

## GUIDELINES FOR ON-SITE EVALUATION TEAMS

### Purpose of the On-Site Evaluation

Accreditation requires a qualitative evaluation of an institution's educational programs to determine whether it is meeting its stated objectives and is in compliance with the NACCAS *Standards and Criteria* promulgated by the Commission.

The evaluation process has two (2) phases. In the first phase, the institution performs a self-study in which objectives are clarified and the institution's performance is evaluated according to the stated criteria in the Institutional Self-Study (ISS). The ISS and supporting exhibits are reviewed by an Accreditation Specialist to verify that all necessary documents are contained within the ISS. Areas of non-compliance or items in need of clarification are pointed out to the institution. However, the staff analysis should not be construed as a final review. The responsibility of reporting comments and limitations to the Commission rests with the on-site evaluation team.

In the second phase, the evaluating team (consisting of an Academic, a School Owner/Administrator, and a Practitioner) visits the institution to verify that the *Standards and Criteria* are being met and that the information contained in the ISS is accurate. In the case of schools applying for accreditation outside of the United States or its territories, the evaluation team will be comprised of a NACCAS staff person and a school owner evaluator who is also a practitioner. International visits will encompass two days due to the decrease in size of the on-site evaluation team. The narratives contained in the ISS are an important element in the process and should be considered carefully by the team, since these generally contain important information regarding an institution's self-perception. The team members will use the school's ISS as a guide during the on-site evaluation and may solicit information regarding the school's compliance through interviews with the administrative staff, faculty, students, members of the local business community, and salon owners who employ the school's graduates. The team members will specifically attempt to verify the participation in the self-evaluation process of those persons listed in the ISS.

An on-site evaluation is normally scheduled for one day, but two days may be necessary if additional time is needed for a proper evaluation; if the size of the student body so dictates; or if the school's most recent application for (re) accreditation was denied regardless of whether they prevailed on appeal. If a second day is necessary, the NACCAS staff person will apprise the school owner of the need to return the next day.

### Qualifications of Examiners

The On-Site Evaluation Team consists of the following:

**Evaluator in the Academic Field:** Has expertise and teaching experience in post-secondary education, and has knowledge in pedagogy and in the development of curriculum.

**Evaluator in the Field of Administration:** Has a minimum of two years of experience in an administrative position in a NACCAS accredited school and is active in school operations, or has five years experience in an administrative position in a NACCAS accredited school and demonstrates relevant industry involvement by:

- (i) active membership in professional organization(s) in the field, or
- (ii) recent authorship of professional publications, or
- (iii) evidence of continuing education in the field.

**Additional Evaluators:** Additional Evaluators may be added to the team to ensure that at least one team member has special knowledge in each field in which the institution offers programs. The additional evaluators may be academics, administrators, or practitioners. The qualifications for practitioner evaluators are shown below. The school shall bear the expense of any additional team members required.

**Practitioner Evaluator:** A practitioner evaluator is a representative of professional services operations in fields within NACCAS' scope. In order to qualify as a practitioner evaluator, the candidate

- (1) Must have completed an education program in the field;
- (2) Must have at least two years of experience as a practitioner on a day-to-day basis in a licensed establishment that provides services in the field of programs offered at the institution to be evaluated; and
- (3) Must demonstrate an abiding interest in the field by:
  - (i) national certification in the field, or
  - (ii) active membership in professional organization(s) in the field, or
  - (iii) recent authorship of professional publications, or
  - (iv) evidence of continuing education in the field, and
  - (v) maintain a current practitioner license, if applicable.
- (4) The practitioner representative may have a direct or indirect interest in a school offering programs within NACCAS' scope so long as the primary focus of his/her professional activity is to provide services to the public.
- (5) The practitioner representative(s) must be selected from outside the market area of the applicant school.

On-Site Evaluators are required to alert NACCAS to any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest related to an institution to be visited. (See the Evaluator Code of Ethics)

A NACCAS Staff Member may accompany the team to lend it administrative assistance, assure consistency, assure that each team member performs the assigned functions and, when requested by the team, to clarify the *Standards and Criteria* and *Rules of Practice and Procedure* of NACCAS. The NACCAS staff member shall coordinate the evaluation trip, and will review the institution's satisfactory progress policy, catalog, enrollment contract, and other requirements as determined by the Commission.

**NOTE:** NACCAS does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, national origin, ethnic group, or handicap in adding evaluators to the eligible list and in selecting individuals to participate in on-site evaluations. NACCAS requires all evaluators to attend a NACCAS Accreditation and Team Training Workshop prior to becoming active in the on-site evaluation process and at least once every three (3) years to remain on the active list. NACCAS also periodically reviews evaluators' qualifications and written evaluations from schools visited and from other Team Members and reserves the right to delete individuals from the list.

The date of the visit and the team members are approved with the institution in advance. The school has the right to reject any team member or postpone the on-site evaluation for a valid reason, pursuant to Section 3.8 of the NACCAS *Rules of Practice and Procedure*. The school does not have the right to reject the NACCAS Staff Representative assigned to the visit.

## **Accreditation Timetable**

### Four to Six Weeks Before the On-Site Evaluation

The team members are contacted by the NACCAS office and asked to serve on the on-site evaluation team. Travel by car which exceeds 600 miles must be approved in advance by the NACCAS Director of Accreditation. NACCAS makes all hotel reservations (guaranteed for late arrival).

The team members will receive a number of documents via mailed hard copy, CD ROM and/or email in preparation for conducting on-site evaluations.

#### First Time Evaluators – Via CD ROM

- NACCAS Handbook
- Goals of Accreditation
- Guidelines for On-site Evaluation
- Travel Policy
- Expense Report (Excel Spreadsheet)
- Glossary of Terms
- On-site Visit Procedures
- Standards Checklists
- Summary of Findings
- Interview Guides
- Evaluator Surveys
- File Review Spreadsheets

#### First Time and Repeat Evaluators – Via Email

- Evaluator Updates (including a statement encouraging the evaluator to go on the website and review any recent updates posted as they may be applicable to the visit)
- Visit Itinerary Letter
- Institutional Self-Study (ISS) and exhibits (sent to the evaluator by the school)

*(Staff Members will hand carry extra sets of the Standards Checklist, File Review Spreadsheets, Interview Guides, and Evaluator Surveys for the full schedule of visits)*

The ISS and exhibits should be carefully reviewed prior to the on-site evaluation to allow for discussion among the team members.

At the beginning of each year (or on their first visit), evaluators will also receive a copy of the NACCAS *On-Site Evaluation Procedures Handbook*, on CD ROM which contains all of NACCAS' policies, procedures, and forms that relate to on-site visits. The handbook is updated each year and is for the evaluator to keep.

Approximately one (1) week prior to the visit, the NACCAS staff representative will contact all team members to coordinate travel arrangements and to verify that all materials have been received.

### The Day of the On-Site Evaluation

## **The Role of the Accreditation Specialist**

During on-site visits, NACCAS staff is to serve the following roles:

- a. Serve as the liaison between the team and the school.
- b. Spot check work of the evaluation team members to ensure consistency and accuracy
- c. Write the final team report
- d. Read the exit interview during the exit interview
- e. Verify Annual Report or Preliminary Annual Report Data as applicable
- f. Check Enrollment Agreement, Catalog, Refund Policy, and Satisfactory Progress Policy for compliance

### **Morning:**

The team members and staff representative meet at breakfast to discuss any questions the team members may have concerning ISS materials, new interpretations of relevant criteria, the schedule for the day, the purpose and process of the evaluation, the individual role and responsibility of each team member, and key items regarding the school such as pending complaints or any adverse actions. Upon the team's arrival at the school, the NACCAS staff representative will request a tour of the facility and a quiet office or unused room reserved for the team's use during the day.

Following the tour, the evaluators will observe theory classes and begin the evaluation of the school. The NACCAS staff representative will provide the school owner or designee with an overview of the accreditation process, review the day's schedule, explain the role of the team members and staff, and the process to be followed. In addition, the staff person will alert the school owner/designee of the documentation needed by the team members to successfully complete their review.

Since the time available for the evaluation is limited, each team member is assigned specific Standards. Team members are not prohibited from evaluating other Standards as well, and in fact, are encouraged to do so. Their first responsibility, however, is to cover their own areas thoroughly

### Owner/Administrator

Standard III - Administrative Services

Standard IV - Admissions Policies and Procedures

Standard VII - Financial Practices and Management

(NOTE: The school's financial statements are reviewed by NACCAS' Department of Finance)

### Academic

Standard I – Educational Objectives and Institutional Evaluation (With Practitioner Support)

Standard II – Instructional Staff (With Practitioner Support)

Standard VI – Curriculum (With Practitioner Support)

Standard IX – Evaluation of Students (With Owner/Administrator Support)

### Practitioner

Standard V – Student Support Services

Standard VIII – Instructional Space and Facilities

The morning continues with the examiners evaluating the school according to the NACCAS Standards and conducting interviews with faculty and students. The team will meet to review findings and to ensure that consistency is being maintained. Information obtained through interviews should be further investigated and discussed with other team members prior to citing a limitation. The NACCAS staff representative will provide technical assistance to the team members and school owner, review the catalog, contract, and if applicable, the school's Satisfactory Progress and Ability-to-Benefit Policies.

In addition, the NACCAS staff representative will spot check specific criteria to ensure consistency and accuracy in the review of student files and other areas.

### **Lunch Meeting**

The team breaks for lunch to discuss its findings and interviews with students and staff. The team may or may not elect to conduct further research into those findings. The staff representative may assist and guide the team in the method of their research or provide assistance in the review of materials.

### **Afternoon:**

After lunch, the staff representative discusses with the school management any problems found by the examiners which may require clarification or where the school may assist the team in locating the necessary documentation. The examiners continue with their evaluation until all criteria have been covered.

The team members and staff person meet to discuss and write the findings in the Team Report, noting limitations, if applicable, pertinent to each Standard.

The staff representative serves as the team's recording secretary. Although each team member is responsible for standards which fall in their area of expertise, the Team Report represents a consensus of all the team members' findings.

The Accreditation Specialist reads the Team Report verbatim to the school management in the exit interview. Time is provided for questions from the school management following the reading of the report. The Team's role is one of a fact-finding body, and the Team is not to make recommendations to the school as to how to correct specific limitations. The school should not argue the Commission's Standards and policies, but should ask for clarification of information included in the report or provide documentation not previously seen by the Team. The staff representative answers any questions regarding the *Standards* or *Rules* and informs the school of the next steps in the accreditation process. The Team Report will be sent to the school with the school being given forty-five (45) days to submit a written response. Please note that no extensions will be given to submit the school's response document.

The school owner is asked to sign a verification sheet that identifies the courses reviewed the day of the visit and the time the team was present.

Following the on-site evaluation, the Accreditation Specialist has the Team Report typed to ensure that all information is correct and a final copy is sent to each evaluator. If any member feels that something was omitted or was not originally agreed upon, he or she must immediately submit a letter to NACCAS outlining the discrepancy. A copy of the report is sent to the institution.

All team members should submit their expense vouchers and original receipts no later than one (1) week after the conclusion of the visit.