impact on society through its curriculum, 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.



A school's strategic plan is the foundation for all of its activities. Within the strategic plan, a clear and focused mission describes who the school is and the populations it seeks to serve. Strategic planning sets the direction for how the school pursues its mission, allocates resources, and sustains high-quality business education.

The strategic 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

A. Strategic plans are for a defined period of time and may follow any format or structure; however, they include essential elements common to effective strategic plans (e.g., mission, goals, strategies/initiatives, expected outcomes, key performance indicators, and resource implications). The period covered by the strategic plan may differ from the accreditation cycle.

B. Strategic plans are developed and refined through engagement with key internal and external stakeholders.

C. Strategic plans identify strategies for maintaining high-quality learner experiences.

D. Strategic plans address strategies for recruitment and retention of qualified faculty.

E. Strategic plans identify the strategies through which schools intend to provide thought leadership within intellectual contributions.

1.2. Clear and Focused Mission

A. The school articulates a clear and focused mission as part of its strategic plan. A mission is clear when it communicates, in specific and understandable terms, the school's purpose, the population it intends to serve, the degrees it offers, and the types of impact it seeks to achieve.

B. A mission is focused when it establishes meaningful priorities and distinguishing characteristics that position the school among its peers and guide strategic choices, including resource allocation, program development, and faculty deployment.

C. Missions reflect the school's distinctiveness and essential identity rather than broad or generic aspirations. They inform strategic planning and are reviewed and updated periodically in alignment with the school's normal planning cycle.

D. Missions are highly specific to a school's context. Factors that are essential in articulating a school's mission include the location or community the school serves, size of the school, available resources, research versus teaching emphasis, and strategic goals. Missions that are focused on regional development, workforce access, national capacity-building, or applied teaching are equally legitimate and valued expressions of quality and impact as schools with a heavy research focus.

E. Strategic plans identify how schools support innovation in thought and in action. Schools demonstrate how innovation, as appropriate to their missions and contexts, informs strategic choices and continuous improvement.

1.3. Societal Impact Focus Areas

A. In accordance with Standard 9, accredited schools strategically select one or more focus areas in which they intend to allocate resources toward activities that ultimately make a positive impact on society with respect to curriculum, scholarship, and external engagement. Identification of the focus areas within the strategic plan ensures that societal impact activities are driven by the school's mission and strategy rather than disconnected from them. Schools may select different focus areas for each of the three impact areas, or they may select focus areas that intersect.[2]

1.4. Monitoring of the Strategic Plan

A. Schools provide evidence of how their strategic plan is regularly reviewed and used as an important strategic tool in allocating scarce resources and making other mission-critical decisions as opposed to a mere compliance exercise.

B. Monitoring includes regular assessment as to whether the school is making progress against its expected outcomes, measures of success, and key performance indicators. Adjustments to the plan are made as needed and revealed by ongoing monitoring.

C. Schools are 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.

D. Schools 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 analysis is proportionate, context-sensitive, and decision-oriented. Importantly, the risk analysis informs strategic choices and is not a mere compliance exercise.

2 For more context see Standard 9

Suggested Documentation

1.1. Well-documented Strategic Plan

A. Make strategic plans available to peer review teams.

B. Include a clear and focused mission statement or sets of statements that describe the mission, along with typical elements of well-designed plans (e.g., goals, strategies/initiatives, expected outcomes, measures of success, key performance indicators, and resource implications for the period covered by the plan).

C. Demonstrate that the school's strategic plan informs strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and progress toward achieving stated goals.

D. 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 updated on progress toward meeting plan goals.

E. Include strategies for promoting a high-quality learner experience and curriculum currency and relevance.

F. Include a discussion of the faculty management model, including recruitment, retention, and development of qualified faculty.

G. Describe how the strategic plan and mission relate to and support the strategic plan and mission of any larger organization of which the school is a part.

H. If a school is nearing the end of its current strategic-planning cycle during the accreditation self-study year, provide evidence that planning for the next strategic cycle is underway.

1.2. Clear and Focused Mission

A. Ensure that the mission within the strategic plan clearly articulates the school's purpose, the populations and communities it intends to serve, the degree levels offered, the types of intellectual contributions it intends to produce, and the types of impact the school seeks to achieve.

B. Ensure that the mission and strategic plan identify meaningful priorities and distinguishing characteristics that position the school among its peers and guide strategic choices, including program development, faculty deployment, and resource allocation.

C. Describe how the mission reflects the school's essential identity and distinctiveness rather than broad or generic aspirations and explain how the mission informs ongoing strategic planning and decision-making.

D. Describe the process by which the mission is developed, reviewed, and updated, including stakeholder engagement and alignment with the school's normal planning cycle.

E. Describe how the school's strategic plan supports innovation in thought and in action, and explain how innovation, consistent with the mission and context, informs strategic initiatives, program design, faculty activities, and continuous improvement.

1.3. Societal Impact Focus Area

A. Include within the strategic plan how the school will allocate human and financial capital to support the school's aspiration to make a positive contribution to society.

B. Identify chosen areas of focus for societal impact and incorporate measures of success within the strategic plan to demonstrate the impact of these activities.

C. Provide evidence demonstrating alignment between the school's mission and the expectations related to societal impact relative to Standard 9.

1.4. Monitoring of the Strategic Plan

A. Summarize and document annual progress toward meeting strategic plan goals and measures of success.

B. Document how key stakeholders participate in regular review and revision of the plan to contribute to continuous improvement.

C. 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.

D. Ensure that assessments are proportionate to school size, scope, and complexity and 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.

E. 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.

2 Physical, Digital, and Financial Resources

Standard 2: Physical, Digital, and Financial Resources

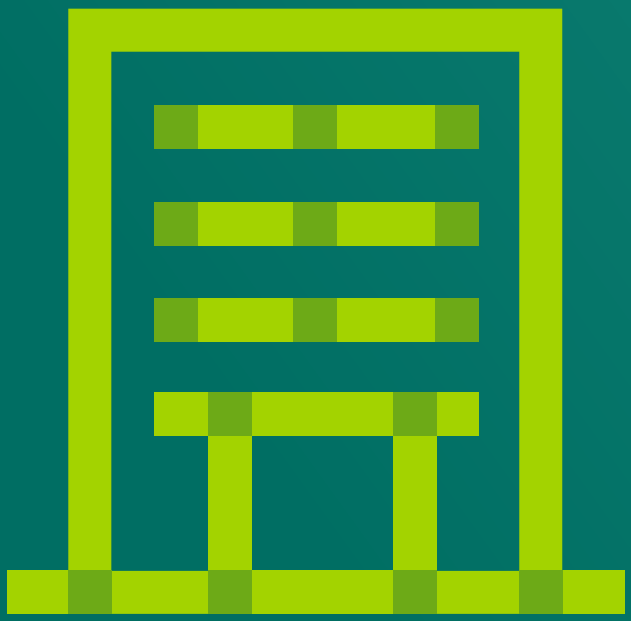
The school manages its

2.1. physical,

2.2. digital, and

2.3. financial resources

to sustain it 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. Resource sufficiency is evaluated relative to the school's mission, strategic priorities, learner populations served, pedagogical approaches, and delivery modalities, rather than by absolute scale or intensity of resources.



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, connection, and learner engagement across geographies and modalities. Digital infrastructure must empower faculty, learners, and staff with the tools, data, and technologies needed for success. Financial models are forward-looking and diversified, supporting strategic priorities and long-term sustainability.

For accreditation purposes, schools demonstrate that their resources are sufficient, resilient, and intentionally aligned with their missions, strategies, and expected outcomes. AACSB accreditation evaluates whether a school's resources are intentionally aligned with strategy and sufficient to support quality and continuous improvement; it does not prescribe specific facilities, technologies, platforms, or funding models.

Basis for Judgment

Peer review teams evaluate resource adequacy and alignment through a mission- and context-sensitive lens, recognizing that different institutional models may achieve high-quality outcomes through different configurations of physical, digital, and financial resources.

2.1. Physical Resources

A. Schools have learning spaces and environments that facilitate the achievement of their educational missions and pedagogical models and maintain plans for updating space as appropriate over time. Physical resource adequacy may be demonstrated through traditional, hybrid, or digitally enabled environments, consistent with mission and delivery modalities.

2.2. Digital Resources

A. Schools provide technology infrastructure to support instructional activities for all modalities. AACSB does not prescribe specific technologies, platforms, or vendors; schools demonstrate adequacy by showing how digital resources enable learning quality, scholarly activity, engagement, and operational effectiveness consistent with mission and strategy.

B. Faculty have access to sufficient current and emerging technologies for both teaching and research purposes consistent with their missions, strategies, and expected outcomes. Such access may be achieved through partnerships with other schools or other third parties.

C. Professional staff are provided with adequate training and technology infrastructure to support the instructional environment, advising, career placement, and other mission-specific activities.

2.3. Financial Resources

A. Strategic plans identify realistic financial strategies, which provide, sustain, and continuously improve all aspects of quality business education consistent with the school's mission. Financial sufficiency is demonstrated through sustainability, resilience, and alignment with strategic priorities, rather than through absolute budget size or revenue levels.

B. Schools 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.

C. Schools have financial plans that ensure sufficient levels of faculty and professional staff and manage these resources to ensure effective recruiting, retention, and development. Financial plans also address the resources needed to sustain high-quality learner support.

Suggested Documentation

2.1. Physical Resources

A. Describe how learning spaces are maintained and deployed in ways that are adequate and appropriate to support the school's mission, size, instructional modalities, and pedagogical models.

B. Include information on classroom and instructional spaces, highlighting recent improvements made to enhance teaching and learning and plans for future enhancements that align with strategic priorities.

C. Explain how the school evaluates the effectiveness of its learning environment and ensures that facilities, technology, and instructional infrastructure are sufficient to support high-quality delivery of its programs.

D. Schools are not evaluated based on comparison with more highly resourced institutions. Rather, facilities are assessed based on whether they are fit for purpose, appropriately maintained, and supportive of the school's stated mission and educational model.

2.2. Digital Resources

A. 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.

B. Describe the current and emerging technologies to which faculty have access in order to fulfill their teaching and research responsibilities.

C. Describe the training for professional staff to learn and implement new technologies to support learner success.

2.3. Financial Resources

A. Complete Table 2-1 to describe the school's major planned strategic initiatives consistent with its mission and current strategic plan and the expected source of funds for those initiatives. This table should be in sync with the timing and cycle of the current strategic plan. Table 2-1 is intended to demonstrate strategic alignment between major initiatives and planned sources of support, not to provide a comprehensive budget or financial audit.

B. Document financial management plans for recruiting, retaining, and developing appropriately qualified faculty and professional staff.

C. Document financial plans for sustaining high-quality outcomes for learner support resources.

D. Provide a summary of recent financial performance and the financial outlook for the next accreditation cycle. Highlight the school's successes in 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 school's financial vitality.

E. Describe the major resource commitments or development projects that have been undertaken and completed since the last accreditation review.

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)

3 Faculty and Professional Staff Resources

Standard 3: Faculty and Professional Staff Resources

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

3.2. Faculty are qualified through initial academic or professional preparation and sustain currency and relevance appropriate to their classification, as follows: Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP). Maintenance of status requires meeting both engagement activities appropriate to the classification and the school's established teaching effectiveness criteria. Faculty who do not meet both requirements are classified as Additional faculty (A).

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

3.4. 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.



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

Standard 3 and Standard 7 are intentionally structured as complementary and interconnected standards where teaching effectiveness is concerned. Standard 7 establishes the school's framework for teaching effectiveness and teaching impact at the portfolio level. It defines the processes, expectations, and support systems the school uses to promote high-quality teaching and continuous improvement across programs.

Standard 3 operationalizes that framework at the individual faculty level. It requires that teaching effectiveness, as defined by the school under Standard 7, is incorporated into faculty qualification criteria, evaluation processes, and ongoing development expectations. In this way, Standard 7 sets the expectations; Standard 3 ensures accountability and alignment.

Importantly, evaluation of teaching effectiveness must be aligned with the school's mission, instructional modalities, and institutional context. Schools retain responsibility for determining appropriate measures of teaching effectiveness consistent with local policies, labor agreements, privacy protections, and legal constraints. The standards do not require disclosure of confidential individual personnel evaluations to peer review teams.

Basis for Judgment

3.1. Faculty Sufficiency

A. Faculty sufficiency is the extent to which a school has and deploys an appropriate mix of "participating" and "supporting" faculty at the discipline level who, collectively, are capable of delivering programs, maintaining curricular and scholarly quality, supporting learners, and advancing the school's mission across all delivery modes. A participating faculty member actively and deeply engages in school activities beyond direct teaching responsibilities. A supporting faculty member does not normally participate in the intellectual or operational life of the school beyond the direct performance of teaching responsibilities.

B. Schools develop and apply school criteria for documenting faculty members as participating or supporting that are consistent with the individual school mission. Each school adapts this guidance to its particular situation and mission by developing and implementing criteria that indicate how the school meets the spirit and intent of the standard. The criteria are periodically reviewed and reflect a focus on continuous improvement. The criteria address the specific activities 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.

C. Disciplines are defined by the school in the context of its mission. Normally, the disciplines align with the degree programs and/or majors offered by the school. However, not every degree program must have an identified discipline. Instead, disciplines are best reflected at the macro level with subdisciplines under each macro-level discipline. For example, the macro-level discipline of management can be listed as a discipline and contain faculty who support strategic management, human resource management, operations management, leadership, etc. Participation ratios, then, are calculated at the overall macro-level discipline instead of for each subdiscipline. Ultimately schools make choices around what macro-level disciplines to include. As examples, commonly included macro-level disciplines are management, marketing, accounting, finance, and quantitative systems.

D. Normally, participating faculty members will deliver at least 75 percent of a school's teaching globally (i.e., across the entire accredited unit including all disciplines); 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. What is an appropriate blend is a conversation between the school and the peer review team. However, a program, location, or modality with all supporting faculty would not normally meet the "appropriate blend" expectation.

E. For instructional models such as mass lectures that are supported by teaching assistants, faculty not in residence but who may travel periodically to the school to deliver a particular program, faculty shared across institutions, visiting faculty, and online program managers who deliver digital instruction, schools must clearly identify these instructional delivery methods and document how they lead to high-quality learning outcomes and high learner satisfaction.

F. When a substantial proportion of the school's faculty resources hold primary faculty appointments at other institutions, the school demonstrates that this faculty model supports mission achievement, overall quality, and continuous improvement, and is consistent with the spirit and intent of this standard. The school also demonstrates that this model enables it to achieve and sustain its stated research expectations.

3.2. Faculty Qualifications

A. Faculty qualifications are the combination of initial academic and/or professional preparation and sustained, role-appropriate activity that collectively establish a faculty member's preparedness for success in their roles and assigned responsibilities in teaching, scholarship, and engagement. Faculty qualifications demonstrate current and relevant intellectual capital or professional engagement in teaching to support the school's mission and related activities.

B. Faculty members can be classified as Scholarly Academic (SA), Practice Academic (PA), Scholarly Practitioner (SP), or Instructional Practitioner (IP). Faculty members are assigned one of these designations based on the school's criteria and sustained engagement activities that support currency and relevance in their teaching field.[3] Faculty whose qualifications do not meet the criteria established by the school for SA, PA, SP, or IP status are classified as Additional faculty (A).

C. Figure 1 depicts a high-level overview of faculty qualifications. Further details are included following the table.

D. "Initial classification" refers to the determination of a faculty member's qualification category at the time a faculty member first assumes formal responsibilities within the school. This determination is based primarily on the faculty member's academic preparation and/or professional background at that time, as well as time since the terminal degree was conferred. Initial classification establishes eligibility for a faculty category; continued qualification in that category requires sustained, role-appropriate activities as described in the subsequent maintenance criteria.

3 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

Overview of Faculty Qualification Categories (Standard 3.2)

	Scholarly Academic (SA)	Practice Academic (PA)	Scholarly Practitioner (SP)	Instructional Practitioner (IP)
Initial Qualification	Terminal academic degree in a field closely related to the area of teaching responsibilities.	Terminal academic degree in a field closely related to the area of teaching responsibilities.	Master's degree in a field closely related to teaching responsibilities.[4] Substantial professional experience and expertise relevant to assigned teaching responsibilities.	Master's degree in a field closely related to teaching responsibilities.[5] Substantial professional experience and expertise relevant to assigned teaching responsibilities.
Maintenance of Qualification	Sustained scholarly activity, including the publication of some PRJs. Ongoing sustained and substantive academic activities.	Ongoing sustained and substantive professional engagement activities related to the area of teaching involving interaction with business and management practice.	Ongoing, sustained and substantive scholarly publication activities supporting qualification status. Ongoing scholarly engagement activities supporting qualification status	Ongoing, sustained and substantive professional engagement activities supporting qualification status.
	Demonstrated teaching effectiveness in assigned instructional roles. (Effective with visits in 2029-30)			

"Maintenance of status requires meeting both engagement activities appropriate to the classification and the school's established teaching effectiveness criteria. Faculty who do not meet both requirements are classified as Additional faculty (A)."

4 In limited cases, IP or SP status may be appropriate for individuals without master's degrees if the depth, duration, sophistication, and complexity of their professional experience at the time of hiring compensates for their lack of master's degree qualifications. The school will be expected to make its case for IP or SP status in such cases.

5 Ibid.

E. Initial Classification of SA and PA

The following guidance outlines considerations relevant to the initial classification of Scholarly Academic (SA) and Practice Academic (PA) faculty.

1. A terminal degree related to the faculty member's field of teaching is appropriate for both SA and PA status. A faculty member with a newly conferred terminal degree may be classified as SA or PA for six years from the date of degree conferral. This six-year initial qualification period allows the faculty member to establish a research agenda and develop the capabilities necessary to meet ongoing maintenance expectations for scholarship and teaching effectiveness. During the six-year initial qualification period, these faculty are engaged in academic/professional and teaching-related activities as needed and appropriate to their role that demonstrate they are seeking to align with the school's maintenance criteria for their assigned category. Likewise, doctoral students with teaching responsibilities who have attained all-but-dissertation ("ABD") status will be considered SA for three years from the commencement of ABD status, after which they would be expected to align with the school's maintenance criteria for their assigned category.

2. A variety of terminal degrees may be appropriate where the terminal degree is related to the faculty member's field of teaching. Illustrative examples of commonly accepted terminal degrees in business include:

- Doctoral degrees in business or a closely-related business discipline (PhD or DBA).
- A graduate degree in law (LLM) and/or taxation (MST) for those teaching taxation
- A law degree (LLM or JD) for those teaching law or aspects related to the legal environment of business (e.g., ethics, sustainability, etc.).

- AACSB recognizes certain specialized degrees, such as the LLM or MST in taxation, as terminal within that academic discipline because they represent the highest level of formal academic preparation customarily awarded in the field and support advanced scholarly engagement.
- In contrast, a Master of Accountancy, even when combined with CPA licensure, does not constitute a terminal academic degree in accounting. The recognized terminal academic degree in accounting remains the PhD or DBA. Professional licensure, while highly valued, does not substitute for terminal academic preparation.

3. Additional terminal degrees may also be appropriate for SA status when the degree is closely related to the faculty member's field of teaching, and the faculty member sustains currency through scholarly activities in that field consistent with this standard.

4. While unusual, a faculty member without a terminal degree may be classified as SA or PA, but the faculty member must clearly be engaged in sustained, substantive academic and/or professional engagement activities to support their currency and relevancy in their field of teaching and their contributions to other mission components; such activity is expected to be consistent with the activities in which the school's other terminally-qualified SA faculty engage. The school will be expected to make its case for SA or PA status for such faculty. AACSB expects that there will be only a limited number (normally not to exceed 10 percent of all faculty) of cases in which individuals without terminal degrees also have SA or PA status.

F. Subsequent to initial classification – SA Status

Three criteria are fundamental for maintenance of SA Status:

01

Sustained scholarly activity that advances disciplinary or pedagogical knowledge (e.g., peer-reviewed research, scholarly publications, funded research, and intellectually grounded contributions to teaching and learning). Scholarly activity must include some PRJs, consistent with the school's mission and resources, and the faculty member's role and assigned duties.

The volume of scholarship and number of PRJs is determined by school-established criteria aligned with the school's mission, resources, strategies, and expected outcomes. A wide variety of high-quality scholarship is encouraged, including basic, applied, and pedagogical scholarship. AACSB acknowledges there are multiple paths to high-quality impact, consistent with Standard 8.

Above all, the impact of the work and alignment with the school's mission is paramount – not the counting of publications in elite journals.

02

Ongoing sustained and substantive academic activities, consistent with the school's mission and resources, and the faculty member's role and assigned duties. Such activities are defined in the school-established criteria for faculty qualifications.

For illustrative purposes, a non-exhaustive list of academic engagement activities includes:

- Industry collaboration appropriate to the faculty member's role, assigned duties, and areas of scholarship and/or teaching
- Participation in research workshops and/or academic conferences related to the faculty member's field of research and/or teaching
- Relevant, active editorships with academic journals or other business publications
- Service on editorial boards or committees
- Ad hoc reviewer work for journals or other business publications
- Academic leadership positions
- Participation in recognized academic societies and associations
- Academic fellow activities
- Invited presentations related to the faculty member's field of research and/or teaching
- Doctoral student supervision
- Significant participation in professional standard-setting or policymaking bodies

03

Demonstrated teaching effectiveness in assigned instructional roles and responsibilities.

Faculty members must demonstrate effectiveness in their instructional roles and in accordance with school-established criteria that are aligned with the school's mission, instructional modalities, and faculty role expectations. The below language is intended to represent maintenance criteria across all categories of SA, PA, SP and IP.

1. An expectation of teaching effectiveness applies to faculty who had any instructional responsibilities during the six-year period reported in the self-study report. For faculty with no instructional responsibilities at all during the six-year self-study period, this criterion would not apply for faculty qualifications.

2. For purposes of this standard, "instructional responsibilities" are activities directly related to the delivery, supervision, and assessment of credit-bearing coursework within the school's accredited degree programs. These may include classroom instruction (in any modality), structured independent studies, capstone supervision, and primary supervision of theses or dissertations. The following activities are not included in teaching effectiveness for the purposes of Standard 3: general academic advising, mentoring, student organization advising, informal coaching, and non-degree executive education.

3. AACSB does not prescribe specific metrics, nor does it require disclosure of confidential personnel evaluations. Determination of teaching effectiveness remains the responsibility of the school and must align with institutional policies, local regulations, and applicable privacy protections.

4. As schools determine what constitutes effective teaching, they should include criteria from multiple methods of evaluation consistent with Standard 7, thus avoiding reliance on any single metric. Importantly, participation in developmental activities (e.g., workshops or seminars) represents input and, by itself, does not evidence effectiveness. Evidence of teaching effectiveness should reflect evaluation by others (e.g., peers, students, or external bodies) rather than self-reported participation in development activities.

5. For illustrative purposes, school criteria may include:

- Peer evaluation of instructional practice, course materials, or learning design
- Formalized, structured classroom observation processes using defined rubrics aligned with school or university criteria
- Student course evaluations documenting collectively students assess an individual professor as effective in creating a positive instructional experience
- Student focus groups or other forms of student testimonials
- Results from externally administered or government mandated student experience surveys.
- Evidence of instructional refinement or improvement based on prior feedback or evaluation results
- Teaching portfolios or reflective documentation demonstrating instructional development
- Evidence that innovative technologies or pedagogies improved student learning outcomes
- Earning or maintaining a teaching-specific credential that requires demonstrated instructional competence and external validation by an independent body
- External recognition of teaching excellence based on demonstrated classroom performance (multi-year or career-spanning awards may instead demonstrate teaching impact under Standard 7)

G. Subsequent to Initial Classification—PA Status

Two criteria are fundamental to maintaining PA status:

01

Ongoing sustained and substantive professional engagement activities related to the area of teaching that involve significant interaction with business and management practice as relevant to their role and assigned duties. Examples of professional engagement activities include the following:

- Consulting activities that are significant in terms of time and substance and directly related to the faculty member's area of teaching
- Faculty internships or embedded professional experiences involving direct engagement with organizational practice
- Development and presentation of executive education programs grounded in current professional practice
- Leadership roles or substantive participation in business professional associations, professional standard-setting bodies, or policymaking bodies
- Practice-oriented intellectual contributions, as detailed in Standard 8[6]
- Relevant, active service on advisory boards of boards of directors
- Substantive continuing professional education experiences that involve meaningful engagement with current professional practice
- Active participation in professional events that focus on the practice of business, management, and related issues (e.g., presenting, facilitating, or serving in leadership roles).
- Participation in other activities that place faculty in direct engagement with business or other organizational leaders

02

Demonstrated teaching effectiveness in assigned instructional roles and responsibilities (refer to teaching effectiveness requirements under SA).

6 While schools may choose to include a publication requirement in their own faculty qualification criteria, Standard 3 does not require a PA faculty member to publish.

H. Initial Classification of SP and IP

Initial classification of Scholarly Practitioner (SP) or Instructional Practitioner (IP) faculty is determined at the point of hire or when a faculty member first assumes responsibilities within the school. This determination is based primarily on the individual's academic preparation and the depth, relevance, and recency of their professional experience. Initial classification establishes eligibility for SP or IP status; continued qualification in these categories requires sustained, role-appropriate professional and/or scholarly engagement as outlined in the subsequent maintenance criteria.

The following guidance outlines considerations relevant to the initial classification of SP and IP faculty:

- A master's degree in a discipline related to the faculty member's field of teaching, along with significant and substantive professional experience. In limited cases, SP or IP status may be appropriate for individuals without master's degrees if the depth, duration, sophistication, and complexity of their professional experience at the time of hiring outweigh their lack of master's degree qualifications. The school will be expected to make its case for SP or IP status for such faculty.
- Normally, at the time that a school hires an SP or IP faculty member, that faculty member's professional experience is current, substantial in terms of duration and level of responsibility, and clearly linked to the field in which the person is expected to teach. The less related the initial professional experience is to the faculty member's field of teaching, or the longer the time since the relevant experience occurred, the faculty member must demonstrate higher levels of sustained, substantive academic and/or professional engagement related to their field of teaching in order to maintain their qualification status.
- SP faculty contribute to the scholarship mission of the school according to the faculty member's role and assigned duties and aligned with the school-established faculty qualifications criteria.
- If needed, the school may grant a reasonable period of time for upskilling in instructional pedagogy or other aspects of the teaching enterprise. In this case, the school criteria should define the period of time allotted for these faculty to align with teaching effectiveness expectations.

I. Subsequent to Initial Classification—SP

Three criteria are required for maintaining SP status:

01

Production of basic, applied, or pedagogical publications related to the faculty member's field of teaching as part of their scholarship portfolio. In addition to publishing in their field of teaching, SP faculty may produce publications outside their field to support other mission-related components of the school and reflect the faculty member's role at the school.

02

Ongoing scholarly engagement activities consistent with the faculty member's role and the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes to support maintenance of this status.

Illustrative, non-exhaustive examples of scholarly engagement activities appropriate for SP faculty include the following:

- Relevant, active editorships with academic, professional, or other business or management publications
- Service on editorial boards or committees
- Leadership positions in recognized academic societies, research awards, academic fellowships, invited presentations, etc.
- Development and presentation of continuing professional education activities or executive education programs
- Significant participation in academic associations, professional standard-setting bodies, or policymaking bodies

03

Demonstrated teaching effectiveness in assigned instructional roles and responsibilities (refer to teaching effectiveness requirements under SA).

J. Subsequent to Initial Classification—IP

Three criteria are required for maintenance of IP status:

01

Sustained engagement in teaching-focused and pedagogical activity (e.g., teaching excellence, curriculum design, assessment activity, pedagogical scholarship, instructional innovation) informed by professional or practice-based interaction as appropriate.

02

Ongoing, sustained, and substantive professional engagement activities to maintain currency in the field of teaching.

An illustrative, non-exhaustive list of professional engagement activities includes the following:

- Consulting activities that are significant in terms of time and substance
- Faculty internships significant in depth of experience
- Development and presentation of executive education programs grounded in current business practices
- Significant participation in business professional associations, professional standard-setting bodies, or policymaking bodies
- Relevant, active service on boards of directors
- Professional certifications that are actively maintained through substantive continuing education and are directly related to the area of teaching
- Presenting, facilitating, organizing, or substantive contribution to professional events that focus on the practice of business, management, and related issues

03

Demonstrated teaching effectiveness in assigned instructional roles and responsibilities (refer to teaching effectiveness requirements under SA).

K. Faculty Sufficiency and Qualifications: School-Established Criteria

1. Standards 3.1 and 3.2 establish minimum standards for faculty sufficiency and faculty qualifications. Criteria are established in alignment with the school's mission and peer institutions. Schools may establish higher criteria but not lower criteria. Shared governance is encouraged to establish clear criteria for participating and supporting faculty, as well as criteria for SA, PA, SP, and IP faculty. The criteria are reviewed and updated as needed to remain consistent with the school's mission and the standards of peer institutions.

2. Schools include policies for classifying not only faculty but also those who hold significant administrative appointments, such as deans, associate deans, department heads, and/or center directors. These criteria address both the initial qualifications and maintenance expectations. For such faculty, criteria 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. School criteria may reflect the proportion of time devoted to administration versus faculty duties.

L. Discipline and Global Ratio Minimums (Refer to Table 3-1)

1. Normally, a minimum of 40 percent of a school's faculty resources are SA, and 90 percent are SA+PA+SP+IP across the entire accredited unit. A minimum of 40 percent of SA is also expected in disciplines in which the school offers degrees or majors, and 90 percent SA+PA+SP+IP in all disciplines. Where a school offers generalist degrees, such as a BBA, General Business, and/or MBA with associated concentrations/areas of focus, then areas of concentration/areas of focus are normally treated as disciplines for meeting ratio requirements.

2. Schools that emphasize research master's and research doctoral degree programs 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 missions.

3. In disciplines where the school 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 percent SA+PA+SP+IP ratio 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 across the accredited unit.

4. For accredited schools, the ratio of SA faculty at the discipline level (in cases where degree programs or majors are offered) may fall below the 40 percent minimum if the deviation is directly related to faculty appointments that drive new, innovative, or interdisciplinary initiatives. In these instances, the burden is on the school to demonstrate how it maintains high-quality outcomes. The peer review team will consider such departures on a case-by-case basis and employ professional judgment when these guidelines are not met

5. Schools seeking initial accreditation are expected to meet the faculty qualifications and faculty sufficiency ratios, including the 40 percent SA ratio across disciplines for which a degree, major, or concentration (for generalist degrees) is offered and for the school overall. Also, these schools are expected to meet the 90 percent SA+PA+SP+IP ratio for all disciplines and the school as a whole. Schools seeking initial accreditation would not normally meet Standard 3 by coupling lower SA ratios with high-quality outcomes, an approach that is acceptable for schools that have already attained accreditation.

M. Faculty Deployment (Refer to Table 3-2)

1. Table 3-2 is intended to provide a snapshot of how qualified faculty are deployed across degree programs in the most recently completed regular academic year.

2. 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 (e.g., teaching, research, service, other). However, schools are expected to meet the 90 percent SA+PA+SP+IP 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 the deployment of qualified faculty across degree levels.

3. The deployment of the school's blend of SA, PA, SP, and IP faculty members is a strategic choice by the school and must be consistent with the school's mission and strategic initiatives, and it must 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 consider the level of degree programs offered at other locations and in various modalities, where such distinction is appropriate. Additionally, research master's and doctoral degrees should be supported by a faculty complement adequate to ensure high-quality experiences and outcomes for these learners. High-quality outcomes can be demonstrated through assurance of learning data provided by each degree program.

4. Table 3-2 is prepared at a macro level across all degree programs, locations, and modalities; however, peer review teams may request a supplemental breakout of Table 3-2 by a particular location or modality, where appropriate, as determined by the team. As blended modalities become increasingly common, modality alone is often not a necessary breakout. Nevertheless, if the peer review team deems it appropriate to view Table 3-2 by modality, they have the discretion to request the table for a particular location or by modality. A team may assess that a school is out of alignment with Standard 3 based on a material deficiency in faculty qualifications at one or more locations with a significant number of students or degrees.

3.3. Professional Staff Sufficiency

A. Schools maintain sufficient professional staff 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 of the university. AACSB does not require these resources to be housed in the business school.

3.4. Faculty and Professional Staff Development

A. Faculty expectations, evaluation, promotion, and reward processes are systematic, transparent, and support school missions.

B. Workload allocation models are appropriate for faculty to fulfill all responsibilities competently.

C. Schools have effective processes for providing orientation, guidance, mentoring, and developmental practices for faculty and professional staff.

D. 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 processes.

E. 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.

F. Professional staff have access to development opportunities to maintain currency in the areas they support.

G. 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

A. Provide criteria for participating and supporting faculty, as well as SA, PA, SP, and IP faculty. Describe how these criteria align with the school's mission. Criteria for individuals with significant administrative responsibility should be clearly noted if they differ from normal requirements for a given category.

B. Complete Table 3-1 by discipline for the most recent regular academic year prior to the visit year (often referred to as the "self-study year") to demonstrate alignment with Standard 3. Include a description of the basis for each respective faculty member's qualification status in the last column, including for teaching effectiveness. The Interpretive Guidance provides additional information on completing Table 3-1.

C. The metrics for faculty sufficiency are based on a teaching metric based on the school's ordinary and usual measurement of time spent teaching (e.g., ECTS, student credit hours, courses, etc.). Apply institutionally defined workload, FTE, credit hour, or equivalent contribution models for full-time, part-time, and contingent faculty.

D. Complete Table 3-2 for the most recent regular academic year prior to the visit year. Schools also provide a narrative that describes the strategy for deploying an appropriate blend of both participating and qualified faculty across degree programs, locations, and modalities, and how that strategy assures high-quality outcomes.

E. 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.

F. Provide information on each faculty member for the peer review team as evidence to support their classification. This information should be provided electronically in the form of academic CVs or equivalent documents. To facilitate the peer review team review, CVs should reflect only the period covered by the accreditation cycle under review and should be organized by discipline consistent with Table 3-1.

G. Provide a narrative describing instructional teaching models, such as lead teachers supported by teaching assistants, tutors, instructors, or other support staff. 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.

H. In cases where a substantial proportion of a business school's faculty resources hold primary faculty appointments with other institutions, schools provide documentation of how this faculty model supports mission achievement, overall high quality, and continuous improvement, and how the 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 and maintaining the research expectations of the school.

I. Provide a narrative description of how faculty are evaluated for teaching effectiveness. The narrative should indicate:

1. How the school consistently applies criteria for teaching effectiveness
2. How those criteria are aligned with the school's mission and instructional context
3. On a school portfolio basis, how faculty are meeting teaching effectiveness expectations on an ongoing basis
4. How remediation occurs where necessary for faculty who are not meeting teaching effectiveness criteria

J. The school may, at its discretion, provide examples of faculty who demonstrate outstanding teaching. Alternatively, the school may describe in aggregate how the faculty have provided effective teaching.

3.3. Professional Staff Sufficiency

A. Describe the professional staff structure for advising, career placement, IT support, faculty instructional support, library support, and faculty research support. Describe how professional staff structure supports high-quality outcomes.

B. Discuss the resources that are centralized and supported at the university level and those that are maintained and supported within the school.

3.4. Faculty and Professional Staff Development

A. Include documentation describing hiring practices, development, and evaluation systems for faculty to ensure high-quality outcomes relative to mission and strategies.

B. Describe processes for determining performance expectations for faculty for teaching, research, and service.

C. Describe processes for orientation, guidance, and mentoring of faculty and professional staff.

D. Describe evaluation, promotion, and reward processes, as well as ways that faculty are engaged in these processes.

E. Describe how faculty and professional staff are provided with professional development opportunities to remain current in their discipline or focus area (e.g., time and financial resources).

Table 3-1

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

Faculty Porfolio by Discipline (List by Individual Faculty Member Within Discipline)			**Faculty Sufficiency Related to Teaching** (e.g., SCH, ECTS)			**Faculty Qualifications With Respect to Percent of Time Devoted to Mission**					**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)	Normal Professional Responsibilities	Scholarly Academic (SA)	Practice Academic (PA)	Scholarly Practitioner (SP)	Instructional Practitioner (IP)	Additional Faculty (A)	
Discipline A											☐ Degrees or majors[7] are offered in this discipline ☐ Degrees or majors are not offered in this discipline
Faculty A											
Faculty B											
Faculty C											
Total Discipline A											
Discipline A Ratios Faculty Sufficiency Guidelines: • Discipline A: P / (P + S) ≥ 60%							Faculty Qualifications Guidelines: • Discipline A SA guideline: (SA) / (SA + PA + SP + IP + A) ≥ 40% • Discipline A SA + PA + SP + IP guideline: SA + PA + SP + IP) / (SA + PA + SP + IP + A) ≥ 90%				
Show all other disciplines and ratios separately.											
Grand Total											
Overall Ratios Faculty Sufficiency Guidelines: • Overall guideline: P / (P + S) ≥ 75%							Faculty Qualifications Guidelines: • Overall SA guideline: (SA) / (SA + PA + SP + IP + A) ≥ 40% • Overall SA + PA + SP + IP guideline: (SA + PA + SP + IP) / (SA + PA + SP + IP + A) ≥ 90%				

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

Table 3-2

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

	Faculty Percentage of Teaching by Program and Degree Level Indicate metric used: credit hours, contact hours, courses taught, or another metric appropriate to the school.					
Degree Program[8]	Scholarly Academic (SA) %	Practice Academic (PA) %	Scholarly Practitioner (SP) %	Instructional Practitioner (IP) %	Additional (A) %	Total %
Bachelor's Program						100%
Research Master's Program A						100%
MBA Program						100%
Specialty Master's Program B						100%
Research Doctoral Program						100%
Applied Doctoral Program						100%

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

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/ 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 alignment of all three standards in this section.



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

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.

4 Curriculum

Standard 4: Curriculum

4.1. Curricula are continuously renewed to reflect current and emerging business theories and practices, demonstrated innovation in design and delivery, and integrated insights from business research, evidence-informed practice, industry evolution, and societal trends. Curricula innovation ensures 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. Curricular content appropriately distinguishes 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, relevance, 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. Curricula cultivate responsible and ethical use of technology, emphasizing human judgment, critical evaluation, and appropriate application rather than mastery of specific tools or platforms.

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

4.5. Curricula are informed by current research and scholarship, as well as other insights informed by evidence and practice, ensuring that learners benefit from contemporary understandings and discoveries in business. Faculty integrate relevant research findings and other credible sources of knowledge, including professional standards and industry innovation, into the learning experience to foster evidence-based comprehension and application.

4.6. Curricula are 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. Such curricula 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 curricular 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 Judgement

4.1. Curriculum Content

A. Schools demonstrate a systematic process for maintaining and renewing curriculum content to ensure that learners are exposed to current and emerging business theories, technologies, and methods, enabling them to contribute to sustainable business practices.

B. Schools demonstrate how curricula are intentional and mission-aligned, incorporating input from faculty research, industry partners, alumni, and employers to ensure relevance and responsiveness to external change.

C. Normally, business degree programs at the bachelor's level include learning experiences that address mission-appropriate 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. The specific competencies emphasized reflect program objectives, degree level, and school mission. AACSB does not prescribe a universal set of graduate competencies.

D. Graduate degree programs will have higher-order learning experiences, such as synthesis and integration of information.

E. Specialized 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.

F. General business master's degrees ordinarily include preparation for leading an organization, managing in a global context, thinking creatively, a strategic mindset, making sound decisions and exercising good judgment under uncertainty, and integrating knowledge across fields.

G. Doctoral degree programs focused on basic research and the creation of new knowledge 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 that intend to prepare learners for academic positions devote significant time in the program of study to successful classroom instruction and management.

H. Doctoral degree programs focused on applied research and the dissemination of applied knowledge or pedagogy normally include deep knowledge of applied topics that is sufficient to prepare an individual for specialized industry or professional work outside academia.

4.2. Curriculum Management

A. Curriculum management is supported by clearly defined governance structures and processes. Faculty are actively engaged in curricular oversight, assume ownership of curricular quality, and use assessment and review results to make continuous improvement changes.

B. Curriculum management processes foster appropriate innovation in program design and delivery while maintaining alignment with the school's mission and strategic priorities.

C. Schools operate under formalized and consistent curriculum review cycles. Evidence demonstrates that curricular content is regularly evaluated and updated to ensure continued relevance, currency, and responsiveness to evolving technological and workforce trends.

Expectations emphasize learner capability in interpretation, evaluation, and application rather than proficiency in specific tools or platforms.

4.3. Digital Agility

A. Curricula provide learners with meaningful exposure to current and emerging digital, analytical, and information technologies relevant to contemporary and evolving business practice. Expectations emphasize learner capability in interpretation, evaluation, and application rather than proficiency in specific tools or platforms.

B. Schools demonstrate intentional curricular design that cultivates agility, innovation, and adaptability in applying technology to solve business problems. Learners develop the ability to critically evaluate technology-generated outputs, exercise sound judgment, and apply technologies creatively and responsibly in business contexts.

C. Curricula emphasize responsible and ethical use of technology, ensuring that human judgment, critical thinking, and higher-order reasoning guide the application of digital intelligence.

D. Technology-related learning is appropriately integrated across courses or learning experiences within each degree program to support workforce readiness in a technology-forward environment.

E. Schools regularly review and update technology-related curricular content to ensure continued relevance, currency, and alignment with evolving business practice.

4.4. Innovation, Experiential Learning, and Lifelong Learning

A. 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.

B. A learn-to-learn expectation is instilled in learners to facilitate agility in adapting to emerging technologies in the future.

C. Schools adopt innovative approaches to curriculum, whether related to content, pedagogy, or delivery method, which demonstrates currency, creativity, and a growth mindset.

D. Schools provide a portfolio of experiential learning opportunities that promote learner engagement between faculty and the community of business practitioners.

E. Schools promote lifelong learning mindsets in learners, including creativity, intellectual curiosity, and critical and analytical thinking.

4.5. Integration of Research and Teaching

A. Schools demonstrate that research and teaching are intentionally integrated, ensuring that learners are exposed to current and emerging knowledge derived from scholarly inquiry and other credible sources of evidence relevant to business practice.

B. Faculty use research and other evidence-informed insights 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. It may also be demonstrated through the incorporation of research activities that help students understand, value, and apply the research process as a tool for evidence-based decision-making. Faculty demonstrate how research informs learning and contributes to the continuous improvement of the curriculum, which becomes increasingly important as degree levels progress.

4.6. Learner Engagement With Each Other, Faculty, and Business Practice

A. Engagement Among Learners

1. Curricula 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.

B. Engagement Between Learners and Faculty

1. Faculty engagement extends 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.

2. Learner-to-faculty interactions involve all types of faculty members. For any teaching/learning model employed, learners have meaningful engagement with the faculty responsible for the course.

C. Engagement Between Learners and Business Practice

1. Learners are 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.

2. Learners have equal access to engagement with business practice regardless of modality or location.

Suggested Documentation

4.1. Curriculum Content

A. Describe processes for curriculum renewal, including stakeholder involvement (faculty, students, employers, alumni, advisory boards, and industry partners).

B. Provide benchmarking or environmental scans illustrating how schools monitor emerging business and technology trends to inform curriculum decisions.

C. Describe how degree programs include learning experiences that develop competencies related to the integration of relevant technology and are consistent with the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

D. Provide narrative descriptions of current and emerging technologies for which graduates are expected to demonstrate a reasonable level of competency 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. Descriptions focus on capabilities and application rather than specific software platforms or vendors.

E. Provide evidence of recent curricular innovations (e.g., new programs, redesigned courses, AI-integrated learning experiences, and/or interdisciplinary initiatives).

F. Provide examples of pedagogical innovations, such as experiential learning, simulations, live case studies, apprenticeships, and/or industry partnerships.

G. Provide evidence, including, where appropriate, AoL results or external validation, demonstrating graduates' preparedness for the changing workforce.

H. 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 provide a rationale for this choice.

4.2. Curriculum Management

A. Describe the governance structures and processes that support curriculum management, including faculty roles in oversight, review, and implementation of improvements.

B. Provide documentation of the school's formal curriculum review cycle, including how assessment and review results are used to inform curricular changes and continuous improvement.

C. Provide examples demonstrating how curricular updates maintain relevance, support appropriate innovation, and respond to evolving technological and workforce trends consistent with the school's mission and strategic priorities.

D. Provide examples of student outcomes or employer feedback confirming graduates' ability to innovate and adapt in technology-enabled work environments.

4.3. Digital Agility

A. Describe how curricula provide learners with exposure to current and emerging digital, analytical, and information technologies relevant to contemporary business practice.

B. Provide examples of how technology-related learning objectives are embedded within courses or learning experiences across each degree program.

C. Describe how the school ensures that learners develop the ability to interpret, evaluate, and apply technology-generated outputs using sound judgment, critical thinking, and higher-order reasoning.

D. Provide examples of assignments, projects, experiential learning, simulations, or other activities that demonstrate learners' ability to apply technologies creatively and responsibly in business contexts.

E. Describe how responsible and ethical use of technology is incorporated into curricula, including expectations regarding human oversight, professional judgment, and appropriate application.

F. Explain how technology-related content is reviewed and updated to ensure continued relevance and alignment with evolving business practices.

G. Where applicable, describe partnerships, co-curricular initiatives, or industry engagement activities that support workforce readiness in a technology-forward environment.

4.4. Innovation, Experiential Learning, and Lifelong Learning

A. Describe innovations in curriculum involving content, pedagogy, or delivery. Explain how these innovations demonstrate currency, creativity, and forward-looking curricula.

B. 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.

C. 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

A. Include examples of course syllabi, assignments, or materials that demonstrate incorporation of current research and faculty scholarship.

B. Show examples of how faculty intellectual contributions inform course content, case studies, or projects.

C. Describe processes or policies ensuring that curriculum design and review are informed by current research developments in relevant disciplines.

D. Provide evidence of faculty development initiatives promoting research-informed teaching.

E. Include examples of student outcomes, projects, or feedback that illustrate how exposure to current research enhances learning.

4.6. Learner Engagement With Each Other, Faculty, and Business Practice

A. Describe curricular and co-curricular activities that promote each form of engagement.

B. Provide examples of faculty practices that enhance engagement, such as applied learning approaches, practitioner integration, and mentorship.

C. Summarize assessment results or feedback that demonstrate the impact of engagement on learning outcomes or employability.

D. Provide evidence of partnerships or collaborations that support engagement with business practice, including data and feedback.

5 Assurance of Learning

Standard 5: Assurance of Learning

5.1. Schools 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 clearly articulated learning competencies or objectives, as opposed to simple satisfaction measures. Results of AoL work inform and lead to curricular improvements.

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

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

5.4. Non-degree executive education that generates more than 5 percent of a school's total annual revenue includes appropriate 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 missions, 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 within a school's accreditation scope.



Basis for Judgement

5.1. Assurance of Learning Processes

A. Schools identify learning competencies and associated learning objectives 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 derive from and are consistent with school missions, strategies, and expected outcomes. Learning objectives derive from competencies.

B. Learning competencies and objectives 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.

C. Where learning competencies or objectives are not achieved, schools provide evidence of actions taken to remediate the deficiencies.

D. Schools employ both direct and indirect measures; schools are expected to include both types of measures across the school's overall portfolio of degree programs.

E. The proportion of direct versus indirect measures by degree program is determined by each school, consistent with its mission and strategic initiatives. It is acceptable for some programs to be assessed only through direct measures, while other programs (e.g., those that are small, 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 are measured through indirect measures.

F. Results of direct and indirect assessment lead to curricular improvements (i.e., courses and curriculum) and, where appropriate, to the assessment process itself, reinforcing continuous improvement.

G. Schools employ systematic AoL processes that include meaningful and broad faculty participation.

H. For AACSB-accredited schools, programs launched since the last review have a robust AoL plan in place, including a timeline for gathering and analyzing data. For newly launched degree programs, the standards allow sufficient time for the school to establish a systematic assessment process that adequately demonstrates student learning; in such a case, a robust assessment plan is of paramount importance.

I. Schools in the initial accreditation process demonstrate substantial alignment with Standard 5 through a robust, well-documented assurance of learning system that includes both direct and indirect measures, achievement of learning outcomes across degree programs, and evidence of curriculum improvements resulting from the AoL process.

5.2. Degree Equivalency

A. Expectations for learner effort and outcomes for the same degree credentials are equivalent in terms of depth and rigor, regardless of delivery mode or location.

B. If competency-based education (CBE) credits are awarded by schools, the equivalent quality is normally assured via direct assessment of learners. CBE credit reflects a small percentage of the total academic program.

C. Judgments of equivalency consider learning outcomes and evidence of student achievement. Other evidence may be provided by the school to demonstrate equivalency.

5.3. Stackable Microlearning Credentials

A. Credentials such as certificates and badges that lead to a degree program are evaluated for alignment with degree-level learning expectations, using quality assurance processes appropriate to the credential's scope and purpose.

5.4. Non-Degree Executive Education

A. Non-degree executive education programs that generate more than 5 percent of a school's annual revenue are reviewed for overall quality, continuous improvement, and appropriate indicators of effectiveness, which may include customer or client satisfaction.

Suggested Documentation

5.1. Assurance of Learning Processes

A. 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 measures only are newer, smaller, specialized, and interdisciplinary programs, or programs very closely tied to professional fields. Indirect evidence should relate to the competencies stated for the degree program to which it applies.

B. For all schools in the initial accreditation process, complete Table 5-1 for each degree program. Table 5-1 serves as a snapshot of data for the peer review team. Supplement the table with a narrative where needed to provide a fuller picture of what is being measured and how. For AACSB-accredited schools, Table 5-1 is optional; schools may provide equivalent formats or alternative evidence that demonstrates alignment with the intent of Standard 5.

C. Provide a brief explanation of data sources and assessment methods used, noting how approaches are scaled appropriately to program size, delivery modality, and learning context.

D. Develop competency goals that either contain learning objectives within the competency goal or state competency goals at a conceptual level and then follow it with specific learning objectives. Schools may choose their preferred format. The Interpretive Guidance provides examples of both options.

E. Support competency goals and learning objectives with curriculum maps that show peer review teams where and when competency goals and learning objectives are expected to be evaluated.

F. Where competencies and/or learning objectives are not achieved, provide evidence of actions taken to remediate the deficiencies.

G. Where assessment demonstrates that learners are not meeting competencies and/or learning objectives, describe efforts the school has instituted to improve such learning outcomes.

H. Provide evidence that faculty are sufficiently and meaningfully engaged in AoL processes.

I. If the school 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 AACSB accreditation documentation to demonstrate assurance of learning.[9] The burden of proof is on such schools to document that these systems support effective continuous improvement in learner performance and outcomes. Schools are encouraged to consult with the mentor or peer review team chair for further guidance.

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

5.2. Degree Equivalency

A. Describe how degree program structure and design are appropriate to the level of degree programs, and demonstrate that expectations across educational programs resulting in the same degree credentials are equivalent, regardless of delivery mode, location, or time to completion.

B. 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 differ unfavorably for a location or modality, peer review teams may identify this as a misalignment with Standard 5.

5.3. Stackable Microlearning Credentials

A. 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.

B. Explain how these credentials may lead to a degree and describe how their quality is assured.

5.4. Non-Degree Executive Education

A. Describe the portfolio of executive education programs and how the portfolio is aligned with the school's mission and strategy.

B. 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 5 percent of the school's total annual revenue.

Table 5-1

Assessment Plan and Results for Most Recently Completed Accreditation Cycle by Degree Program

/ Table is required for schools in the initial accreditation process, optional for CIR schools.

Competency Goal and/or Learning Objective	Measure			Data			Results	Problem Identified
Competency Goal/ LO #1	Measure	Direct or Indirect	Form of Measure	Target	Where Assessed	When Assessed		
	First							
	Curricular Intervention (Describe)							
	Second							
Check One: ☐ Loop Is Closed ☐ Loop is Not Closed								

(Add additional rows for other competency goals.)

6 Learner Progression

Standard 6: Learner Progression

6.1. Schools 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 school mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

6.2. Post-graduation success is consistent with school mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. Public disclosure of academic program quality supporting learner progression and post-graduation success occurs 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 journeys reflects 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 fair, consistently applied, transparent, and aligned with their missions, 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 Judgement

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

A. Policies and procedures related to degree program admission are clear, effective, and transparent and aligned with mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

B. Schools have clear and documented processes for managing and supporting exceptions to admissions and progression policies.

C. Schools actively seek to attract and retain learners with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives consistent with school missions. Normally, admission criteria for graduate business degree programs include the expectation that applicants have or will earn a bachelor's degree prior to admission to the graduate program. Schools document how exceptions support quality.

D. Schools define and broadly disseminate policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting transfer credits or courses from other institutions. These policies ensure that the academic work accepted from other institutions is comparable to the academic work required for the school's own degree programs.

E. Apart from collaborative provision programs, normally the majority of learning in business disciplines that counts 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.[10]

F. Schools 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.

G. High-quality advising services are available to learners on a consistent and timely basis.

H. Strategies are employed to identify and provide intervention and support for learners who are not progressing adequately, including learners with barriers to persistence or completion.

I. Schools provide effective career development support for learners and graduates that is consistent with degree program expectations and school mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

J. 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, are appropriate and available with a high degree of service-mindedness for relevant consumers of these services.

10 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 this document following the standards.

6.2. Academic Program Quality and Post-Graduation Success

A. Schools seek to collect and maintain available post-graduation employment data, graduate school attendance data, or other measures that indicate post-graduate success.

B. In addition to public disclosure information required by national or regional accreditors, schools 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. Disclosures reflect the school's mission and available data and may be presented in formats appropriate to the regulatory context.

Suggested Documentation

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

A. Describe admissions policies and processes and demonstrate that they are consistent with program expectations, aligned with the school's mission, and transparent to all participants.

B. Describe the strategies in place to attract and retain learners with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives consistent with the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

C. 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.

D. Describe the school's policies governing transfer credit acceptance and how quality is assured for transfer credit.

E. Describe academic advising services available to learners.

F. Describe how appropriate interventions are undertaken when learners are failing to progress toward successful and timely degree completion, including learners from at-risk populations.

G. Describe any information technologies used to support admissions, academic progression, and career development.

H. 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

A. Document post-graduate learner success. Success may be defined in a variety of outcomes other than 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, activity with positive societal impact, and case examples of successful graduates.

B. Provide relevant and timely public disclosure data documenting overall academic program quality. Schools that have been accredited should display this information on their websites, where it is clear 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.

C. Where privacy, legal, or regulatory constraints limit disclosure of specific metrics, provide alternative evidence of program quality and learner outcomes consistent with the intent of this standard.

/ 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 distinct functions but as complementary dimensions of an integrated impact ecosystem. Each standard focuses on one dimension while reinforcing the interdependence of all three:



Standard 7

Teaching Effectiveness and Impact

Schools 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 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 consider how overall strategy and activities contribute positively to society and align with the school 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 and Engagement)—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. 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 it is grounded in rigorous research and 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."

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 that schools move beyond outputs, such as publications or course completions, and examine the outcomes and implications resulting from those activities. AACSB encourages a holistic approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators of impact, emphasizing that what schools choose to assess signals 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 between 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 research insights adopted 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 that align with their identities and global contexts.

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.

7 Teaching Effectiveness and Impact

Standard 7: Teaching Effectiveness and Impact

7.1. Schools have systematic, multimodal assessment processes for evaluating and continuously improving teaching effectiveness.

7.2. Schools 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 establish clear expectations for teaching impact (the sustained influence of teaching beyond the immediate instructional setting) and demonstrate how they measure, recognize, and reward faculty whose teaching contributes meaningfully to learner success and school missions over time.



Standard 7 is interrelated to both Standard 3 and Standard 5. First, Standard 7 seeks to define and establish expectations at the aggregate level related to teaching effectiveness and teaching impact. Standard 7 describes overall processes in place to support teaching effectiveness and teaching impact. In contrast, Standard 3 seeks to include teaching effectiveness as an important component of a qualified faculty member.

Second, Standard 7 complements, but does not replace, the requirements of Standard 5 (Assurance of Learning). Standard 5 evaluates whether learners achieve stated program competency goals. In contrast, Standard 7 focuses on the quality of instructional delivery (teaching effectiveness) and the sustained influence of teaching over time (teaching impact). Evidence used for Standard 5 may inform Standard 7, but the standards serve distinct purposes.

It is also instructive to distinguish between teaching effectiveness and teaching impact.

Teaching effectiveness refers to evaluated evidence of instructional quality within a faculty member's assigned instructional responsibilities. It reflects how well instructional design, content delivery, learner engagement, feedback practices, and learning support collectively enable learners to achieve intended learning outcomes.

Teaching impact refers to the broader, longer-term influence of teaching beyond the immediate course or learning experience. It reflects sustained contributions to leader development, application of knowledge, career progression, leadership capacity, or societal contribution, and may also include influence on curriculum innovation, pedagogical advancement, or educational practice.

Basis for judgment

7.1. Teaching Effectiveness

A. Schools have systematic processes and criteria for evaluating teaching effectiveness as an integral component of the faculty review. Processes include multiple methods of evaluating instructional quality and evidence that feedback is used for continuous instructional improvement.

B. Learners provide feedback through institutionally appropriate instruments, with measures that are consistent with school-established criteria for what constitutes effective teaching. Where collective bargaining agreements, regulatory constraints, or other extenuating circumstances prevent feedback from individual learners, other methods of learner feedback are used, within the constraints of the school's local environment.

7.2. Support for Teaching Effectiveness

A. Schools 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.

B. Recognition and reward systems are applied fairly and consistently across faculty roles and teaching modalities.

7.3. Teaching Impact

A. Schools define "teaching impact" in a manner consistent with their missions, learner profiles, and instructional portfolios. Teaching impact extends beyond immediate course evaluations or point-in-time instructional assessments.

B. Schools measure teaching impact using multiple forms of evidence, specific to the school's individual mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Community-level influence and enhancement initiatives resulting from the overall teaching efforts of the school
- Measurable contributions to learner engagement, progression, or career readiness where the school can articulate a reasonable connection to its educational experience
- Documented success of experiential, applied, or innovative learning activities with evidence of influence beyond the immediate instructional setting
- Recognition for pedagogical innovation or sustained contributions to student development (e.g., teaching awards, employer feedback, curriculum leadership)
- Alumni achievements (e.g., career progression, professional accomplishments, credential attainment, leadership roles) where the school can reasonably articulate a connection to the learning experience

C. Schools have transparent and well-communicated processes that recognize and reward faculty who achieve meaningful teaching impact (e.g., annual reviews, merit systems, promotional paths, internal awards).

D. Schools identify evidence that shows how insights from teaching impact are used to strengthen pedagogy, curriculum, learner support systems, or institutional strategy.

Suggested Documentation

7.1. Teaching Effectiveness

A. Describe the school's framework for evaluating teaching effectiveness at the course or instructional level, including the criteria used and how they align with the school's mission and instructional modalities

B. Provide evidence that multiple methods are used to assess instructional quality. Illustrative examples may include:

1. Peer review of teaching (e.g., observation, syllabus review, instructional materials review)
2. Review of course design and alignment of course objectives with program competency goals
3. Teaching portfolios or reflective statements
4. Structured faculty self-assessment
5. Input from learners, where institutionally appropriate
6. Review of engagement practices in experiential, online, hybrid, or AI-enhanced environments

C. Provide documentation of how the learner's voice is included in the evaluation process and in improving instructional quality.

D. Provide evidence demonstrating how information related to teaching effectiveness is used to:

1. Improve course design and pedagogy
2. Inform faculty development initiatives
3. Strengthen instructional support systems
4. Enhance learning experiences across modalities

E. Show examples of improvements implemented in response to teaching effectiveness evaluations over the past review cycle.

F. Individual faculty performance records are not required, and evidence may be presented at an aggregate level in narrative form.

7.2. Support for Teaching Effectiveness

A. Document faculty participation in teaching enhancement initiatives over the past six years.

B. 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.

C. Describe processes for remediating ineffective teaching when the school deems it necessary.

D. 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

A. Provide aggregated alumni or employer data demonstrating graduate preparedness aligned with the school's mission.

B. Document curricular or pedagogical innovations that have demonstrated influence beyond a single course (e.g., adoption across programs, scaling of experiential models, external dissemination).

C. Demonstrate external engagement with, adoption of, or influence of teaching and learning scholarship or faculty-developed instructional materials.

D. Describe structured mentoring or developmental activities linked to learner advancement.

E. Summarize internal or external recognitions for sustained educational contributions.

F. Explain how insights derived from teaching impact evidence have informed curricular refinement, strategic initiatives, or learner support systems.

G. Teaching impact evidence may be presented at an aggregate, programmatic level. Individual personnel records are not required.

8 Impact of Scholarship

Standard 8: Impact of Scholarship

8.1. Faculty collectively produce and disseminate 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 business theory, policy, and/or practice and contributes to 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 form shapes or 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. High-quality research is measured not only by scholarly rigor and peer review but also by influence on knowledge, professional practice, learners, and communities.

Basis for judgment

8.1. Production and Dissemination of High-Quality, Impactful Intellectual Contributions

A. The distribution of intellectual contributions across portfolio categories is aligned with schools' missions, strategies, and aspirations for their reputations as thought leaders. As such, the types of intellectual contributions will vary across schools just as their missions vary.

B. Schools support faculty in disseminating research to appropriate multi-audience channels, including journals, books, case studies, policy briefs, open-access outlets, and digital media channels. Schools encourage and support the translation of findings into actionable insights for nonacademic audiences.

C. One important type of intellectual contribution is the publication of high-quality peer-reviewed journal articles. The production of peer-reviewed journal articles is a key way for faculty to maintain currency and expertise in their fields. Accordingly, accredited schools demonstrate the production of high-quality peer-reviewed journal articles as part of their collective portfolio of intellectual contributions. The type of peer-reviewed journal articles is aligned with the school's mission. Schools that have primarily teaching missions may produce more high-quality applied and pedagogical research, while schools offering research master's and doctoral degrees typically produce more high-quality basic research.

"One important type of intellectual contribution is the publication of high-quality peer-reviewed journal articles. The production of peer-reviewed journal articles is a key way for faculty to maintain currency and expertise in their fields"

D. Schools encourage, support, and reward the creation of intellectual contributions that have impact beyond traditional scholarly metrics and that consider nonacademic stakeholders, including policy, industry, and society broadly.

E. Schools demonstrate that intellectual contributions, including peer-reviewed scholarship, are broadly distributed across participating faculty in a manner appropriate to their missions and faculty models.

F. Schools assess and evaluate the quality of intellectual contributions and articulate their strategic priorities for future scholarship. Schools periodically evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of their metrics to determine whether they reflect the dimensions of excellence that matter most to their institutions and meaningfully lay a foundation for future success.

G. Schools have policies that guard against publishing in predatory journals and uphold integrity, fairness, and responsible research practices.

H. Assessments of scholarly impact consider the school's mission, context, and portfolio as a whole and do not rely on a single metric, ranking, or publication outlet list.

I. Schools 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. Examples of activities that may contribute to thought leadership goals may include:

1. Organizing and holding regional, national, or international academic and/or practitioner conferences
2. Holding meetings for academic or professional organizations
3. Publishing working-paper series
4. Publishing academic journals
5. Establishing a case study clearinghouse
6. Forming research relationships with private-sector, nonprofit, or government organizations

8.2. Collaboration With Stakeholders

A. Schools have systems, processes, and resources that support engagement with relevant external stakeholders involving the school, units within the school, faculty, and learners. These engagements produce credible knowledge, contribute to new venture creation, and/or create commercialization opportunities that are ultimately useful to external communities and inform underlying theories, practices, or policies of business education. Collaborations with stakeholders contribute to schools' reputation as thought leaders in their desired area(s).

B. Where consistent with the school's mission, resources, and strategic initiatives, schools seek opportunities to connect academic research with industry and/or professional or governmental stakeholders to produce responsible research that connects to business practice and enhances the school's thought leadership.

C. Schools encourage and foster meaningful collaboration among diverse faculty types (e.g., scholarly/research-focused and practitioner faculty) and across disciplines to advance new knowledge, innovation, and impact through research collaboration.

Suggested Documentation

8.1. Production and Dissemination of High-Quality, Impactful Intellectual Contributions

A. Clearly outline how the school supports and encourages faculty to produce and disseminate intellectual contributions aligned with the school's mission. Include an outline of financial support, incentives and rewards, performance expectations, development opportunities, and other initiatives that ensure faculty are supported to develop quality intellectual contributions for a wide variety of stakeholders and audiences.

B. Describe processes to identify high-quality research and scholarship, including descriptions of how the school guards against promoting publications in predatory journals and upholds integrity, fairness, and responsible research practices. AACSB does not require the school to use any particular journal list to assess quality. Rather, the school establishes policies and procedures for defining and safeguarding quality. The school's mission is highly relevant in this determination. AACSB recognizes that both applied and pedagogical intellectual contributions can be considered high-quality and impactful.

C. Describe how the school's portfolio of intellectual contributions supports the school's thought leadership aspirations.

D. Complete Table 8-1 to provide a structured summary of the school's portfolio of intellectual contributions over the past six years. In assessing the percentage of participating faculty producing intellectual contributions, peer review teams consider the school's mission, faculty model, and workload expectations. AACSB does not prescribe a minimum percentage. Judgments of the data presented in Table 8-1 focus on mission alignment, quality, and the portfolio's overall impact rather than raw counts in any single category.

1. 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.

2. In Table 8-1 (B), outline how the school's intellectual contributions are aligned with its mission, strategies, and expected outcomes.

3. In Table 8-1 (C), identify how the school measures the quality of its intellectual contributions and use 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.

4. In Table 8-1 (D), using qualitative and/or quantitative metrics, provide an analysis of the impact made by the school's portfolio of intellectual contributions.

8.2. Collaboration With Stakeholders

A. Outline the processes, systems, and resources in place to facilitate engagement between schools, units within the schools, faculty, learners, and relevant external stakeholders. Describe how these engagements encourage the creation and/or co-creation and communication of relevant and timely knowledge.

B. Describe how the school incorporates substantial and meaningful interaction between research-engaged faculty and external stakeholders, such as industry, professional associations, policymaking bodies, NGOs, governmental entities, or other mission-oriented partners.

C. Describe how the school supports research efforts through cross-faculty collaboration and interdisciplinary research and scholarship efforts to advance new knowledge, innovation, and impact.

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**	Percentage of Participating Faculty Producing ICs
(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, aligns 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.

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9 Societal Impact and Engagement

Standard 9: Societal Impact and Engagement

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

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

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



While Standard 8 evaluates the quality and impact of a school's overall intellectual contributions, Standard 9 focuses specifically on the school's strategically chosen societal impact priorities and how those priorities are reflected across teaching and/or curricula, scholarship, and engagement.

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

Table 9-1 provides a framework for accredited schools and schools seeking accreditation to categorize and evidence their societal impact across curricula, scholarship, and engagement. The table highlights the outcomes and demonstrates 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 contexts 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 evolution for schools.

The overarching expectation is that schools will tell compelling, evidence-based stories of how they leverage their business education expertise to create positive, demonstrable changes 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. No single terminology, thematic area, or metric is required to demonstrate societal impact; judgments consider alignment, intentionality, outcomes, and evidence consistent with a school's mission and context.

Basis for Judgment

9.1. Strategically Chosen Focus Area(s)

A. Schools identify one or more societal impact focus areas that are clearly articulated in their strategic plans, as specified in Standard 1. Schools may choose one focus area that is reflected in curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities, or they may choose different focus areas for each of the areas curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities.

B. Schools demonstrate how the chosen focus area(s) are supported by measurable goals, resource availability, faculty capacity, and activities that demonstrate strategic intentionality and follow-through.

C. Schools provide evidence that societal impact priorities are reflected in decision-making processes, resource allocation, staff and faculty workloads, and appropriate incentives.

D. Schools demonstrate that their societal impact efforts are grounded in business school expertise rather than providing a list of charitable activities or good deeds. Strategic plans explain how schools use their expertise to create positive societal impact through curriculum, scholarship, and engagement activities.

9.2. Societal Impact in Curriculum

A. Schools select at least one societal impact focus area to incorporate into the curriculum which may have long term positive impact in teaching. The depth and form of integration will vary by program level and school mission. The curriculum reflects the school's societal impact focus area/s through required and/or elective courses, cocurricular opportunities, and/or experiential learning. The focus area for curriculum may be the same as the focus area(s) for scholarship and/or engagement, or it may be entirely different from the focus area/s chosen for scholarship and/or engagement.

B. Schools 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 responsible use, ethics, global responsibility), leveraging new pedagogical approaches or technologies, and partnering with organizations or communities to provide authentic, impact-focused projects that ultimately have the ability to elevate teaching impact. Schools 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

A. Schools demonstrate how their research strategies clearly connect intellectual contributions to the societal impact focus areas identified in their strategic plans. The focus area for scholarship may be the same as the focus area/s for curriculum and/or engagement, or it may be entirely different from the focus area/s chosen for curriculum and/or engagement.

B. The school's identification of societal impact focus area(s) guides strategic emphasis and does not limit individual faculty members' academic freedom to pursue scholarly inquiry beyond those areas.

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

D. Evidence of societal impact from scholarship may include a combination of qualitative and quantitative indicators and is not expected to rely on any single metric or publication outlet.

9.4. Societal Impact in Engagement

A. Schools demonstrate positive societal impact through activities and partnerships, both internal and external, aligned with their missions and strategies. Their strategic plans should state the focus areas applicable to their external stakeholder engagements. Focus areas for engagement may be the same as those for curriculum and/or scholarship, or they may be entirely different. Examples include collaborations with business, government, NGOs, and communities that advance solutions in the chosen focus areas.

B. Schools 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)

A. Provide excerpts from the strategic plan showing chosen focus area(s) for societal impact and related objectives, initiatives, and measures of success.

B. Demonstrate that Table 9-1 reflects at least one focus area for each of the curriculum, scholarship, and engagement categories.

C. Summarize annual or periodic reports to stakeholders demonstrating progress toward societal impact goals and lessons learned. This may be integrated into the overall strategic plan. A separate strategic plan for societal impact is not required.

9.2. Societal Impact in Curriculum

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. Where teaching impact is evidenced over time as a result of these curricular enhancements, provide a discussion of this elevation of teaching impact.

9.3. Societal Impact in Scholarship

A. Provide excerpts from the strategic plan identifying societal impact focus area(s) related to scholarship production that aims to positively contribute to societal issues.

B. Summarize a representative set of scholarly outputs (basic, applied, and pedagogical) that illustrate alignment with and contributions to the chosen societal impact area(s).

C. Provide evidence of societal impact from research, such as documented changes in policy or practice, community benefits, citation or engagement metrics in practitioner outlets, or stakeholder testimonials, that demonstrates influence beyond academia.

9.4. Societal Impact in Engagement

A. Outline major relationships with external stakeholders that exist with schools, units within schools, faculty, and learners, and explain the rationale for the relationships and their intended outcomes.

B. Provide evidence of engagement initiatives and partnerships, including outcomes or impact assessments such as case studies, metrics, testimonials, and/or trend data.

C. Explain how engagement with business and broader society aligns with and supports the school's mission, strategies, and expected outcomes as well as its societal impact aspirations.

D. Include an evaluation of the school's societal impact over the most recent accreditation cycle. Identify the school's aspirations in this area and provide examples of how learners, faculty, teams, or centers have engaged with non-academic external stakeholders to create impact, and explain how these efforts support external communities, enhance business practice, and/or address real-world problems and improve society. Include an assessment of how effectively the school has achieved its desired impact and outline 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 provides an illustrative framework rather than a checklist or scoring device. Schools may adapt the structure, terminology, and presentation, as long as the evidence demonstrates alignment with the intent of Standard 9 and reflects the school's mission, strategy, and context.

For each of these areas of societal impact in curriculum, scholarship, and engagement with internal and/or external partnerships, the table captures the school's strategic goals, progress achieved over the last accreditation cycle, and 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. Describe the intended change or value the school seeks to create over time in each of these areas.
Part B: Describe the school's identified focus areas for curriculum, scholarship, and engagement and the outcomes the school has achieved. Where focus areas have been pursued over multiple accreditation cycles, describe how outcomes and impact have evolved over time. Evidence should emphasize outcomes and impact rather than name activities alone and may include qualitative and/or quantitative indicators appropriate to the school's mission and context. • Identify the school's societal impact focus area for curriculum and describe the progress the school has made in achieving its strategic goals in this area. If long term outcomes and impact on teaching are beginning to be observed from these efforts, identify and discuss. • Identify the school's societal impact focus area for scholarship and describe the progress the school has made in achieving its strategic goals in this area. • Identify the school's societal impact focus area for engagement with internal and external partnerships 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 its societal impact efforts, including how lessons learned inform future priorities, resource alignment, and refinement of focus areas.

/ Table is required for schools in the initial accreditation process, optional for CIR schools.

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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 is the largest network and global standard-setting body for business education. We unite business educators, businesses, and organizations in the nonprofit and public-sector to share thought leadership and best practices that drive innovation, deepen engagement, and amplify the collective impact of business schools. Together, we 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.

We strive to continuously improve engagement across the business education ecosystem 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. To help realize this vision, our standards contain an imperative that AACSB-accredited business schools demonstrate a positive impact on society.

AACSB adopted additional accounting standards for undergraduate and graduate degree programs 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[11]. Additionally, AACSB is committed to upholding the guidelines of the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation.

11 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 curricular currency and relevance.

Moreover, declining public support for higher education has placed business schools under additional economic pressure. This pressure has widespread implications on all components of the business school, from the variety 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 evolution, 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 positively impact society.

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 setting enriches the educational experience and prepares graduates to participate effectively in a global business landscape. When business schools expand opportunities and implement strategies to support broader participation, they create a culture 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. The spirit of the standards ensures that these external factors are considered by peer review teams and AACSB governing bodies.

One of the guiding principles of AACSB accreditation is the encouragement of diverse 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, community partners, and broader society is essential, not only for designing curricula and experiences that develop workforce-ready graduates, but also for ensuring that faculty expertise meaningfully contributes to business practice and societal well-being.

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 scholarly and industry engagement; neither alone is sufficient.

AACSB accreditation therefore promotes a dynamic intersection of academic and professional engagement that reflects a school's mission, strengthens its relevance, and ensures that its 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.

The Global Standards and associated accreditation 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 planned—and such outcomes are not inherently 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 substantially 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 missions, strategies, 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 contributions.

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 opportunities to use their expertise to benefit society in ways aligned with their missions. Regardless of form, meaningful impact stems from clear strategic choices and sustained action.

The Role of Peer Review Judgment

AACSB accreditation derives much of its value from the experience, 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 to support the continuous improvement expectations 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 areas where a school does not align with the spirit of a standard, the school may 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 a shared commitment to continuous improvement.

In applying their 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 notion of global standards with local application.

Peer review teams consider legal, regulatory, privacy, and contractual constraints that may affect the collection, analysis, or disclosure of certain data, and schools may provide alternative evidence consistent with the intent of the standards.

Peer review evaluations are based on the quality of the learning experience and outcomes—not rigid interpretations of standards.

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 the institution as 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 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: (1) branding, and (2) external market perception, as it relates to the single unit and the parent institution. AACSB decides whether the school has made a successful case for a single unit of accreditation.

- **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 brand independence, 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 focuses on how effectively external markets (learners, employers, the public, and other stakeholder groups) perceive that the business academic unit is distinct from other academic units within the parent organization. This differentiation may include elements such as learner markets served, admissions requirements that differ 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 recognition as a single business unit typically is made before the school submits its eligibility application in the initial accreditation process.

For accredited schools, an application for unit 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 application for unit accreditation 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 that the market is fully aware of which degrees have been quality-assured by AACSB. If the request for unit 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 normally includes all business degree programs at thebachelor'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.[12]

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.

12 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.

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 it into scope. Schools may check their included and excluded programs at any time in myAccreditation.

New business degree programs introduced by the approved entity which will be resourced by faculty who have been substantially quality-assured may be identified 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. Degree programs introduced in between accreditation visits which will be resourced by faculty who have not been quality assured must be reported to AACSB 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 applicable. In providing guidance, CIRC and IAC will consider how significant the degree program is and may request further review in between accreditation cycles before the new program can be considered 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.[13] The review evaluates 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.

13 "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.

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 counts 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. In practical terms, this means that, without a collaborative provision, transfer credit related to business disciplines is normally limited to less than half of the program requirements.[14]

An exception to the transfer limits may apply when collaborative provisions exist. There is a wide array of collaborative provisions, each with varying implications on a school's AACSB accreditation. The table below shows 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.[15] 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 on 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.

14 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.

15 The collaborative provision types were adapted from the EQUAL Guidelines on Collaborative Provision.

Collaborative Provision Type	Definition	Coursework Included in Scope of School A[16], or Excluded From Scope of School A[17]
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 blending 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.[18]	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 who have completed courses at 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 the 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 the 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 the scope of 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 the scope of School A.
Offshore Arrangement	An 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 multicampus provision of the awarding institution, whether located in the same country or different countries.	Business coursework taken at School B is included in the scope of School A.

16 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.

17 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 its 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. While in these instances School B's business coursework is excluded, School A's business degree is still in scope for School A.

18 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.[19]

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 the school is reasonably able to align with AACSB guiding principles and Global Standards within the maximum time frame allowed. The following section outlines the criteria 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 its progress toward fully aligning with AACSB's guiding principles and Global Standards through a self-evaluation and peer review process. 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.[20]

19 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.

20 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 in myAccreditation.

Criteria for an Eligibility Application to Be Accepted

1. **Good Standing**

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 a formal investigation related to a significant legal or ethical breach, or a breach of the governing bodies' rules and processes. Additionally, the school is current with AACSB membership dues.

2. **Degree Program**

The school must offer at least one baccalaureate and/or graduate degree program (or equivalent) in business, management, or accounting independently through its 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**

The school must have a strategic plan, independent of but supportive of the university (if applicable) and consistent 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 provides 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 Applicant School**

AACSB acknowledges that a multitude of leadership structures for in-scope accredited programs exist 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 the 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**

The school must demonstrate sufficient financial resources from all sources 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**

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 a significant or sustained enrollment decline that could impact its financial health, faculty resources, or ability to deliver high-quality business education.

7. **Faculty Sufficiency**

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 for a visit without 16 full-time faculty in place at the time the IAC makes the invitation decision.

8. **Faculty Qualifications**

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**

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 the school's in-scope degree programs must 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 for 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**

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 percent 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 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 the business school's strategy and operations. 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 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 directly related to a violation of the AACSB Global Standards rather than related to personnel issues, which are handled at the local school level.[21]

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

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 strategic plan. This includes an expectation that the school identifies within its strategic plan specific focus areas for curriculum, scholarship, and internal and/or external engagement activities designed to advance the school's societal impact aspirations.

3. **Mission-Driven Focus**

AACSB accreditation focuses on outcomes achieved through the institution's mission-related activities. As part of maintaining a robust strategic plan, each school identifies its specific mission, strategies, and expected outcomes. The school is then evaluated by peers against its stated mission to determine whether 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 peer review team and mentor visits. The peer review process is a defining characteristic of AACSB accreditation. All schools agree to continued adherence to the 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 are 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 determines an accreditation outcome. Accredited institutions may be subject to an off-cycle peer review visit or other 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 supports 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 promotes awareness 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 cultural differences and global perspectives. Graduates are prepared to pursue business careers in a global context.

9. **Community and Connectedness**

A strong sense of community and meaningful connections enhances the educational experience and contributes 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 develop intercultural capability, including the ability to work respectfully across differing values, contexts, and ways of knowing. 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.

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/ 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.

A

Accreditation: Structured, peer review–based evaluation process through which an external body assesses whether an institution or program satisfies defined standards and demonstrates ongoing compliance and improvement.

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

Accreditor: Recognized body that establishes quality standards, conducts peer review evaluations, and determines whether an institution or program demonstrates alignment with those standards on an ongoing basis.

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 the 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 competencies, assessing learner achievement of those competencies, 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 school's mission.

Competency-Based Education (CBE): Refers to courses where a learner progresses at their own pace, based on their ability to demonstrate proficiency with a specific skill or competence. CBE includes credit for prior learning.

Course: A defined unit of instruction within an academic program that has specified learning objectives, content, credit or contact hours, and methods of assessment, and for which student performance is formally evaluated.

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 school's mission, values, and culture.

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.

Curriculum Vitae (CVs): A comprehensive academic and professional record that documents an individual's education, qualifications, scholarly work, and professional experience.

D

Degree: An academic credential awarded by an authorized institution upon completion of a prescribed program of study that meets defined academic requirements and learning outcomes.

Degree Levels:

- **Undergraduate Degree:** An initial post-secondary academic credential (e.g., bachelor's degree) that provides foundational and specialized knowledge within a discipline. Admission generally requires completion of secondary education.
- **Master's Degree:** A graduate-level credential that builds on undergraduate study and provides advanced knowledge, specialized expertise, or professional preparation in a specific field.
- **Doctoral Degree:** The highest academic credential, focused on advanced scholarship, research, or professional practice. Doctoral degrees typically require original research or a significant applied contribution to the field (e.g., PhD, DBA).

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: 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

ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System): A standardized credit system used across the European higher education area to quantify student workload and facilitate credit transfer and degree comparability among institutions.

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: 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: Individuals who are academically or professionally qualified and contribute to teaching, scholarship, and other mission-related activities, regardless of title or employment classification within a particular context.

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 Practitioners (IP).

Financial Resources: Funding from all sources that is used 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.

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.

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

Framework: A structured set of concepts, principles, or criteria that provides the foundation for organizing, evaluating, or implementing a system, idea, or body of work.

FTE (Full-Time Equivalent): Standardized unit of measurement used to represent workload or enrollment in terms of a full-time schedule.

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: Evidence attained from information 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 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 assessing 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.

Modality: The method or mode through which instruction or engagement is delivered, including face-to-face, online (synchronous or asynchronous), hybrid or blended, HyFlex (hybrid and flexible, allowing students to choose among in-person, synchronous online, asynchronous online participation), and immersive formats.

O

Other Peer-or Editorial-Reviewed Intellectual Contributions (Table 8-1): Scholarly outputs that are validated through review by either peers or subject matter experts recognized as having particular practical or academic expertise in that field. Refer to the 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: 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.

Pedagogy: Refers to the theory and practice of teaching and learning.

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

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles: 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.[22]

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

Q

Quality: The inherent characteristics of a product, service, or experience that determine its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.

22 Definition adopted from "Predatory Journals: No Definition, No Defence," Nature, 11 December 2019. 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.

Self-Study Year: The full academic year prior to the year of the accreditation visit. The self-study year is also sometimes referred to as the "year of record."

Society: External stakeholders of relevance to the business school in the context of 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 curriculum, research, and engagement that addresses social, economic, and environmental challenges consistent with its mission.

Stakeholders: Individuals and organizations with 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 period.

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

Suggested Documentation: Illustrative examples of evidence and criteria a peer review team may examine to determine whether a school aligns with a standard. Schools not pursuing accreditation may also use the suggestions to guide internal review and continuous improvement.

Supporting Faculty Member: A faculty member who 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.

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: An alternative to institutional accreditation involving the accreditation of a single business academic unit.

W

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

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