The Self-Study Manual for Federal Institutions

2016 Edition

This manual contains information about the specific format to be used by Federal institutions conducting a self-study for accreditation by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education. It must be used in conjunction with the conditions, standards, and criteria of the Commission found in the *Handbook of Accreditation for Federal Institutions*.

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IMPORTANT

The following conditions ***must*** be satisfied before a federal institution can host an accreditation visiting team:

1. Institutions hosting teams for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must have the on-site administrator or other full-time employee at the attend Commission Self-Study Workshop within 6 to 18 months prior to hosting the accreditation visiting team. Additionally, institutions hosting teams for initial accreditation must also attend Annual Report Workshops within 6 to 18 months prior to hosting the accreditation visiting team. Candidate Academies offered by the Council include both the Self-Study and the Annual Report workshops that satisfy this requirement.

2. For institutions that are seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation, in order to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the institution's qualifications for accreditation, the institution being considered must give notice in the appropriate newspaper(s) and/or media services. This notice for comments must be made no more than sixty (60) days prior to hosting a visiting team for accreditation (initial or reaffirmation). The notice must state that the institution is applying for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation with the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education and that persons wishing to make comments should write to: Executive Director, Commission of the Council on Occupational Education, 7840 Roswell Road, Bldg. 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350, or submit their comments via the Council web site (www.council.org).

   Persons making comments must provide their names and mailing addresses.

Changes made to this Manual from the previous year are highlighted in yellow.

SELF-STUDY MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A WORD FROM THE COMMISSION

Although the primary purpose of this manual is to provide the format to be used by institutions for an examination of their qualifications for accreditation, the self-study process also serves as an evaluation and planning vehicle for the improvement of all institutional services. The self-study process involves the total staff in evaluating the educational programs offered and the related functions of the institution in light of the institution's mission and the conditions and ten standards of the Commission. Findings of the institution's staff and advisory groups while conducting the self-study are recorded in a document referred to as the Self-Study Report. This report will indicate to what extent the institution is in compliance with the conditions and standards of the Commission.

While conducting the self-study, if it is found that the institution is in violation of a condition or standard, the deficiency should not be ignored as if it does not exist. The deficiency should be discussed in the self-study report, and plans to correct the deficiency should be described. All written plans required by the criteria must have evidence that they are in effect.

One major benefit from the accreditation process is that a visiting team of professional colleagues during an extended visit will validate the description of the institution's staff findings found in the self-study report by reviewing the institution's operation, the educational programs, and the documents on file during an extended visit to the institution.

Another benefit is the public recognition which comes with accreditation. Successful completion of the accrediting process signifies not only that the institution's services are sound, but that it is meeting its broader responsibility to the public.

Regardless of where the decision to undertake a self-study originates, it is a step of major importance and should be conducted with the full cooperation and assistance of the entire staff.

Three basic commitments are essential to a successful self-evaluation:

1. A willingness to invest the necessary time, effort and expense.
2. The support of all institutional personnel.
3. A conscious dedication to undertake all improvements which the study shows to be needed.

To achieve these objectives requires continuing, positive, and creative leadership. Within the framework of the conditions and standards, each institution is evaluated according to its own stated mission and objectives. Deficiencies in a basically sound program do not prohibit accreditation, provided the institution is willing to remedy the deficiencies in a reasonable period of time.

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A SELF-STUDY

In order for an institution to complete a successful self-study, it must "***begin with the end in mind***." The process must have total commitment from the institution's governing body, administration, and every member of the staff. The community, advisory committee(s), student body, and alumni should be kept fully informed and as closely involved as possible.

Adequate time should be allowed for effective planning and preparation of all studies and documents; therefore, large institutions with very complex programs may need more time than the usual one year to complete the study. Small institutions with limited staff are also challenged to plan carefully in order to complete all tasks involved in the self-study in a timely manner. All institutions, however large or small, must also be sure that an institutional representative attends a Commission Self-Study Workshop within six to eighteen months prior to hosting an accreditation team visit (whether for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation).

A steering committee is recommended to coordinate the work of the various committees and to provide overall supervision of the study. This committee will be responsible for organizing the results into a logical, cohesive document and for establishing schedules for each sub-committee.

Sub-committees should do an in-depth analysis of each aspect of the institution as it relates to each standard. The most desirable committee breakdown should provide one committee for each standard, but staff size may make this impractical.

In addition to committees which address conditions and standards, a committee should be appointed for each instructional program. These program committees will work closely with each other, with sub-committees on conditions and standards, and with the steering committee. Before finalizing the self-study report, there should be an opportunity for the total staff to review the reports of the committees to ensure a general consensus regarding the final report.

The leader and coordinator of the study must be able to motivate others, have considerable writing skills, and have the ability to organize and direct a complex project. Ideally, this person should be relieved of enough typical duties to provide the time needed to head the self-study project.

Timetable

A time schedule which reflects the following elements should be developed by the steering committee or person in charge of coordinating the self-study.

1. Beginning date of the self-study.
2. Deadline for preliminary data collection.
3. Meeting dates of committees.
4. Dates for completion of committee reports.
5. Final date for review of committee reports.
6. Final date for completion of self-study report.
7. Date for completing the final review of report.
8. Target date for transmitting final draft of the self-study to team leader.
9. Tentative date of preliminary visit by team leader (at least 30 days prior to the team visit).
10. Date for team visit.

The task sheet at the end of this section may serve as a useful tool which the self-study coordinator may use in the planning and completing of the self-study process. (This appendix is offered as an example. Each institution may customize this chart as needed.)

The self-study report must be completed prior to the preliminary visit of the visiting team leader. After approval for distribution to team members by the team leader, copies of the report must be distributed as follows:

1. One digital copy to the Commission office in Adobe Acrobat ® .pdf format. The digital self-study document may be submitted to the Commission via email (20MB maximum file size), cloud transfer or sharing service, or by flash drive.

   NOTE: If the team leader requests a hard copy of the self-study document, it must be bound as one document that includes program supplements, if possible.

   The cover page of the self-study document must have the name of the institution, the address, and the year of the team visit.

*2. One copy to the visiting team leader.
*3. One copy to each member of the visiting team.
*4. One copy to each observer on the visiting team.
5. At least one copy for the school files.

*These copies may be transmitted electronically or provided in hard copy to the recipient, depending on the preference of the reader.

General

The statements contained in the succeeding pages of this manual are intended as a guide for institutions undergoing self-study. Each of the following sections has been divided into a series of statements relating to specific standards and forms for reporting data that must be included in the self-study document.

When writing the report, describe the institution in narrative form as it exists based on the criteria in each standard. Insert the charts in the proper places. At the end of each standard, there must be a summary evaluation which identifies the strengths, challenges, and limitations as perceived by the institution and the institution's plan for resolving the challenges. Each department of the school should be actively involved. No part of the self-study should be conducted in isolation from the rest.

Above all, there should be consensus regarding statements in the report. It can be embarrassing if the report of the visiting team does not reflect the general perception of the staff as portrayed in the self-study.

Basic Considerations

In general, these basic rules should govern the development of the self-study:

1. Involve all faculty, administration, advisory groups, and the governing board.
2. Discuss extensively what goes into the report.
3. Analyze all aspects of the institution's relationship to the conditions and standards.
4. Write as concisely as possible and substantiate the findings.
5. Make the self-study a self-improvement project.

The self-study should become a vehicle for future improvement and development.

When the self-study is initiated, the constructive effects of the self-study process will begin. It is not necessary to await the decision of the Commission before initiating changes and planning for others. The process of identifying needed improvements and designating them for immediate, short-term, or longer-term implementation is one benefit of the self-study process.

As emphasized before, this manual is a guide only. It must be used in conjunction with the latest edition of the *Handbook of Accreditation* of the Commission. When questions develop, consider the *Handbook of Accreditation* as the final authority.

It is important that a self-study produce improvements, not just a self-study report. Each activity should improve the institution - not merely produce a report for the Commission. The self-study timetable should include ample time to implement needed improvements identified by the self-study.

SELF-STUDY COMMITTEE
Task Sheet

TASK *Including Exhibits*	Person Responsible	Date for Rough Draft	Completed	Date for Final Draft	Completed
Institutional/Community Characteristics					
Conditions Checksheet					
Standard 1 – Institutional Mission					
Standard 2 – Educational Programs					
*(*List each secondary and postsecondary program)*					
Standard 3 - Program and Institutional Outcomes					
Standard 4 - Strategic Planning					
Standard 5 - Learning Resources					
Standard 6 - Physical Resources and Technical Infrastructure					
Standard 7 - Financial Resources					
Standard 8 - Human Resources					
Standard 9 - Organizational Structure					
Standard 10 - Student Services and Activities					
Editing					
Document Reproduction (Printing – If Needed)					
Transmit Self-Study and Program Supplements to Team Leader (1 copy before preliminary visit)					
Transmit Self-Study and Program Supplements to Team Members (1 copy each before visit)					
Transmit Self-Study and Program Supplements to Council Office (1 electronic copy)					
Revise Educational Programs Chart (if needed)					
				Target Date for Self-Study Completion	

** See Guidelines for Reporting Secondary Programs*

FORMAT FOR THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

1. Cover

   The cover must include the name of the institution, the institution's address, the title of the document ("Self-Study Report"), and the year of the team visit.

2. Preface

   The self-study must begin with a preface written by the chief administrator. It may contain, but need not be limited to, an appraisal of methods employed in conducting the self-study and the major benefits as viewed by the chief administrator and staff. It is suggested that the preface consist of 500 words or less.

3. List of Self-Study Committee Members

   A list of self-study committee members must follow the preface. This list makes it easier for visiting team members to coordinate with those people directly responsible for each condition, standard, or program area.

4. Table of Contents

5. Institutional and Community Characteristics

   This section includes the narrative descriptions of institutional and community characteristics as delineated in the section of this manual titled "Characteristics."

6. Conditions Check Sheet and Findings

   The Conditions Check Sheet found at the front of the check sheets document provided on the Council's web site must be completed. For every "No" response on the check sheet, develop an explanation describing how the institution fails to comply with that condition. Collect appropriate exhibits to support the institution's assertion that each condition is met or that proposed solutions have been implemented to address each "No" response.

7. Standards

   This section of the self-study document must contain the results of applying the criteria for each of
   This section of the self-study document must contain the results of applying the criteria for each of
   the standards to an evaluation of the institution. **DO NOT include the check sheets for standards in the self-study document.** Rather, the format for each standard must be presented in narrative form and must include the following areas: **introduction, analysis, challenges, solutions, and summary.**

a. The **introduction** should include general comments on the **standard** as it relates to the institution and the institution's commitment to compliance with the standard. The comments may include reference to the criteria of the standard, their applicability to the institution, and their importance in assuring educational quality. (See criteria of the standards in the *Handbook of Accreditation.*) It should also include the description of any unique circumstances or situations that might need to be explained to evaluators. A brief introduction must also be provided for **each program** that describes its history, relationship in the community, and any unique circumstances or situations that might need to be explained to evaluators.

b. The **analysis** should present the results of the evaluation to determine compliance of the institution with the specific criteria of each standard. The results will include data and their interpretation that demonstrate compliance or non-compliance with the criteria. Specific practices that support the analysis will be cited in the narrative. The analysis should be well-organized, clearly written, and concise. These results should reflect the consensus of the standards' committees and the self-study steering committee. **IMPORTANT: The self-study must present a realistic assessment of compliance with the criteria. Do not avoid describing areas of non-compliance. An honest and realistic analysis facilitates the development of effective and realistic solutions in those areas in need of improvement.**

c. The **challenges** should address any areas of non-compliance with specific criteria and/or areas where continued compliance may be difficult to maintain.

d. **Solutions** must consist of courses of action that have been taken to address the challenges by the time of the team visit. Exhibits prepared to demonstrate the implemented solutions will be reviewed by the visiting team.

e. The **summary** should provide an overview of findings that is a synthesis of the **introduction, analysis, challenges, solutions, and summary**.

8. Glossary

To ensure that the self-study report is easy to read, a glossary of abbreviations and terms should be included. This section may follow Standard 10 and includes abbreviations and terms germane to the institution throughout the text.

9. Supplements to the Self-Study

If the institution offers a large number of programs, individual program information from Standard 2 - Educational Programs may be presented in the form of "supplements" to the self-study document -- that is, separate documents which accompany the self-study document. Each supplement must include the narrative information requested in the format (items 7 a through d, pages 6 and 7), and the Clock Hour/Credit Hour chart if the program is measured in credit hours. If supplements are used, they must be created by program. This means that even though a particular program may offer several credentials or "exit points" (such as: certificate, diploma, or associate degree), all information about that program must be included in the same supplement. Supplements may also be created by program area. That is, all programs related to an occupational area such as computer science, electronics, industrial, etc., may be grouped together and included in one supplement with the occupational area heading.

10. Digital Document Format

For the purpose of transmitting the self-study to the team and to the Council office, the entire self-study document and all program supplements must be printed to an Adobe PDF file. Some versions of Adobe Acrobat software allow the user to compress PDF files so that emailing rather large files is a more viable possibility. The Council's email service can accept one or more attachments that total up to 20MB per email. In some instances, the self-study document may be too large to attach to an email, and in those instances, the document can be sent via cloud transfer or sharing service or saved on a flash drive or CDrom and physically mailed to the team and Council office. Certain Adobe Acrobat versions also allow the creation of bookmarks (or tabs) within digital documents. It is important to save each PDF file with clear file names so that team members and Council staff can easily identify each file and find information (example: *School Name - 2015 Self-Study Part 1* and *School Name - Computer Science Program Supplement*).

CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics of the institution and the community it serves must be described in narrative fashion by including the items listed below as a minimum. If the institution consists of more than one campus, characteristics must be addressed per location (history, staffing, program offerings, community information, etc.).

Institutional Characteristics

1. State the name of the institution.

2. State the address (city, state, zip code, telephone, web site).

3. List all campuses with addresses (branches, extensions, extended classrooms, instructional service centers).

4. Record, briefly, the history of the institution. Be sure to include such data as:

    a. Date of charter authorization.
    b. Date first students were in attendance.
    c. Date the institution graduated its first class.
    d. Type of control (state, county, city, federal, proprietary, industry, independent, etc. - see Form of Ownership pages of this manual). Establish as an exhibit a copy of the institution's charter or enabling legislation/regulation along with the institution's bylaws, etc.

5. Give an overall summary of the following:

    a. The total number and type of technical educational courses/programs offered (computer science, electronics, etc.).
    b. The level of offerings for students and type of credentials awarded (certificates, diplomas, associate degrees).
    c. Overall enrollment number that reflects a typical calendar year.

   d. Total number of full- and part-time administrative and instructional staff employed by the institution.
   e. Summary of non-traditional programs (tech prep, continuing education, adult literacy, etc.).

6. Indicate which calendar system is used at the institution (quarter, semester, trimester, 12-month, other).

7. Explain what constitutes a typical full-time student load in class hours per week.

8. List the name and length of summer sessions which do not classify as regular terms.

9. Briefly describe the delivery systems the institution uses (traditional classes — lecture, lab, work-based activities; continuing education; distance education, etc.).

Community Characteristics

1. Describe the geographic area (towns, cities, counties, etc.) served by the institution. Exhibit a map.

2. Describe the population of the areas served by the institution. Show total population of service area and provide the source and date of this population data.

3. For institutions that serve contiguous geographic areas, indicate the rural-urban distribution of population in the area served.

4. Describe any important population characteristics in the community served which affect the institution and its services.

5. Describe basic changes experienced or anticipated in the size or characteristics of population in the area which may affect the nature of the institution's services.

CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

In order for an institution to gain and maintain accreditation, the conditions as listed in the latest *Handbook of Accreditation* (Sections II through V) as well as the criteria listed under each of the ten standards must be met. For the purpose of describing compliance with the conditions of accreditation, the Conditions Check Sheet found at the front of the check sheets package for Federal institutions provided on the Council's web site (www.council.org/Documents/Applications and Forms) must be completed and included as part of the self-study document.

Items on the conditions check sheet should be answered "YES" to indicate compliance. Narrative is not required for "YES" responses, but exhibits must be available to demonstrate the institution's compliance with each condition. Each item on the check sheet which is answered "No" must be explained through a narrative response which will probably call for supporting documentation in the form of exhibits for the team's reference.

STANDARDS

Check sheets for Standards 1 - 10 are **not** included in the Self Study. Current check sheets can be found on the Council's web site (www.council.org/Documents/Applications and Forms) and used to address each criterion of the standards listed below.

Follow this guide to address the criteria of each standard. The outlined format referenced in the table refers to the instructions provided in this manual under Format for the Self-Study Report, Items 7 a through d which includes an introduction, analysis, challenges and solutions, and a summary.

Additional information for some of the standards and forms that are to be included in the self-study document are also indicated below.

STANDARD	Use Outlined Format	*Include Chart/Form
1 - Institutional Mission	✔	
2 - Educational Programs	✔	Postsecondary Educational Programs Clock/Credit Hour Chart, If Required

The institution's compliance with the criteria for Standard 2 must be reviewed and reported for each secondary and postsecondary technical education program individually. (See Guidelines for Reporting Secondary Programs in this manual.) However, the overall summary that is written for this standard must include composite findings for all programs as a group. The overall summary for this standard must be included in the self-study document.

The charts of Educational Programs must also be included in the self-study document. Before the team arrives, the chart must be reviewed for accuracy and revised if changes take place between the date the chart is finally completed for the self-study document and the date the team arrives. If the chart is revised, copies must be available for team members when they arrive.

If the institution offers a large number of programs, individual program information from Standard 2 - Educational Programs may be presented in the form of "supplements" to the self-study document; that is, separate documents which accompany the self-study document. Each supplement must include the narrative information requested in the outlined format and the Clock Hour/Credit Hour chart if the program is measured in credit hours. If supplements are used, they must be created by program. This means that even though a particular program may offer several credentials or "exit points" (such as: certificate, diploma, or associate degree), all information about that program must be included in the same supplement.

STANDARD	Use Outlined Format	*Include Chart/Form
3 - Program and Institutional Outcomes	✔	
4 - Strategic Planning	✔	
5 - Learning Resources	✔	
Learning resources includes materials such as film, video tapes, audio tapes, software programs, reference books, technical manuals, professional periodicals, supplements to text materials, supplies, equipment, staff, and facilities used to enhance an educational program.		
6 - Physical Resources and Technical Infrastructure	✔	
7 - Financial Resources	✔	
8 - Human Resources	✔	Roster of Instructional Staff Roster of Administrative/ Supervisory Staff
9 - Organizational Structure	✔	
10 - Student Services and Activities	✔	

**The charts and forms referenced in this table can be found in this manual. Editable versions of these documents can be downloaded from the Council's web site (www.council.org/Documents/Applications and Forms).*

THE VISITING TEAM

General

The team visit is intended to give the institution objective consultation from a group of experts in the field of occupational education. The team's assignment is not to inspect or find fault with what is being done. Instead, it will seek to assure itself that the institution has conducted an extensive self-study, and that it reflects an accurate assessment of the institution based on the institution's mission and the conditions and standards of the Commission. This will provide the basis for an unbiased, objective report to the Commission.

Each team will consist of occupational educators who have demonstrated their competence in the areas of vocational-technical philosophy, educational administration, business and finance, educational programs, school plant operations, business and industry practices, student personnel services, planning, learning resources, and the specialized program areas which relate to the institution's mission.

The Commission staff will determine the number of team members based on appropriate factors such as the number of programs, staff members, students enrolled, campuses, and distance between campuses.

All team members will be from outside the state in which any campus of the institution is located and will be selected by the staff of the Commission. An institution has the right to refuse any member of the team for cause but cannot select team members. A Commission representative or an observer may accompany a team.

All logistical arrangements such as hotel/motel selection, team member transportation from the airport to hotel/motel, and meeting times should be finalized during the preliminary visit by the team leader. Hotel/motel selection will be a mutual decision between the team leader and school officials. The Council on Occupational Education reimburses each team member for expenses after the visit and bills the institution for the total cost. Institutions cannot reimburse team members directly.

In advance of the team's arrival, the entire staff should be briefed as to what they may expect, and what will be expected of them. It is important that the staff understand that:

1. The team members will be coming in the role of helpful colleagues.
2. The team members will be interested in identifying the institution's strengths as well as ascertaining its challenges.
3. The principle of confidentiality will be rigorously observed by members of the team.

Through this kind of orientation, the staff will be helped to understand that the visitors have been invited for the express purpose of assisting the institution to fulfill its goals and improve all facets of the institution's operation.

The team will normally spend four days at the institution and will visit all facilities, campuses, and branches, and the community. They will interview staff, faculty, administrators, advisors, students, and community leaders. They will review procedures, policies, programs, and plans. They shall seek to secure a comprehensive view of the institution.

Upon completion, the team will review the findings, recommendations, and suggestions with the chief administrative officer/commanding officer and others selected by the administration. They will then prepare a report for the Commission. The visiting team will not dictate to the institution what it must do to correct violations, but it may recommend and suggest areas for improvement.

It is preferable that little or no publicity be given to the team. If the school would like to provide an article about the self-study and the visiting team for the local paper, it may do so. However, personal interviews with team members will not be possible. News media should be made aware that a self-study document, a visiting team, and a visiting team report are only parts of the evaluation and accreditation process and cannot be construed to be indicators of accreditation. The accreditation of an institution is based on an analysis of these documents and other documents, activities, and processes.

Social Functions

It is helpful to provide an opportunity for members of the institution's staff to become acquainted with the members of the visiting team. This task may be accomplished by way of several methods:

A dinner (a more formal event)
A reception (a more casual event with beverages and snack items available)
A breakfast (seated, buffet, or continental)
An opening meeting of the institution staff and team members

These methods are merely suggestions. In no way does the Commission prefer one method over another, nor does it encourage the institution to incur excessive expense for this event. The Commission does, however, discourage the serving of alcoholic beverages at this event.

Whatever method is chosen by the institution, the event should take place very early in the team visit (the evening before the evaluation begins is most appropriate) and it need not occur more than once during the visit. It is not uncommon for teams to have 'working meals'; therefore, institutions should not make plans to entertain the team every night of the visit.

It is necessary to notify the leader of the visiting team of the plans the institution makes for any social function.

Visiting Team Workroom

The visiting team will need a secure room in which they will review exhibits, hold team conferences, write reports, and take periodic breaks. This room should be as centrally located as possible, well-lighted, and large enough to accommodate the team. The room should be clearly identified as the "Team Work Room" and should be considered off limits to school personnel during the team visit.

The following list of materials, supplies and equipment should be in the room:

Conference table(s), chairs and/or work station for each team member, observer, and COE staff member.

Computers and Printer(s)	Internet Access	Highlighters	Lined Writing Pads
Copy Machine	File Folders	Paper Clips	Paper Shredder
Pencils and Ball-Point Pens	Staplers	Transparent Tape	Post-It Notes
Computer Paper	Scissors	Pencil Sharpener	Wastebaskets

CHECK LIST FOR TEAM VISIT	
CHECK WHEN COMPLETED	
	Self-Study Document - in final draft form (45 days before visit)
	*Team leader's preliminary visit made (approximately 30 days before visit)
	Self-study distributed to team members after approval by team leader (20 days before visit)
	Self-study transmitted to the Commission 20 days before visit. One digital copy to the Commission office in Adobe Acrobat® .pdf format. The digital self-study document may be submitted to the Commission via email (20MB maximum file size), cloud transfer or sharing service, or by flash drive. *The cover page of the self-study must have the name of the institution, the address and the year of the team visit.*
	*Hotel reservations made for visiting team, observers, and COE staff member or representative
	Team members notified of hotel arrangements
	Name tags prepared for faculty and staff
	*Arrangements made to meet team members at airport and transport them to hotel. (If team members are to take cab or airport limousine, they should be notified of this.)
	*Place for the preliminary meeting of the team. (Usually held at 4:00 p.m. before any evening function on the first day of the team visit.)
	*Meeting room arranged at the hotel for evening meetings of team (if requested by team leader)
	*Meeting room arranged for the team at the school. (See previous sub-section for suggested materials, equipment, and supplies.)
	Transportation arranged for travel to branch campuses, extension classes, instructional service centers, and/or clinical sites
	Transportation arranged for travel to and from hotel each morning and evening
	Place arranged for final meeting of team with selected staff on the last day. (The time is usually set by the team leader and the chief administrative officer.)
	Transportation arranged for travel to airport or hotel after final report.

**Must be mutually agreed upon with team leader.*

Example Visiting Team Schedule

TIME	DAY ONE	DAY TWO	DAY THREE	DAY FOUR
7:30 a.m.	Arrive by 3:00 p.m. at accommodations arranged by institution and team leader. Briefing session of visiting team is conducted by the team leader normally starting at 4:00 p.m. and lasting approximately one hour. A social function including school personnel, governing body members, advisory committee members, local community leaders, and the visiting team can be scheduled after 6:30 p.m. (optional). If time permits during this first day of activities, a brief tour of the school facility may be included.	Breakfast Meeting with Visiting Team	Repeat Day One Schedule Team Work (Standards)	Breakfast Meeting with Visiting Team
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.		Campus Tour *(if not conducted the previous evening)*		Team Work
9:30 a.m. – Noon		Team Work (Programs)		
Noon – 1:30 p.m.		**LUNCH BREAK**		
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.		Team Work (Programs) *(3:00 – 4:00: Team Leader Office Hour)*	Repeat Day One Schedule Team Work (Standards)	Visiting Team Reports Due to Team Leader Oral Report on Findings and Recommendations to Administrative Staff of Institution
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.				Private Session – Team Leader and Director
4:00 – 4:30 p.m.		Progress Meeting of Team (continue after dinner if necessary)		

SELF-STUDY EXHIBIT PREPARATION

Exhibits are documentation which support each condition and criterion. Exhibits must be made available for the team to review during the on-site visit, not prior to the visit. Exhibits are not transmitted to the Council office. Only the self-study document and program supplements are transmitted to the Council office and to the team members before the on-site visit.

Exhibits should clearly demonstrate the institution's compliance with each of the conditions and criteria. In some instances, the same exhibits can apply to more than one standard and can be duplicated and/or cross-referenced. Set up exhibits according to the latest version of COE check sheets. (The latest versions of check sheets are available at the COE website - www.council.org/Documents/Applications and Forms.)

The accessibility of these materials to the appropriate team member can greatly expedite his/her work and definitely enhance the effectiveness of the team.

Exhibit Format

Exhibits must be made available to the team in electronic format.

It is imperative that the institution have the capability to provide adequate computer access to all members of the team and to make electronic exhibits easily accessible on an intranet (a private, local network), the internet on a secure password-protected site, or on electronic media such as CDs or flash drives.

Organizing electronic exhibits can be accomplished as easily as setting up a folder on the institution's server and subfolders labeled for each standard.

- Self-Study Exhibits
  - Conditions Of Accreditation
  - Standard 1 – Institutional Mission
  - Standard 2 – Educational Programs
  - Standard 3 – Program and Institutional Outcomes
  - Standard 4 – Strategic Plan
  - Standard 5 – Learning Resources
  - Standard 6 – Physical Resources and Technical Infrastructure
  - Standard 7 – Financial Resources
  - Standard 8 – Human Resources
  - Standard 9 – Organizational Structure
  - Standard 10 – Student Services and Activities

Clearly-lableled digital exhibit files can be placed within each subfolder that correspond to the criteria on the conditions and standards check sheets.

Self-Study Exhibits

Conditions Of Accreditation

Condition 7 - Current License from State Approval Agency

Condition 9 - COE Workshop Attendance Certificates

Condition 10 - Newspaper Notice Announcing Accreditation Team Visit

Confidential Materials

The location and name of the person in charge of exhibit materials considered to be confidential such as personnel evaluations, budgets, etc., should be placed in an electronic folder appropriately identified by standard number.

SELF-STUDY
Charts and Forms

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

DATA COMPILED AS OF (date):

Click

Programs listed below are those of which campus : (Click applicable box and enter name of campus if appropriate)	☐	**Main Campus**	☐	**Other Campus Location:**	Click
Click each appropriate box to indicate method of measuring program length:	☐	**Clock Hours**	☐	**Semester Credit Hours Complete Clock Hour/ Credit Hour Chart**	☐ **Quarter Credit Hours Complete Clock Hour/ Credit Hour Chart**

PROGRAM NAME / CIP Code (Use One Line For Each Program)	PROGRAM LENGTH		% of Program's Total Length Available Through Distance Education	INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY METHOD (Check One or More)			CREDENTIAL			PROGRAM START DATE (The date the program first enrolled students at the institution —not the start date of the latest term)	Number of STUDENTS ENROLLED on the date chart is completed		Number of INSTRUCTORS ASSIGNED	
	Clock Hours	Credit Hours		Traditional	Hybrid	Distance Ed	Certificate	Diploma	Degree		Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time
Click	Click	Click	Click	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Click	Click	Click	Click	Click
Click	Click	Click	Click	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Click	Click	Click	Click	Click
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Traditional Program – Program that requires all instructional hours to be completed on campus.
Hybrid Program – Program in which less than 50% of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods.
Distance Education Program – Program in which 50% or more of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods

Instructions for Completing the POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS CHART

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Complete one chart for each campus of the institution (main campus, branch, extension, instructional service center).
2. Indicate the manner in which the length of the program is measured (clock hours/semester credit hours/quarter credit hours). More than one option may be indicated.
3. One Clock Hour/Credit Hour Chart must be completed for each program measured in credit hours and must accompany the Postsecondary Educational Programs chart.
4. All documentation submitted to the Commission must be TYPED and provided in English.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS (From the *Handbook of Accreditation*)

Program - A combination of courses and related activities (e.g. laboratory activities and/or work-based activities) that leads to a credential and is offered by an institution to develop competencies required for a specific occupation.

Distance Education - As defined for the purposes of accreditation review, education that uses one or more of the technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor; and support regular and substantive instruction between students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies used may include the internet, print-based media, e-mail, one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed.

A **Credit Hour** is equivalent to a minimum of each of the following: one **semester** credit for 15 clock hours of lecture, 30 clock hours of laboratory, or 45 clock hours of work-based activities; or one **quarter** credit for 10 clock hours of lecture, 20 clock hours of laboratory, or 30 clock hours of work-based activities.

LISTING PROGRAMS

1. List all programs offered by the institution as of the date the chart is completed.
2. List only those programs that educate students for the purpose of job entry or job advancement.
3. **List only those programs that are <u>actively enrolling students</u> or those that have enrolled students within 12 months prior to the date of the chart. All programs must be listed no matter the length of the program.**
4. Include Vocational English-As-A-Second-Language programs offered at any campus.
5. Indicate the name of each program as it appears in the institution's catalog. (Program names must be consistent with the names printed in institutional publications AND state approval documentation.)
6. Be sure to indicate what percentage of the program's total length is available through distance education delivery methods.

EXAMPLE:

PROGRAM NAME / CIP Code (Use One Line For Each Program)	PROGRAM LENGTH		% of Program's Total Length Available Through Distance Education	INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY METHOD (Check One or Both)			CREDENTIAL			PROGRAM START DATE	Number of STUDENTS ENROLLED on the date chart is completed		Number of INSTRUCTORS ASSIGNED	
	Clock Hours	Credit Hours		Traditional	Hybrid	Distance Ed	Certificate	Diploma	Degree		Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time
Accounting / 52.0302	1190	70	0	X				X		2/15/90	59	243	4	6
Bookkeeping / 52.0308	320	20	25		X		X			4/30/03	20	12	2	0
Computer Aided Drafting / 15.1302	1400	84	50	X		X		X		6/4/2001	24	201	3	7

Traditional Program – Program that requires all instructional hours to be completed on campus.
Hybrid Program – Program in which less than 50% of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods.
Distance Education Program – Program in which 50% or more of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods.

CLOCK HOUR/CREDIT HOUR CHART

Program Name:	Click	**CIP Code:**	Click

INSTRUCTIONS: This chart is to be completed for all programs measured in credit hours.
ENTER BOTH CLOCK HOURS AND CREDIT HOURS FOR EACH COURSE WITHIN THE PROGRAM.

Provide total program length in all categories that apply. Be sure these numbers agree with the Grand Totals below.

Total Required CLOCK Hours: (Must equal Grand Total below)	Click	Total Required SEMESTER Credit Hours: (Must equal Grand Total below)	Click	Total Required QUARTER Credit hours: (Must equal Grand Total below)	Click
Total Required CLOCK Hours available via distance education:	Click	Total Required SEMESTER Credit Hours: available via distance education:	Click	Total Required QUARTER Credit hours: available via distance education:	Click

COURSE NAME (LIST ALL COURSE OFFERED WITHIN THE PROGRAM) Use one line for EACH COURSE.	**LECTURE** Click in the box in the far right column if any course instruction is **available** via distance education delivery modes.			**LABORATORY** Click in the box in the far right column if any course instruction is **available** via distance education delivery modes.			**WORK-BASED ACTIVITIES** Click in the box in the far right column if any course instruction is **available** via distance education delivery modes.			**COURSE TOTALS**	
	Clock Hours	**Credit Hours**	**DE**	**Clock Hours**	**Credit Hours**	**DE**	**Clock Hours**	**Credit Hours**	**DE**	**Clock**	**Credit**
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TOTAL ALL COLUMNS	Click	Click		Click	Click		Click	Click		Click	Click

GRAND TOTALS

The Grand Total number of credit hours will be rounded down in accordance with the latest edition of the Policies and Rules of the Commission.
Traditional Program – Program that requires all instructional hours to be completed on campus.
Hybrid Program – Program in which less than 50% of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods
Distance Education Program - Program in which 50% or more of the required instructional hours are available via distance education delivery methods.
Refer to the latest edition of the Handbook of Accreditation for definitions. Make additional copies of this chart as needed.

Instructions for Completing
Clock Hour/Credit Hour Chart
(To be completed only for programs measured in credit hours)

1. Use one chart per program.
2. List all courses within each program.
3. Be sure to reflect total hours for each row on the chart and each column where indicated. Make every attempt to assure that calculations are accurate.
4. Program names and lengths must be consistent with the names printed in institutional publications AND state approval documentation.
5. **IMPORTANT:** It is imperative that the following requirements are met with regard to the measurement of programs in credit hours.

   The Council defines the ratio of clock hours to credit hours as follows:

   For every credit hour awarded, **no less than** the following number of clock hours of instruction must be required:

Semester Credit Hours:	15 Hours of Classroom/Lecture 30 Hours of Laboratory Instruction 45 Hours of Work-Based Activities
Quarter Credit Hours:	10 Hours of Classroom/Lecture 20 Hours of Laboratory Instruction 30 Hours of Work-Based Activities

   If discrepancies are discovered between the Council's definition of the clock hour/credit hour ratios and the institution's catalog or state approval documents, they **must** be resolved before the institution submits its application.

6. Depending on the nature of the courses within each program, the appropriate number of instructional hours **must** be provided in the form of Classroom/Lecture, Laboratory Instruction and/or Work-Based Activities. The Council defines these methods of instruction as follows:

   Lecture (Classroom) – Instruction by a qualified faculty member or other resource which imparts to students the concepts, principles, and theories of an academic or technical subject.

   Laboratory Instruction – An instructional setting in which students apply theories and principles learned during lectures in order to acquire proficiency and dexterity that is required in the occupation for which the student is being prepared.

   Work-Based Activities – Structured learning activities conducted in supervised work settings external to the institution or in a setting that involves the public (for example: clients who are served by the institution in cosmetology clinical or automotive technology settings) that are components of educational programs (e.g., externships, internships, clinical experiences, industrial cooperative education, and similar activities).

Roster of Instructional Staff

Location: Click

Complete this roster for all instructional staff (full-time and part-time) currently employed and on site.
Indicate which instructors teach courses within associate degree programs with an asterisk (*).
Complete one chart per campus.

NAME Note: Group by program	YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT	MOST ADVANCED DEGREE	EXPERIENCE IN FIELD AND/OR IN CLASSROOM	COURSES TAUGHT	CURRENT INSTRUCTIONAL LOAD IN HOURS	
					Part-Time	Full-Time
Sample: John Doe	***2002***	***BS/Business***	***8 yrs/12 yrs***	***All BUS, plus MAT 111***	***Click***	***25 hrs/wk***
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Roster of Administrative and Supervisory Staff

Location: Click

Complete this roster for all administrative and supervisory staff (full-time and part-time) currently employed and on site.
Complete one chart per campus.

NAME	YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT	EDUCATION	EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF HOURS EMPLOYED PER WEEK
Sample: Jane Doe	***2008***	***MS/Ed Leadership***	***Instructor/10 yrs; Asst Dean/4 yrs; Dean of Instruction/6 yrs***	***40***
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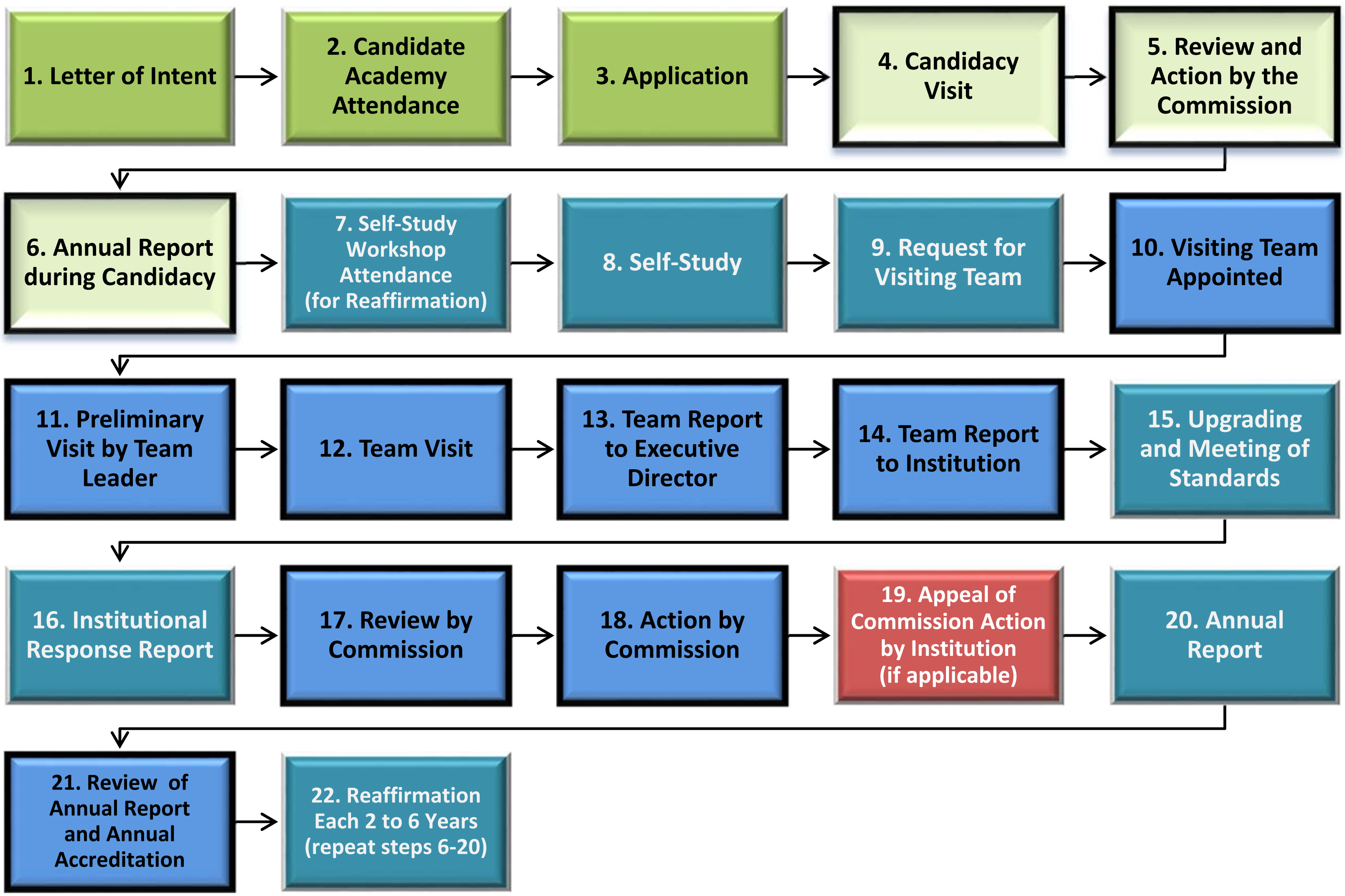
Council on Occupational Education
Accreditation Process



THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. Letter of intent to seek candidacy and to request application forms.

2. The on-site administrator or other full-time employee at the main campus must attend a Candidate Academy within 6 to 18 months prior to submitting an application for candidate status.

3. Submission of an application for candidacy.

4. Candidacy team visit.

5. Commission review of application and candidacy visit report. Approval of candidate status by Commission. If disapproved, appeal may be made to the Commission.

6. After acceptance as a candidate, an annual report is submitted each year for Commission review. The annual report while in candidate status is an update on the institution's status toward initial accreditation. Also, non-public institutions must submit an audited financial statement each year after acceptance as a candidate and throughout their term of membership with the Council. Audits must be submitted within 6 months of the end of the fiscal year and must be accompanied by a completed COE Financial Form. During candidate status, no substantive changes may be approved except for changes in existing programs. The earliest date that an institution can host an accreditation visiting team is six months after the date candidate status is approved and six months after a representative attends the COE Self-Study and Annual Report workshops (see below). The maximum time an institution may be in candidacy is three years. Candidate institutions must host an initial accreditation team visit within 24 months after being accepted as a candidate by the Commission.

Accreditation

7. The on-site administrator or other full-time employee at the main campus must attend Commission Self-Study and Annual Report Workshops within 6 to 18 months prior to hosting a visiting team for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.

8. A self-study should be initiated by the end of the first year as a candidate.

9. Within 24 months after acceptance as a candidate, an institution must request and host a team visit.

10. Visiting team appointed by Commission Staff.

11. A preliminary visit by the Visiting Team Leader is made approximately 30 days prior to team visit.

12. The team visit includes a review of all programs and activities of the school. An oral report is made to the school at the end of the visit.

13. The written team report is sent to the Executive Director by the team leader within 30 days of the visit.

14. The Commission Executive Director sends team report to the institution.

15. Institution makes changes necessary to meet standards.

16. The chief administrative officer writes a letter requesting accreditation and submits one electronic copy of institutional response, if required, to the team report within 30 days of the date of the COE Executive Director's transmission of the team report to the institution.

17. The Commission reviews the team report, institutional response report, self-study, and report of readers.

18. The Commission may defer action and request additional documentation, grant accreditation, or deny accreditation. If accreditation is granted (based on the self-study, team report, and institutional response report) the Commission will specify the number of years in the next reaffirmation cycle (two [2] to six [6] years). The year of reaffirmation may be changed for just cause.

19. An institution may appeal a negative action to the Commission.

<u>Annual Review</u>

20. All candidate and accredited institutions must submit an annual report to the Commission.

21. Continued candidate status or accreditation is determined annually by Commission approval of annual reports.

22. During the year prior to the year that ends the reaffirmation period, a school must attend a self-study workshop, begin another self-study, and request another team visit. Teams for reaffirmation of accreditation are scheduled every 2 to 6 years. The Commission determines the reaffirmation schedule.

NOTE: Failure to submit an annual report or additional information regarding the annual report, if requested, by the due date established by the Commission shall be grounds for an institution to lose its candidacy status or accreditation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Comments and suggestions for the improvement of this manual should be sent to:

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