



COUNCIL ON OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

Assuring Quality and Integrity in Career and Technical Education

Self-Study Manual
for
Federal Institutions
2018 Edition

The Self-Study Manual for Federal Institutions

2018 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, **federal** institutions hosting teams for initial accreditation must also attend the Annual Report for **Beginners** workshop 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

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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 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 courses/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 **documentation present to demonstrate that the plans are in use.**

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 the 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 command, administration, and every member of the staff. All constituents should be kept fully informed and as closely involved as possible.

Basic Tenets Governing the Self-Study

When the self-study project is initiated, the constructive effects of the self-study processes will begin. It is not necessary to await a 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 of the benefits of the self-study process.

Full benefits of the self-study project may be fully realized if the following tenets govern its development:

1. The self-study is a self-improvement project.
2. All faculty members, administrators, advisory groups, and the governing board must be involved.
3. The contents of the report must be determined only after extensive discussion involving the groups above.
4. All aspects of the institution’s relationship to the conditions and standards must be analyzed.
5. Report narratives must be written as concisely as possible and findings must be substantiated.

The self-study should become a vehicle for future improvement. Each activity toward the preparation of the self-study should help to improve the institution. When an institution identifies its challenges toward meeting specific COE criteria, it must also identify the course of action it took in order to be in compliance with the criteria. The self-study timetable should include ample time to implement needed improvements identified by the self-study.

This manual is a guide only. It must be used in conjunction with the latest edition of the *Handbook of Accreditation*.

Self-Study Coordination

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 recommendation impractical.

In addition to committees which address conditions and standards, a committee should be appointed for each instructional course/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.

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.)

Council Requirements Regarding the Use of Consultants (as published in the *Handbook of Accreditation*)

A consultant may be used to assist in the self-study, but clear indications **must** exist that the faculty and staff were primarily responsible for preparing, revising, and editing any documents required in the accreditation process. Within seven days after employing a consultant for the purpose of assisting in the accreditation process, an institution **must** submit a copy of the consultant's resume to the Council. A consultant may provide assistance to the institution by conducting an on-site workshop for one or more of the following purposes:

1. Acquainting the administration and staff with the self-study process.
2. Providing an explanation of the content of the accreditation standards and criteria.
3. Lending assistance in organizing the self-study effort to maximize staff participation.
4. Identifying the types of exhibits or other documentation needed to support or complement the self-study report.

Attendance of a consultant at a Commission-hosted Self-Study workshop or Candidate Academy does not satisfy the requirements for workshop attendance by the staff and/or faculty of the institution seeking accreditation.

Consultants may not serve as leaders or members of visiting teams scheduled for institutions for which they have contracted their services. **Additionally, consultants must not be present during Council site visits required for candidacy, accreditation, focused review, or approval of substantive changes.** Anyone who violates this policy will be permanently barred from participation in visiting teams or any other accreditation activity conducted by the Council.

Consultants may not serve in the role of accreditation liaison for an institution and should not contact the Council office for information on behalf of the institution.

Self-Study Timetable

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 **the required Self-Study Workshop(s) and Annual Report for Beginners workshops** within six to eighteen months prior to hosting an accreditation team visit (whether for initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation).

A timetable 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 45 days prior to the team visit).
10. Date for team visit.

A complete self-study **report** must be prepared prior to the preliminary visit by the team leader. After the team leader approves the self-study, the report must be distributed as follows:

Submit the self-study **report** to the COE office and to the visiting team as ONE document twenty (20) days prior to the scheduled visit. If the electronic file is too large to send as a single document, it is acceptable to submit it as one document in one of two ways:

1. Via cloud/on-line storage delivery system (e.g., Dropbox, Google Drive, etc.). Ensure that the institution provide COE staff with the appropriate access information.
2. Via flash drive – Mail to the attention of the COE staff person who coordinated the institution's site visit. Ensure that the complete self-study **report** has been submitted.

The institution **must keep** at least one copy of the self-study **report** for the school's **accreditation** file.

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

(The cover page of the self-study **report** must have the name of the institution, the address, and the year of the team visit.)

Exhibits are not transmitted to the team or to the Council office. Only the self-study report should be transmitted, and it should be sent to the team and the Council office twenty (20) days prior to the scheduled visit.

General Information

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 **report** should be conducted in isolation from the rest.

Above all, there should be consensus regarding statements in the report.

Considerations when Planning for a Visiting Team

Another consideration that must be made as work on the self-study report begins, are the dates of the team visit. When choosing team visit dates, consider institutional activities that will be underway (or not) during those dates as well as events occurring in the local community that may disrupt the team's work. Ensure the dates scheduled are those when classes are *in session* for the visiting team to review. Also, check to be sure no local festivals, holidays, or other events are occurring during that time in the surrounding community that may make housing, transportation, or other event planning for the team difficult.

SELF-STUDY COMMITTEE

Task Sheet

TASK <i>Including Exhibits</i>	Person Responsible	Date for Rough Draft	Completed	Date for Final Draft	Completed
Institutional/Community Characteristics					
Conditions Check Sheet					
Standard 1 – Institutional Mission					
Standard 2 – Educational Programs					
<i>(List each course/program)</i>					
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 Report to Team Leader (1 copy before preliminary visit)					
Transmit Self-Study Report to Team Members (20 days before team visit)					
Transmit Self-Study Report to Council Office (20 days before team visit)					
Revise Educational Programs Chart (if needed)					
Target Date for Self-Study Completion					

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 **report** must begin with a preface written by the chief administrator/commander. It may contain, but is not limited to, an appraisal of methods employed by the institution in conducting the self-study. It should also include a description of the major benefits that the institution received as it prepared the self-study **report**. The preface should be 500 words or less.

3. List of Self-Study Committee Members

The list of self-study committee members should designate those individuals 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 must be completed by the institution and included in the self-study **report**. For every "No" response on the check sheet, the institution must also identify the course of action it took in order to come into compliance with the criteria.

7. Standards

DO NOT include the standards' check sheet in the self-study report. This section is used to describe how the institution applies the criteria and the results of that process. The format for each standard must be presented in narrative form and must include the following four parts:

Introduction, Analysis, Challenges and Solutions, and Summary.

- a. **Introduction:** The introduction is one or two paragraphs and must begin each chapter. A brief history must also be provided for each educational course/program, which briefly describes the history, mission and breadth of each course/program. The introduction must describe the applicability of the criteria to the institution (See criteria of the standards in the *Handbook of Accreditation*). This section must also include a description of any unique circumstances or situations that might need to be explained.

- b. **Analysis:** The analysis must begin with a re-statement of the criteria that is being addressed (See Check sheets). This section must provide the results of the institution's evaluation of its compliance with specific criteria. The results must reflect the consensus of the standards' committees and the self-study steering committee.
- c. **Challenges and Solutions:** Challenges should address any areas of non-compliance with specific criteria. Solutions describe the course(s) of action the institution has taken to be in compliance with the criteria.
- d. **Summary:** The summary must provide an overview of findings that is a synthesis of the **Introduction, Analysis, Challenges and Solutions**, and the **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. Digital Document Format

Completed self-studies must be in digital PDF format. It is recommended that exhibits also be in PDF format.

Some versions of Adobe Acrobat allow the creation of bookmarks (or tabs) within digital documents. It is important to save PDF file with clear file names so that team members and the Council can easily identify each file and find information.

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 (Army, Navy, DoD, etc.)
5. Give an overall summary of the following:
 - a. The occupational educational courses/programs offered.
 - b. The level of offerings and type of credentials awarded (certificates, diplomas).
 - 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 (continuing education, job upgrade training, 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 media; etc.).

Community Characteristics

1. Describe the occupational community (MOS, AFSC, NEC, civilian GS series, etc.) served by the institution.
2. Describe any important population characteristics in the community served which affect the institution and its services.
3. Describe changes experienced or anticipated in the population which may affect the nature of the institution's services.

CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

The institution completes the Conditions check sheet to demonstrate compliance with the conditions of accreditation (see the Conditions of Accreditation check sheet in this manual or access the document at [Council.org/Resources/Applications and Forms](http://Council.org/Resources/Applications%20and%20Forms))

The Conditions check sheet must be included in the self-study document. For every "No" response on the check sheet, the institution must also identify the course of action it took in order to come into compliance with the criteria.

STANDARDS

Check sheets for Standards 1 - 10 **ARE NOT** included in the self study report. (The check sheet for Conditions **IS INCLUDED** in the Self Study.) Current check sheets can be found on the Council's web site (www.council.org/Resources/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 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	✓	*Federal Occupational Course/ Program Chart
<p>The institution's compliance with the criteria for Standard 2 must be reviewed and reported for each occupational education course/program individually. However, the overall summary that is written for this standard must include composite findings for all courses/programs as a group. The overall summary for this standard must be included in the self-study document.</p> <p>Whether by way of the Federal Occupational Course/Program Chart, or through internally-generated reports, the information requested on the chart must also be included in the self-study report. Before the team arrives, the course/program information must be reviewed for accuracy and revised if changes take place between the date the information is finally completed for the self-study report and the date the team arrives. If the course/program information is revised, copies must be available for team members when they arrive.</p> <p>IMPORTANT: A moratorium will be placed on the acceptance of, processing and approval of ALL substantive changes beginning 6 months prior to the scheduled dates of accreditation team visits through the date the Commission grants initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.</p> <p>For Programs Only: No changes to course/programs should be made within 6 months of the scheduled dates of accreditation visiting teams. (See the Handbook of Accreditation for Federal Institutions.)</p> <p><i>*The institution should ensure that the most current course/program information is available for the visiting team either by way of the Federal Occupational Course/Program Chart, or through internally-generated reports.</i></p>		

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. The institution should ensure that the most current version of these rosters are available for the visiting team. Editable versions of these documents can be downloaded from the Council's web site (www.council.org/Resources/Applications and Forms).*

**Federal institutions are required to take appropriate measures to ensure personally identifiable information [PII] is not released to unauthorized entities.*

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.

Teams 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 **academic program/courses**, 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. They should be aware 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. 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.

The team will normally spend **three to** four days at the institution and will visit all COE-approved campuses. They will review procedures, policies, programs and plans, as well as, interview staff, faculty, administrators, students and other constituents, as needed.

Exit Interview

Upon completion of the visit, the team will review the findings of non-compliance, suggestions, and commendations (if any) with the chief administrator/commander and others selected by the administration. The visiting team will not comment on what the institution must do in order to address findings. All questions regarding the team report should be addressed to COE staff.

The team has thirty (30) days from the last day of the team visit to submit the team report to COE. Council staff will review the report and then submit it to the institution. The institution has thirty (30) days from the day it receives the report to submit an institutional response to COE.

Social Functions (Optional)

Members of the institution's staff should become acquainted with the members of the visiting team as soon as possible. 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. The Commission does not 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.

The event should take place very early in the team visit (the evening before the evaluation begins is most appropriate). 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.

Visiting Team Workroom

The visiting team will need a secure room to 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 (for each team member)	Internet Access	Highlighters	Lined Writing Pads
Copier	File Folders	Paper Clips	Paper Shredder
Printer	Staplers	Transparent Tape	Post-It Notes
Scissors	Pencil Sharpener	Wastebaskets	Pencils and Pens

CHECK LIST FOR TEAM VISIT

CHECK WHEN COMPLETED	
	It has been confirmed that no local festivals, holidays, or other events are occurring during the dates scheduled for the team visit in the surrounding community that may make housing, transportation, or other event planning for the team difficult.
	The self-study report must be completed and emailed to the team leader 60 calendar days before the team visit.
	*Team leader's preliminary visit made (approximately 30-45 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. <i>The cover page of the self-study must have the name of the institution, the address and the year of the team visit.</i>
	*Hotel reservations made for visiting team, observers, and COE staff member or representative
	Team members notified of hotel arrangements and encouraged to make/confirm travel arrangements (airline or other means).
	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 and extension campuses.
	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 administrator.)
	Transportation arranged for travel to airport or hotel after final report.
	No substantive changes 6 months prior to the scheduled dates of the team visit. (See <i>Handbook of Accreditation for Federal Institutions.</i>)

*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.		Breakfast Meeting with Visiting Team		Breakfast Meeting with Visiting Team
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.	<p>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.</p>	Campus Tour <i>(if not conducted the previous evening)</i>	Repeat Day One Schedule	
9:30 a.m. – Noon		Team Work (Programs)	Team Work (Standards)	Team Work
Noon – 1:30 p.m.		LUNCH BREAK		
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.		Team Work (Programs)		Visiting Team Reports Due to Team Leader
		(3:00 – 4:00: Team Leader Office Hour)	Repeat Day One Schedule	Oral Report on Findings and Recommendations to Administrative Staff of Institution
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.			Team Work (Standards)	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 electronic documentation which support each condition and criterion, and must be made available for the team to review during the on-site visit. **Exhibits are not transmitted to the team or to the Council office.** Only the self-study document should be transmitted, and it should be sent to the team and the Council office twenty (20) days prior to the scheduled visit.

Exhibits should clearly demonstrate the institution's compliance with each of the conditions and criteria. All materials should be easily accessible to the team in order to ensure the documentation can be reviewed in its entirety. In some instances, the same exhibits can apply to more than one standard, therefore, documentation can be duplicated, as needed. Exhibits should be set up according to the latest version of the COE check sheets, which are available at the COE website—[council.org/Resources/Applications and Forms](http://council.org/Resources/Applications%20and%20Forms).

IMPORTANT: There **must** be at least one exhibit for every condition and criterion.

Exhibit Format

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

It is imperative that the institution's exhibits are easily accessible by all team members on an intranet (a private, local network), or on the internet on a secure password-protected site, or in an electronic format, such as a CD or flash drive.

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-labeled 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 9 - COE Workshop Attendance Certificates

Digital files must be numbered to match the corresponding condition or criterion for which they demonstrate compliance.

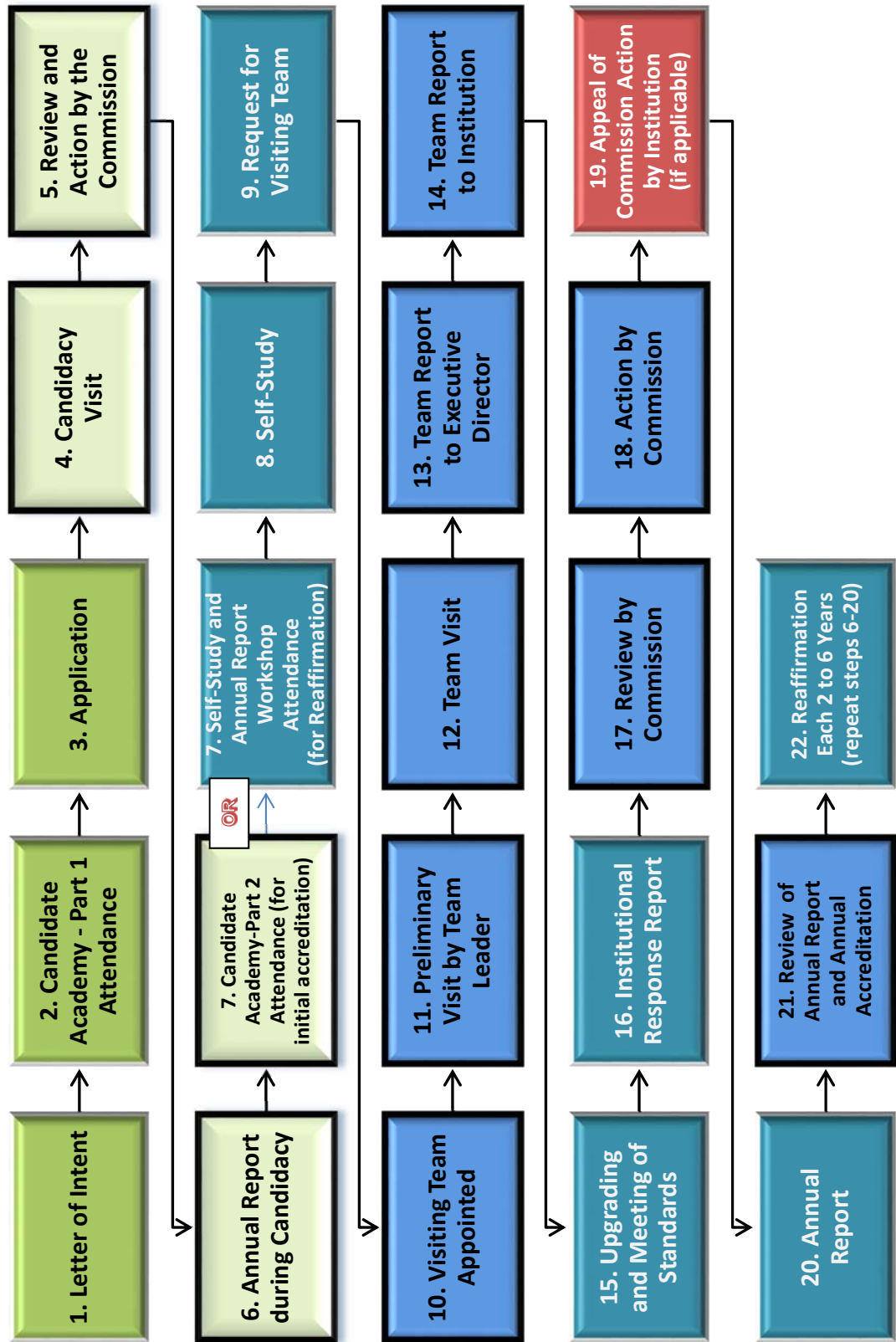
Confidential Materials

The location and name of the person in charge of confidential exhibit materials, such as personnel evaluations, budgets, etc., should be placed in an electronic folder appropriately identified by standard number. Additionally, federal institutions are required to take appropriate measures to ensure personally identifiable information [PII] is not released to unauthorized entities.

SELF-STUDY RESOURCES



Council on Occupational Education Accreditation Process



THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOR FEDERAL INSTITUTIONS

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-Part 1 within 12 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. During candidate status, no substantive changes may be approved. (*See Handbook of Accreditation for Federal Institutions.*) 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. FOR INITIAL ACCREDITATION: The on-site administrator or other full-time employee at the main campus must attend the Candidate Academy-Part 2;

OR,

FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 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; or, for institutions seeking reaffirmation, at a time appropriate to the target date for hosting an accreditation visiting team.
9. For institutions seeking initial accreditation, an accreditation visit must be hosted no sooner than 6 months after attendance of Candidate Academy-Part 2, and no later than 24 months after acceptance as a candidate. Institutions seeking reaffirmation must submit a request for specific dates they wish to host an accreditation team visit. (Council staff initiates an inquiry to institutions scheduled to host visiting teams each year. Institutions work with Council staff to select the most appropriate dates for accreditation team visits.)
10. Visiting team appointed by Commission Staff.
11. A preliminary visit by the Visiting Team Leader is made approximately 30-45 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 administrator 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.

Annual Review

20. All candidate and accredited institutions must submit an annual report to the Commission. (Persons responsible for completion of the annual report must have a valid certificate of attendance for the Annual Workshop.)
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.

Instructions for Completing the FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL COURSE/PROGRAM CHART

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Whether by way of this chart, or through internally-generated reports, the information on this chart must be included as part of the Self-Study.
2. If using this chart, complete one chart for each campus of the institution (main campus, branch, or extension).
2. Indicate the length of each course/program.
4. All documentation submitted to the Commission must be TYPED and provided in English.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS (From the *Handbook of Accreditation*)

Course—A series of lectures, laboratory and/or work-based activities that pertain to a particular subject and that are typically required as part of a broader curriculum (a program, for example).

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.

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.

LISTING COURSES/PROGRAMS

1. List all courses/programs offered by the institution as of the date the chart is completed.
2. List only those courses/programs that educate students for the purpose of job entry or job advancement.
3. **List only those courses/programs that are actively enrolling students or those that have enrolled students within 12 months prior to the date of the chart. All courses/programs must be listed no matter their respective length.**
4. Indicate the name of each course/program as it appears in the institution's catalog. (Course/program names must be consistent with the names printed in institutional publications.)
5. Indicate what percentage of the course/program's total length is available through distance education delivery methods.

FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL COURSE/PROGRAM CHART

DATA COMPILED AS OF (date):

Click

COURSE/PROGRAM NAME (Use One Line For Each Course/Program)	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROGRAM LENGTH (Clock Hours)	Main Campus		Other Campus Location:			PROGRAM START DATE (The date the course/program first enrolled students at the institution —not the start date of the latest term — IF available)	Number of STUDENTS ENROLLED on the date chart is completed		Number of INSTRUCTORS ASSIGNED							
			Total Length Available Through Distance Education	% of Course/Program	Traditional	Hybrid	Distance Ed		Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time	Full-Time			
Click	<input type="checkbox"/>		Click	Click	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	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*

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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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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