**AACSB Initial Accreditation Peer Review Team Instructions**

As you prepare for the visit, please refer to this for guidelines and expectations regarding the peer review team tasks and responsibilities in the initial accreditation process.

1. **Transition from the mentor to the peer review team chair:**

Once the school is invited to apply for initial accreditation the mentor steps aside and the chair takes over the advising role from the mentor. The chair can contact the mentor to get feedback on their accreditation journey. The chair works closely with the school in the development of the visit schedule and provides advice concerning the content of the Self Evaluation Report (SER). The chair may (but is not required) conduct an onsite campus visit prior to the official initial accreditation team visit. It is the responsibility of the institution, not the chair, to present its case for accreditation and continuous improvement (1) in the self-evaluation report, (2) in responses to team requests and questions included in the pre-visit analysis, (3) during the on-site visit, and (4) in the optional response to the team report. The chair's primary role during this period is to raise appropriate questions during the development of the SER and **prior to** submission of the report to the team and AACSB.

1. **Analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report and submission of the documentation:**

All team members review and analyze the SER. The peer review team chair contacts the team members to obtain their analysis and to discuss the content of the draft pre-visit analysis. A pre-visit analysis template is available on [AACSB’s website](https://www.aacsb.edu/educators/accreditation/peer-review-teams).

**Guidelines for the Draft Pre-visit Analysis and accompanying Standard-by-Standard Analysis:**

* The draft pre-visit analysis accompanies the team’s analysis of the SER and should include the major issues that are detailed in the team’s analysis section.
* The team’s analysis of the SER should be in a standard-by-standard format specifying issues and concerns and the degree of concern regarding each issue.
* The analysis should clearly state its requests for (a) information to be delivered prior to the visit and (b) information to be provided on-site during the visit. Teams should request as much information as possible for review prior to the visit to allow more time for discussions and activities that only can be accomplished on-site.
* Evaluative statements, such as, “no concerns” or “satisfies this standard” are premature during this phase of the review process and should not be included in the pre-visit analysis.
* Gratuitous (non-standards specific) comments should be reserved for inclusion in on-site conversations or in appropriate sections of the team’s visit report.
* Preferred words/phrases for the report are suggested in place of those in parentheses: self-evaluation (self-study); peer review team (visit team, visitation team - the team's role includes more than just the visit); congruence, satisfies, meets the expectations (compliance); does not satisfy, does not meet the expectations, incongruent with (disconformity); application for initial accreditation (letter of intent); pre-visit analysis (letter of concerns).
* When an initial accreditation applicant is **not** being recommended for a visit, specific rationale relating to the standards must be cited in the pre-visit analysis. Because the institution can request and proceed with a visit, even though not recommended, please do not remove the visit dates from your schedule until you receive confirmation from AACSB that the visit will not take place.

**Review and Distribution of the Final Pre-visit Analysis:**

* 1. **Pre-visit Analysis.** The team submits the draft to AACSB via myAccreditation (unless otherwise instructed by AACSB) at least 60 days before the visit. If there are no major concerns or hurdles, following AACSB staff review, the pre-visit analysis will be shared with the school at least 45 days prior to the visit. If the team or AACSB has concerns about the school or analysis, a review can be facilitated involving the Initial Accreditation Committee reviewers, chair, and vice chair of the committee. If the committee approves the analysis and agrees with the team’s recommendation concerning the continuation of the visit, the chair finalizes the analysis and shares it with the applicant school at least 45 days prior to the visit.
  2. **Responses to Pre-visit Analysis**. If the institution responds to the pre-visit analysis, the team should receive the response at least 15 days prior to the visit via myAccreditation.

1. **Visit Schedule Determination:**

No later than 30 days prior to the visit, the team chair should confer with the host dean to clarify and discuss the pre-visit analysis and to finalize the visit schedule (discussions on preliminary visit arrangements should begin earlier). A sample visit agenda is available [here](https://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/volunteers/peer-review-teams) for reference and modification according to the specific on-site needs of the peer review team.

1. **Preparation and Submission of the Team Visit Report:**
   1. **Preparation.** Because the team recommendation is communicated to the school, it is essential that the team reaches its accreditation recommendation by the end of the visit. It is recommended that, if at all possible, a draft copy of the report is provided at the end of the visit. The team should follow the team visit report project in myAccreditation to generate the draft team report. The Initial Accreditation Handbook (see link below) contains additional guidance regarding the preparation of the team visit report.
   2. **Submission.** Within ten days following the visit, the team chair forwards by email a final draft copy of the team visit report and its recommendation to the applicant institution. The applicant has ten days after the visit to provide the team with a request of corrections of factual information. The final peer review team report must be submitted via myAccreditation. The applicant institution has the option to submit a response to the team visit report; this response should be provided to the chair of the Initial Accreditation Committee ([IAC@aacsb.edu](mailto:IAC@aacsb.edu)) with a copy to each of the peer review team members.
2. **Role of the Initial Accreditation Committee Liaison:**

An Initial Accreditation Committee member serves as liaison between the peer review team and the committee. The liaison's role is to lead discussions regarding the institution at accreditation committee meetings. Prior to committee meetings, the liaison thoroughly reviews the pre-visit analysis, visit report, recommendation, and any responses from the institution. The liaison determines if a conference call or other form of information exchange between the team, accreditation committee chair, or AACSB office is necessary, and initiates action accordingly.

For reference, please find the following resources available online:

* 2020 Business Standards and Interpretive Guidance: [link](https://www.aacsb.edu/educators/accreditation/business-accreditation/aacsb-business-accreditation-standards)
* Initial Accreditation Handbook: [link](https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/documents/accreditation/business/initial-self-evaluation/initialaccreditationhandbook_2020bus.pdf?rev=2e6934ab80624fe891d95463b2f84416&hash=D2F116C8733A54CFE9DD5F2048177B79)

Please feel free to contact the staff member assigned as the accreditation staff liaison to the host school if you have questions or would like additional information. You can find the staff liaison contact information in myAccreditation, under the ‘Contacts’ tab.