



Program Evaluator Candidate Training

Online Training Modules

2018-19 CYCLE

NOTE: This document is a downloaded copy of ABET's official 2018 PEVC Online Training modules, which are located on Brightspace. Module formatting has been affected and links may be broken or password protected as a result of the export from Brightspace.



A. PROGRAM EVALUATOR TRAINING OVERVIEW

Candidates who are selected for the ABET Program Evaluator Candidate (PEVC) Training Program undergo three training processes:

1. **Online Training (must be completed prior to the Face-to-Face Training):** The online modules include three proficiency assessments and a simulated program evaluation. The online modules – which can be taken at your own pace – cover fundamental information about ABET, the accreditation process, roles and responsibilities, and the general criteria (criteria 1-8).
2. **Face-to-Face Training:** Face-to-Face Training is a one-and-a-half day experiential workshop that simulates an accreditation visit.
3. **Program Criteria Training:** Training on program-specific criteria is provided by the member society with program area responsibility.

B. ONLINE TRAINING (PRE-WORK FOR FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING)

The online Program Evaluator Candidate (PEVC) Training consists of seven (7) online modules designed to provide information about ABET, the accreditation process, the role of the Program Evaluator (PEV), and PEV tasks prior to and during an accreditation visit. This training also prepares you for the Face-to-Face Training. Included in the seven (7) online training are three (3) Proficiency Assessments at the end of Modules 3, 4, and 6. The results will automatically be recorded and the correct responses sent to you via email.

The purpose of the online training is two-fold:

1. **To review the fundamental aspects of the overall ABET Accreditation Process:** These materials are contextual, somewhat static in nature, and best learned independently. During accreditation visits, you as a PEV are considered the face of ABET and are required to know the contextual pieces of information.
2. **To simulate what happens in preparation for an accreditation visit:** In this portion, you will complete several items that will be posted to the ABET Training Website and reviewed by your Training Mentor, your ABET Member Society contact, and a Face-to-Face Training Support Facilitator, much like that done by an accreditation visit **Team Chair**.

C. OUTPUTS FROM ONLINE TRAINING

The following materials need to be completed and submitted according to the dates listed below:

- Three (3) completed Proficiency Assessments
- Program Evaluator Worksheet (Applicable to PEVCs affiliated with CAC and EAC)
- Program Evaluator Report
- You will learn more about completing and posting the Program Evaluator Worksheet and Program Evaluator Report in Module 5: Applying the Criteria.

If the Proficiency Assessments, Program Evaluator Worksheet, and Program Evaluator Report are not completed and posted by the due date, you will not be able to attend the Face-to-Face Training. You'll have considerable choice in attending the following training sessions. The important dates for each session are listed below:

ABET's Training Manager will contact you with instructions regarding travel and hotel arrangements and ABET's travel policy. *Per ABET policy, we will only reimburse for reservations made with the ABET travel agent.*

D. THE FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

The Face-to-Face Training consists of one-and-a-half days (usually Saturday and Sunday) of interactive training as a simulated visit team, including an assignment on the first evening to be turned in the following morning. The Face-to-Face Training is designed for two purposes:

1. To immerse you in the real-life situations and activities that occur during a site visit to a university or college. The workshop uses and builds upon the online training pre-work materials that you have completed.
2. To provide opportunities to demonstrate the [PEV Competency Model](#).

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FOR FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

ABET reimburses all appropriate travel expenses, providing the PEVC uses ABET's travel agent.

E. YOUR TRAINING MENTOR CONNECTION

Your ABET Member Society has assigned a [Training Mentor](#) to you. The Training Mentor is available to answer questions and guide you through your learning process. Your Training Mentor will work with you throughout the training process to:

- Make an initial contact
- Answer your questions in completing the online training pre-work
- Support your learning through the Face-to-Face Training
- Answer your questions after the Face-to-Face Training

Please Note: You should hear from your Training Mentor within a few days of receiving a notice that you have been assigned a mentor. Please contact your ABET Member Society if you have not heard from him or her.

For more information about Training Mentors, visit ABET.org: [Training Mentors](#)

F. GETTING ASSIGNED TO YOUR FIRST SITE VISIT

Upon successful completion of PEVC Training, your ABET Member Society will assign you to the PEV pool. Your Member Society may assign you for a visit in the upcoming cycle, based upon the number of programs being visited. For more information, contact your Member Society.

G. BACKGROUND

WHAT IS ABET?

ABET is the recognized U.S.-based accreditor of college and university programs in applied and natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

In the United States, accreditation is a non-governmental, peer-review process that assures the quality of the postsecondary education students receive. Educational institutions or programs (<http://www.abet.org/network-of-experts/for-current-abet-experts/training/glossary/#prog>) volunteer to undergo this review periodically to determine if certain criteria are being met. (NOTE: Outside the United States, accreditation is not necessarily voluntary or non-governmental. For more information, see the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (<http://www.unesco.org/>) (UNESCO) website for more information on the world's post-secondary education systems and their quality assurance mechanisms.)

It is important to understand that accreditation is not a ranking system. It is an assurance that a program meets established quality standards. In addition, the role of ABET accreditation is to provide periodic external assessment and evaluation in support of the program's continuous improvement process. ABET accreditation provides assurance that a college or university program meets quality standards of the profession for which that program prepares graduates.

H. ABOUT ABET

ASSURING CONFIDENCE

Industry can embrace the future with assured confidence knowing that the institutions that invest in our accreditation services are using the most advanced methodologies and expertise to measure the quality and performance of their programs.

ABET serves the public globally through the promotion and advancement of education in applied and natural science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. ABET:

- Accredits educational programs.
- Promotes quality and innovation in education.
- Consults and assists in the development and advancement of education worldwide in a financially self-sustaining manner.

- Communicates with our constituencies and the public regarding activities and accomplishments.
- Anticipates and prepares for the changing environment and the future needs of constituencies.
- Manages the operations and resources to be effective and fiscally responsible.

We champion excellence worldwide. Our approach, the standards we set, and the quality we guarantee inspire confidence in those who aim to build a better world—one that is safer, more efficient, comfortable, and sustainable.

I. ABET'S PHILOSOPHY OF OUTCOMES-BASED ACCREDITATION

ABET's accreditation procedures and processes historically have been intended for programs that prepare graduates for entry into a profession appropriate to the program's discipline. The decision on the appropriate accreditation action for a program is made based on the extent to which the relevant criteria for the program are met. It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate how the program meets the relevant criteria.

ABET's current accreditation processes are strongly oriented toward continuous quality improvement (CQI) and outcomes-based accreditation.

An educational program CQI process should reflect a clear understanding of:

- Mission
- Constituents
- Objectives
- Outcomes
- Processes (internal practice to achieve the outcomes)
- Facts (data collection)
- Evaluation (interpretation of facts) and
- Action (feedback to support decision making and improve processes)

J. WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE ABET ACCREDITATION PROCESS?

The accreditation process requires the participation of many individuals, institutions, and organizations:

- ABET
- ABET's member societies
- Institutions and programs requesting accreditation
- Team Chairs
- Program Evaluators

Each of ABET's member societies is invited to have representation on one or more of the four ABET commissions according to the curricular areas that the ABET Board of Directors assigns to those societies.

The four ABET accreditation commissions are the:

- Applied & Natural Science Accreditation Commission (ANSAC);
- Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC);
- Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC); and,
- Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC).

The commissions are responsible for administering the ABET Accreditation Process, conducting accreditation reviews, and determining accreditation actions (by vote of the entire membership), based on the *Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM)* and on the accreditation criteria. The commissions are also responsible for the continuous review and enhancement of criteria, policies and procedures.

Upcoming PEVC Training assignments are Commission specific. Please contact ABET's Training Manager (<mailto:training@abet.org>) if you are unsure of the Commission to which you have been nominated.

For more information, see Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) and criteria (<http://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/>).

The Accreditation Council (AC) is comprised of leadership (Chair, Past Chair and Chair Elect) from the four accreditation commissions. The Accreditation Council is responsible for improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and uniformity of the accreditation process.

Changes to the accreditation criteria and to the Accreditation Policies and Procedures proposed by the commissions and the Accreditation Council are approved by the ABET Board of Directors and Board of Delegates.

You will learn more about how the ABET Criteria are based on CQI in Module 5: Applying the Criteria and how it relates to assessing student learning in Module 4: Continuous Quality Improvement of Student Learning.

Outcomes-based accreditation focuses on:

- Learning, not teaching
- Students, not faculty
- Outcomes, not inputs or capacity

K. ABET CODE OF CONDUCT

ABET holds its staff and expert volunteers to the highest standards of conduct.

For your review, ABET's Code of Conduct explicitly describes behavior that is and is not acceptable when you participate in ABET activities.

In addition, you must abide by ABET's Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policies in the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, Sections II.A. and II.B



A. OVERVIEW OF ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The entire program review process is typically 18 months long.

Step 1: The process begins in January of the first year, when the institution requests accreditation for one or more of its programs.

Step 2: The institution prepares and submits a Self-Study Report(s), which the visit team will review in advance of the site visit.

Step 3: The site visit is usually conducted between September and December of the first year.

Step 4: After the visit, the team chair develops a **Draft Statement** to the institution by editing and combining the material written by the Program Evaluators and adding material that applies to the institution as a whole.

Step 5: The Draft Statement is reviewed by two **editors** from the respective commission and by ABET headquarters staff for adherence to standards and consistency with other Draft Statements.

Step 6: The edited Draft Statement is sent to the institution, which has 30 days to respond.

Step 7: The team chair uses the response from the institution, with assistance from the PEV as needed, to prepare the Final Statement, which again is edited and then provided to the full Commission for action.

Step 8: Final accreditation decisions are made at the Summer Commission Meeting in July of the second year.

Step 9: ABET notifies the institution of the final accreditation action in August of the second year.

The steps listed above describe only the actual program review process. The entire accreditation process ([Overview of Accreditation Process](#)) involves Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes by the program, as well as significant efforts to prepare a self study and collect course and assessment materials.

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MEMBER SOCIETIES

ABET is a federation of **professional and technical societies**. Member societies with curricular responsibilities recruit, select, mentor, and assist in training qualified program evaluators who, along with team chairs, comprise the teams assigned to accreditation visits. ABET member societies also nominate individuals to the four ABET commissions (the Applied & Natural Science Accreditation Commission, the Computing Accreditation Commission, the Engineering Accreditation Commission, and the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission) and appoint individuals to the ABET Board of Delegates.

INSTITUTIONS

Institutions requesting an ABET review have significant responsibilities to complete before ABET's Visit Team arrives on site. Each program completes a Self-Study Report, which serves as the central document the team relies on for the review. In the Self-Study Report, each program details how the ABET Criteria are being met. Read the [Accreditation Step-by-Step](#) document for a detailed description of the accreditation process from the institution's point of view.

The institution hosts the site visit. On campus, institutions arrange for interviews and reviews of display materials, facilities, equipment, and other observations that cannot be included in the Self-Study Report.

After the visit, the institution has seven (7) days to report errors of fact in the visiting team's preliminary findings. After it receives the Draft Statement, the institution has 30 days to report actions it has taken since the visit to address the team's findings and improve the program. This is the [Due Process Response Period](#).

COMMISSIONS

Each of the member societies is invited to have representation on one or more of the four ABET commissions, according to the curricular areas that those societies are assigned to by the ABET Board of Delegates. The four commissions are:

- Applied & Natural Science Accreditation Commission (ANSAC);
- Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC);
- Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC); and,
- Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC).

The accreditation commissions are responsible for administering the ABET accreditation process, based on the [Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual](#) and on the [accreditation criteria](#), both of which are approved by the ABET Board of Delegates. The commissions recommend criteria, assign the team chairs of the visiting teams, and make final accreditation decisions (by vote of the entire membership).

VISIT TEAM

The visit team evaluates one or more programs at an institution against the ABET Criteria and Accreditation Policies and Procedures. The visit team is composed of a team chair and at least one program evaluator for each program being evaluated.

TEAM CHAIR

The team chair is a member of the commission (or, occasionally, a former member), appointed by the [Commission Executive Committee](#) to lead the visit team. The team chair is the primary contact with the institution. The team chair is responsible for contact with the [dean](#) of each program being evaluated. He or she is involved in approving the composition of the visit team. As the leader of the visit team, the team chair assembles the Draft Statement and the Final Statement, and presents the findings to the ABET commission at the Summer Commission Meeting in July.

The responsibilities of the team chair will vary depending on the size of the visit team. In addition, team chairs may use different leadership approaches and organizational strategies to ensure a successful visit. Some team chairs, for example, may conduct conference calls with their team prior to the visit. Some may request an additional team meeting while on the visit.

PROGRAM EVALUATORS

Program evaluators (PEVs) are selected by their member societies to represent ABET on site visits, where they work with a team of colleagues from other member societies. As an ABET team member, the program evaluator's role is to provide knowledge on professional practice, professional preparation, and continuous improvement. The program evaluator also provides sound judgment about how the program he or she is evaluating meets ABET's Accreditation Criteria.

One of the program evaluator's most important responsibilities is to behave in an ethical and professional manner and to uphold [ABET's Code of Conduct, in Section IV of the ABET Board of Delegates Rules of Procedure](#). It is particularly important to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the institutions being evaluated. Program evaluators must disclose any real or perceived conflicts and recuse themselves from discussions or decisions related to any associated issues. If you have any questions about this, contact your team chair or ABET at accreditation@abet.org or 410-347-7700.

To avoid being assigned as a PEV for a visit to an institution for which you have a conflict of interest, it is important that you keep your list of conflicts current in your ABET profile. You should update your profile whenever a new conflict of interest develops, but not later than mid-spring of each year.

Special Note: Avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the institutions being evaluated. If you are not sure about a possible perception of a conflict of interest, contact your team chair or ABET.

As a Program Evaluator, you will have responsibilities before, during, and after the site visit.

C. OVERVIEW OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Programs must comply with the Criteria and ABET's Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual to achieve accreditation. As a program evaluator, you are responsible for evaluating a program's compliance with the Criteria.

The Criteria are intended to:

- Ensure the quality of educational programs.
- Foster the systematic pursuit of quality improvement in educational programs.
- Help develop educational programs that satisfy the needs of constituencies in a dynamic and competitive environment.

It is the responsibility of the institution seeking accreditation of a program to demonstrate clearly that the program meets the Criteria.

Please Note: To evaluate a program, it is critical that you thoroughly understand the Criteria and how to apply them. (Note: In this training, we will only be addressing the General Criteria. Your member society will cover program-specific criteria as needed.)

For more information, please see [the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual and the Accreditation Criteria](#).

D. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

ABET expert volunteers and staff should use consistent terminology. As a program evaluator, you will need to know and use the following terms (all found in the course glossary):

Program Educational Objectives: Broad statements that describe what graduates are expected to attain within a few years of graduation. Program educational objectives are based on the needs of the program's constituencies.

Student Outcomes: Statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to skills, knowledge, and behaviors that students acquire as they progress through the program.

Assessment: One or more processes that identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate the attainment of student outcomes. Effective assessment uses relevant direct, indirect, quantitative, and qualitative measures as appropriate to the outcome being measured. Appropriate sampling methods may be used as part of an assessment process.

Evaluation: One or more processes for interpreting the data and evidence accumulated through assessment practices. Evaluation determines the extent to which student outcomes are being attained. Evaluation results in decisions and actions regarding program improvement.

If you are from industry, government, or private practice and would like more information on the academic environment and terminology, you will want to review this [Introduction to Academia for Non-](#)

E. DEFINITION OF LEVELS OF COMPLIANCE

When writing the Exit Statement for the program you will be evaluating, you will need to use a variety of terms and statements to define levels of compliance ([Accreditation Policy and Procedures Manual I.E.5.b.](#))

Findings of Concern: A **Concern** indicates that a program currently satisfies a criterion, policy, or procedure. However, the potential exists for the situation to change such that the criterion, policy, or procedure may not be satisfied.

Findings of Weakness: A **Weakness** indicates that a program lacks the strength of compliance with a criterion, policy, or procedure to ensure that the quality of the program will not be compromised. Therefore, remedial action is required to strengthen compliance with the criterion, policy, or procedure prior to the next review.

Findings of Deficiency: A **Deficiency** indicates a criterion, policy, or procedure is not satisfied. Therefore, the program is not in compliance with the criterion, policy, or procedure.

Statements of Observation: An **Observation** is a comment or suggestion that does not relate directly to the accreditation action but is offered to assist the institution in its continuing efforts to improve its programs.

Statements of Strength: A **Strength** is an exceptionally strong, effective practice or condition that stands above the norm, and has a positive effect on the program.

Please Note: You must fully understand what is required to meet the Criteria and the levels of compliance. More will be covered in Module 5: Applying the Criteria.



As a Program Evaluator, you have many roles. Most important, you are the face of ABET and must follow ABET's Code of Conduct and adhere to ABET's Conflict of Interest Policy. As a Program Evaluator, you are devoting your time and expertise to ensuring quality education for students studying for entry into your profession.

A. PROGRAM EVALUATOR ROLES

ABET Representative: As a program evaluator, you are the face of ABET. You represent ABET when conducting all accreditation-related activities, and the institution that you visit judges ABET by your actions.

Evaluator: You have been selected as a program evaluator because you have subject matter expertise in the discipline you will be evaluating. Every program evaluator on your team is assigned a program to evaluate, based on the expertise he/she has in that program area. Accepting a position on a visit team is a commitment to fulfill all the obligations required. The role of the program evaluator is not to be the police, to look for "gotchas," but rather to be a partner with the institution in the improvement of the program.

Team Member: As a program evaluator, you also play the important role of team member. Your interaction with your colleagues, particularly during team meetings, is crucial to an efficient and successful visit. Being team-oriented is an important competency for all program evaluators.

A program evaluator's responsibilities are to:

- Complete the pre-visit work, including inspecting the materials provided by the institution.
- Participate in a 2-4 day on-site review.
- Evaluate information obtained according to ABET Criteria.
- Prepare materials in a timely manner, including recommended accreditation action.
- Provide visit materials to the team chair at the conclusion of the visit.
- Complete performance appraisal forms. (This will be covered in Module 6.)
- Submit expenses to ABET using the on-line expense system within 10 days of your site visit.
- Assist the team chair, as requested, in review of the institution's 30-day due process response and development of the Final Draft Statement.

Important Note: Avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the institutions being evaluated. For more information, see ABET's Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Confidentiality Policies in the ABET Board of Delegates Rules of Procedure.

B. ACTIVITIES BEFORE THE VISIT

You will have a significant number of tasks to complete prior to arriving on campus for the site visit. Your thorough preparation before arriving on site is essential to an efficient and successful site visit. In particular, your pre-visit analysis will enable you to identify additional information you will need during the visit. Additional information requests must be given to the program well in advance of the visit and should be coordinated with the team chair. Because this is a collaborative process, you need to meet your obligations in a timely manner to allow the institution to gather additional information in a reasonable time. If the program is already ABET-accredited, the program evaluator will receive a copy of the previous final accreditation statement for the program.

Here are some of the activities and deliverables you will need to complete prior to arriving on campus:

MAKE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements in consultation with the team chair and in alignment with the ABET Travel Policy. Travel arrangements should be made as soon as the team chair communicates visit details, including overall schedule, hotel accommodations, and transportation arrangements to and from the airport. All reasonable attempts should be made to minimize travel costs. All travel must follow the ABET Travel Policy to be reimbursed .

REVIEW THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

This is the primary document the institution prepares to demonstrate compliance with ABET Criteria. Each program uses the Self-Study Questionnaire template appropriate to the commission. These are found on the ABET website. While the majority of the program's Self-Study Report will be in paragraph format, a program may use tables, graphs, charts, and figures to illustrate compliance. The Self-Study Questionnaire includes tables that a program is required to complete along with prescribed formats for certain types of information such as course descriptions and faculty curriculum vita. Here are samples of what those may look like:

- ✓ Course Description Sample 1

- ✓ Course Description Sample 2

- ✓ Course Description Sample 3

- ✓ Faculty CV Sample 1

- ✓ Faculty CV Sample 2

You must thoroughly review the Self-Study Report prior to arriving on site, and prior to pre-visit conferences if scheduled by the team chair.

TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

As part of your review of the Self-Study Report, you will need to analyze transcripts. ABET recognizes transcripts as the official record of student coursework. While summary sheets or transcript checklists provided by the institution may be helpful for transcript analysis, the transcript itself should be the key document analyzed. Procedures for doing this include:

Be sure that the transcripts identify the name (title) of the program in a way that clearly identifies the program as an ABET-accredited program according to the institution catalog and other documents and in a way that distinguishes it from any non-accredited programs with which it could be confused by a potential employer. Identify any problems in this regard to your team chair.

- Make sure that the courses that are counted toward the degree are consistent with the published requirements of the program. In cases where the transcript is for a graduate of an earlier curriculum, the institution must provide a copy of the appropriate curriculum. The institution also should provide justification for any variances, such as transfer credits or substitutions that are not clearly documented on the transcripts.
- Check to be sure that prerequisites are taken before each course that requires them and that the course sequence on the transcript does not vary unreasonably from the recommended sequence. If courses are taken out of sequence, check to see if there is an indication of difficulty for the students in terms of the course grades. (If there are difficulties for students, then there could be a problem with the mechanisms for advising and the enforcement of prerequisites. If there are no problems, it could indicate prerequisite requirements that are not needed.)
- Ensure that the number of transfer credits and the number of course substitutions are reasonable.
- Request clarification for any apparent problems in the transcripts. Do your transcript analysis and request clarifications soon enough to allow reasonable time for the institution to respond.

Read the guidelines for analyzing student transcripts based on commission. (<http://www.abet.org/network-of-experts/for-current-abet-experts/program-evaluator-candidate-training/module-1-welcome-and-overview/transcript-analysis/>)

DRAFT PLAN FOR VISIT

Your draft plan includes the questions and areas that require additional information based on your review of the Self-Study Report. The draft plan helps you manage your time efficiently when you are on site. Be sure to:

- Convey your preferences and arrangements for interviews and meetings with faculty, students, and others to your team chair and then contact the program head if directed to do so by the team chair.

- Tell your team chair about visits needed to supporting areas. (Team chairs usually coordinate visits to supporting areas.)

PRE-VISIT FORMS

In Module 5 you will be provided with a variety of forms to help you walk through the self-study report and conduct a preliminary review of a program's compliance with the ABET criteria.

APPLYING THE CRITERIA

- Review the current ABET Criteria, the Self-Study Report, and any other materials sent by the institution.
- Assess areas of apparent strengths and shortcomings.
- Make preliminary assessment of what ABET Criteria appear to be met or may not be met.

TEAM CHAIR

- Follow up with the team chair regarding additional information you will need when you arrive on site. Your team chair may direct you to communicate this information to the program representative.
- Always respond promptly to requests from your team chair.
- Coordinate your travel plans with your team chair.

C. THE VISIT

The site visit enables ABET to assess factors that cannot be adequately addressed in the Self-Study Report. These factors include the intellectual atmosphere, the morale of the faculty and students, the caliber of the staff and student body, the facilities, and the outcome of the education offered as evidenced by the character of the work performed.

Do not conduct interviews or share preliminary conclusions with the institution prior to the site visit.

Your objectives while on site are to:

- ✓ Make a qualitative assessment of factors that cannot be documented in the Self-Study Report.
- ✓ Conduct a detailed examination of the materials compiled by the institution (this includes course materials and assessment materials).
- ✓ Provide the program with a preliminary assessment of its strong points and shortcomings.
- ✓ Review facilities.

Important Note: Visiting teams should help the programs assess their strong points as well as their weak points. You are not there only as an auditor but also as a consultant to assist the program in its continuous improvement efforts.

D. ACTIVITIES THAT YOU WILL CONDUCT DURING THE VISIT

EXAMINE ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

Assessment Materials are usually located with the course display materials. The purpose is to corroborate the assessment plan for student outcomes that was provided in the Self-Study Report, including ensuring that appropriate documentation exists for the various phases of the assessment process.

EXAMINE COURSE MATERIALS

Evaluators will review samples of displayed course materials including course syllabi, textbooks, example assignments and exams, and examples of student work, typically ranging from excellent through poor ([Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, Section I.E.5.b.\(2\)](#)).

The display materials should be readily available throughout the visit. You should verify that:

- The course is up-to-date and appropriate for the objectives of the program.
- The course prerequisites are adequate.
- The learning activities are appropriate for the course outcomes.
- The graded work adequately assesses the course learning outcomes.

Note that it is unlikely that a problem with a single course would be enough evidence for a Weakness or a Deficiency. Rather, the course materials should be used to corroborate potential problems indicated elsewhere, such as suspected failure by some faculty members to remain current, or should suggest potential problems that need to be corroborated by additional evidence, such as an apparent lack of rigor sufficient to achieve the course learning outcomes.

INTERVIEW THE PROGRAM HEAD

This is an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the program's strengths and weaknesses and the vision of its leadership for the future. Any issues that arose during your pre-visit preparation should be discussed to ensure that you are aware of all appropriate facts and have planned appropriate activities for further investigation. If a single program is being evaluated, the team chair may decide to interview the program head.

It is preferable not to make requests that require substantial effort to satisfy during this meeting (or at any time during the visit). Such requests should be made well in advance if your visit preparation is adequate. However, do not hesitate to make requests for things that are really needed to ensure a fair and complete review. It is advisable to discuss such requests with your team chair if they are likely to require a substantial amount of work from the program's staff.

You should also interview others with administrative duties (class scheduling, student advising, transfer course evaluation, etc.) relative to the program. This does not include administrators at the institutional level, whose visits are coordinated by the Team Chair. If the program head is not the department chair or the administrative head over the program, then you should also interview the administrative head. If more than one program under the administrative head is being reviewed, you may wish to coordinate your interview with the program evaluator(s) for the other program(s), perhaps even doing the interview simultaneously with the other PEV(s).

INTERVIEW FACULTY MEMBERS

During the faculty interviews, you should try to understand each faculty member's teaching philosophy; activities undertaken to maintain currency; level of understanding of, and participation in, the assessment process and preparation for the visit; and his/her view of the strengths and weaknesses of the program and its future direction.

Faculty members also can be a source of initial identification or corroboration of problems related to the quality and maintenance of facilities (labs, classrooms, library, etc.). Faculty attitudes regarding the work environment and their commitment to remaining at the institution are also important in assessing the adequacy of institutional support to maintain program stability during the potential period of accreditation.

There are many personal preferences regarding the best way to interview faculty members. Ideally, it is best to interview faculty members in their offices (if private) on a one-on-one basis. However, if the faculty is large or offices are not private, an alternative approach may be needed. Individual appointments should last for approximately 30 minutes. You should identify some of the faculty you are especially interested in interviewing if you will not have time to interview all of them. When selecting faculty to interview, consider those teaching courses for which you have questions, those with laboratory responsibilities, length of service, and rank. This should all be arranged before the visit and in consultation with your team chair.

INTERVIEW STUDENTS

Interviewing the students is often one of the most rewarding and enjoyable parts of the visit. The level of satisfaction with, and enthusiasm for, the program can be a good indicator of the program quality. In addition, students can provide important corroboration for such aspects as the lack of adequate quality in certain courses, problems with advising, and the adequacy of facilities (labs, classrooms, library, etc.).

As we know, however, the student perspective on the importance of certain courses and the characteristics of the program is often quite different from the perspectives of the faculty and administration. Although these perspectives can be valuable in getting a feel about the overall quality of a program, it is important to keep in mind that students are not always in a good position to judge the real value of an educational experience. Therefore, student complaints should not result in a conclusion that there is a problem unless the problem can be corroborated by evidence that is more concrete.

There are many individual preferences for selecting the students to be interviewed as a group. Ideally, the group will include a representative number of upper-level students and some other students as well. The student interviews can be done during a scheduled class (the instructor should not be present), but it is difficult to get a good representative sample from a single class. On the other hand, if the student interview is held during an open meeting with voluntary attendance, it can be difficult to get good representative attendance as well (or even good attendance at all). In any case, the group to be interviewed should not be selected by the program staff unless you ensure that those selected are a representative sample of the student body, especially the upper-level students. You should allow at least 30 minutes for meeting with the students.

TOUR THE FACILITIES

In touring the facilities, you want to ensure that they are sufficiently up-to-date and maintained to support the needs of the program. You also want to be aware of safety and access issues. The adequacy of the support staff is important, as is a mechanism for ensuring the continuing adequacy through the period of accreditation. The following are typical support facility visits that are conducted on an accreditation review visit. These visits may be done by the team chair or may be assigned to PEVs by the team chair.

If more than one program is being visited, these activities may be coordinated among the program evaluators and findings shared.

- **Visit the library.** When you visit the library, you are primarily verifying the evidence in the Self-Study Report: adequacy of the collection, availability of staff support, electronic access to information and materials, etc. The adequacy of the resources is important to observe, and this is difficult to determine from the Self-Study Report.
- **Visit one or more supporting departments.** Supporting departments (mathematics, physics, English, etc.) play an important role in the foundational preparation of students. In interviewing the department chair or other departmental representative, you should try to determine how well the students of the programs that the team is reviewing do in the supporting courses and whether there are any problems with the nature of the courses from the perspective of the supporting department. If course materials have been provided in a course materials display area, you should review these materials before going to visit the supporting department. If the materials have not been arranged in advance, then you cannot expect to see much more than course textbooks and syllabi for courses that are currently being offered.

- **Visit the career support center, placement office, cooperative education office, etc.** The intent of visits to offices such as these is to assess the level of support for students. You should inquire about the support that is available and general procedures for students to obtain the support. Sometimes you can assist the program, students, or faculty by identifying available support that is not being used effectively in the program. Understaffed offices, inadequate facilities, or outdated programs can indicate or corroborate problems that appear in assessment results, student or faculty interviews, etc.

WRITE AN EXIT STATEMENT

The Exit Statement has a prescribed format for each commission. The Exit Statement must clearly identify each shortcoming relative to the ABET Criteria or Accreditation Policies and Procedures.

COMPLETE A PROGRAM AUDIT FORM (PAF)

The PAF lists the shortcomings for a program. It normally is completed after the Exit Statement is finished, and should use the same language as the Exit Statement in describing shortcomings. Usually the text in the PAF is copied from the Exit Statement and pasted into the PAF. The PAFs are given to the dean by the team chair at the conclusion of the Exit Meeting, and they serve as a written summary of the team's findings for each of the programs that were evaluated for accreditation. Note that the PAF does not identify the recommended action on a program.

DEBRIEF THE PROGRAM HEAD

The debrief for the program head by the PEV is less formal than the exit meeting. There should be sufficient discussion to ensure that the program head understands the shortcomings that have been identified. Information that could be helpful in addressing the shortcomings can be provided by the PEV, but care must be taken to avoid any impression of prescribing a solution.

PARTICIPATE IN THE EXIT MEETING

The purpose of the exit meeting is to communicate the team's findings relative to all programs. Following initial statements by the team chair, each PEV will read (verbatim) the Exit Statement for the program evaluated by that PEV. The exit meeting is a formal report by the team. The team chair serves as chair for the exit meeting, and only questions for clarification are permitted. If you are asked by your team chair to respond to a question, you should be very careful not to ramble, but focus on the observed facts that lead to the finding.

The team chair may modify this basic procedure as appropriate. For example, if the number of programs reviewed is large, general information about each program and the program strengths might be omitted from what is read at the exit meeting. Similarly, if there is a shortcoming that is common to all programs, then the team chair may state that shortcoming in the introductory remarks and each PEV would then omit that shortcoming from the reading of the PEV's statement. Finally, if there is more than one PEV for a program, the team chair will determine what is to be read by each PEV.



E. A TYPICAL VISIT AGENDA

SUNDAY

During the initial team meeting, your responsibilities are to:

- Review visit plan.
- Provide initial Program Evaluator Visit Report and Program Evaluator Worksheet to the team chair.
Note: Your team chair may request these prior to the visit.
- Discuss pre-visit assessment.
- Review criteria, policy, and procedure changes.

You will also visit the program to:

- Evaluate course materials (syllabi, texts, graded student work, etc.).
- Evaluate assessment materials (results and analysis from surveys, etc.).
- Conduct other visits (labs, etc.) as needed.

SUNDAY EVENING

During the team meeting, your responsibilities are to:

- Identify all potential Deficiencies, Weaknesses, and Concerns.
- Work as a team to come to consensus and to ensure consistency about findings among programs.

MONDAY MORNING

- Team meets with president and/or dean and designated guests.

- Meet with program head.
- Meet with program faculty, students, and support staff.
- Attend optional luncheon for team with institutional officials and guests.

MONDAY AFTERNOON

- Continue meetings and interviews.
- Visit facilities.
- Visit supporting departments.

MONDAY EVENING

During the team meeting, your responsibilities are to:

- Report on findings relative to previously identified potential Deficiencies, Weaknesses, and Concerns.
- Discuss possible accreditation action.
- Prepare draft of Program Audit Form (PAF) and exit statement.

TUESDAY MORNING

- Provide draft of Program Audit Form (PAF) and exit statement to team chair.
- Complete interviews and facilities visits not completed on Monday.
- Brief program head on findings (informal debrief)
- Team meeting (working lunch)

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

Complete Program Audit Form (PAF) and exit statement:

- Address each criterion for which there are findings.
- Document facts, Deficiencies, Weaknesses, Concerns, and Observations
- Your statement must correlate with PEV Report and Program Evaluator Worksheet.

Provide team chair with PEV Visit Report, Program Evaluator Worksheet, and Program Audit Form.

- Update to reflect visit findings.
- List persons interviewed.
- Identify recommended accreditation action.
- Add program exit statement.

Participate in exit meeting. Read your written exit statement, do not deviate, and do not ramble! Please Note: During exit meeting, it is very important not to mention a proposed recommended accreditation action!

As a Program Evaluator, your responsibilities include:

- Identifying potential shortcomings by criterion.
- Determining appropriate findings.
- Selecting the key term that applies overall for each finding.
- Providing evidence for each finding and the effect it has on the program in the exit statement and Program Audit Form (PAF).
- Discussing or recommending an accreditation action to the team only.

As a Program Evaluator, you should never:

- Recommend solutions to shortcomings.
- Be prescriptive in suggesting improvements.
- Share the recommended accreditation action with anyone outside the team.

DRAFT STATEMENT OUTLINE

The Team Chair will combine the exit statements of all programs evaluated into a draft statement. The draft statement will follow this outline:

- Introduction
- For each program:
 - Program Strengths
 - Program Deficiencies

- Program Weaknesses
- Program Concerns
- Program Observations

After going through an editing process, the Draft Statement will be sent to the institution. The institution then has 30 days to respond. This response is called the Due Process Response.

Please remember to:

- Explain all shortcomings.
- Be consistent with ABET Criteria.
- Provide evidence for each finding and the impact it has on the program as it relates to the ABET Criteria.
- Be consistent with all forms provided to the Team Chair.

F. APPLYING THE CRITERIA: CONSISTENCY COUNTS

Accreditation actions must be consistent across all programs with similar shortcomings (Concern, Weakness, Deficiency) and across all institutions. As a PEV, it is essential that you compare your findings with those of the other programs being evaluated at the institution and ensure that different findings do not result from similar observations. The visit team should work together to resolve potential differences in findings for situations that are the same or very similar. Consistency is checked throughout the ABET Accreditation Process. The process is visually illustrated in this graphic (<http://www.abet.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/consistency-checks.pdf>).

G. AFTER THE VISIT

Within ten (10) business days after the visit, you will need to:

- Submit your expenses using the ABET on-line expense system, including scanning or copying all receipts. The expense report will be sent to your team chair for approval by the system. Once approved by the team chair, the system will forward your expense report to ABET headquarters for payment.
- Complete the online appraisal form for the Team Chair and Program Evaluators on your visiting team.

ABET EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY: All travelers should be aware that only persons who are authorized prior to visiting campuses or attending pertinent meetings and activities will be reimbursed for their allowable and reasonable expenses. If there is a question on reimbursements or allowable expenses, please seek guidance from your team chair or ABET liaison. It is ABET's policy to reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by those individuals who are authorized to attend specific visits. All expenses should be submitted within ten (10) working days after returning from your trip. Failure to comply with the travel policy instructions will delay the reimbursement of your expenses. Expenses submitted more than sixty (60) days after the end of travel may not be reimbursed.



The evaluation of a program's compliance with each of the various features of the Program Educational Objectives, Student Outcomes, and Continuous Improvement Criteria (Criteria 2, 3, and 4) is an important element of ABET's outcomes-based accreditation criteria and the program's continuous improvement processes.

Although you as a Program Evaluator (PEV) will be reviewing many aspects of the program visited, your review of the program's appropriateness of program educational objectives and the program's process for the assessment, evaluation and implementation of identified needed improvements relative to its stated student outcomes will be an important part of your work. This module will provide you with information that will help you in the evaluation of these processes.

A. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS USED BY ABET

Unfortunately, there is no universally accepted set of terms used in the assessment field. Below are terms used in the ABET Criteria and defined in the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual.

ABET TERMS

Program Educational Objectives: Broad statements that describe what graduates are expected to attain within a few years of graduation. Program educational objectives are based on the needs of the program's constituencies.

Student Outcomes: Statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to skills, knowledge, and behaviors that students acquire as they progress through the program.

Assessment: One or more processes that identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate the attainment of student outcomes. Effective assessment uses relevant direct, indirect, quantitative, and qualitative measures as appropriate to the outcome being measured. Appropriate sampling methods may be used as part of an assessment process.

Evaluation: One or more processes for interpreting the data and evidence accumulated through assessment practices. Evaluation determines the extent to which student outcomes are being attained. Evaluation results in decisions and actions regarding program improvement.

Note: Programs may have adopted a specific language of assessment, which varies from the terms above. Terminology might also vary from one program to another within an institution. If a program is using different terms, it is important that it defines its terms in its self-study and uses them consistently in its documentation for ABET. If the Self-Study Report does not clearly indicate how terms are being used, this should be clarified before the visit.

B. REVIEW OF PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Program educational objectives focus on what graduates are expected to attain within a few years after graduation. Due to changes in the Criteria, it is no longer necessary to assess the attainment of the program educational objectives but “There must be a documented, systematically utilized, and effective process, involving program constituencies, for the periodic review of these program educational objectives that ensures they remain consistent with the institutional mission, the program’s constituents’ needs, and these criteria.”

The review of program educational objectives requires appropriate monitoring of the currency of the objectives themselves. The currency of the program educational objectives should be reviewed periodically. The time span will depend on the changing needs of the constituents and mission of the program. Programs in disciplines that are dynamic and rapidly changing will need to have more frequent monitoring cycles to be sure the program educational objectives are current and the student outcomes will enable the attainment of the objectives.

Information on the needs of constituents for the development and revision of the program educational objectives should be gathered in meaningful ways. Determining compliance with this aspect of Criterion 2 will take informed judgment on the part of the evaluator.

C. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT OUTCOMES

For student outcomes, the focus of the data collection is to answer the question, “To what level have students have attained the stated student outcomes?” The evidence of student learning is then used to identify student strengths and weaknesses related to each of the student outcomes for making decisions about how to improve the **program’s** teaching/learning processes.

This evidence should be the product of faculty reviewing and/or observing student work related to the program requirements. In preparation for reviewing a program’s processes related to Criterion 4, Continuous Improvement, for student outcomes, it is important to understand several principles of a well-constructed process to enable continuous improvement related to program-level student learning.

- 1. The focus of Criterion 4 (continuous improvement) is on the assessment of the program, not on the assessment of individual students.** Assessment of the attainment of student outcomes at the program level focuses on the performances of selected student and graduate cohorts. Program faculty gain insights into how well it is developing its outcomes through the evaluation of student outcome assessment results for the selected student cohort. In general, results are reported in terms of the percentage of students in the student cohort who meet the program’s student outcomes targets. The program’s interpretation of the results informs decision making for continuous improvement purposes.
- 2. The focus of Criterion 4 (continuous improvement related to student outcomes) is on the learning of students and not the assessment or evaluation of individual courses.** At the program level, assessment and evaluation should be focused on the learning that has resulted from the experiences in the program by the time of graduation. The purpose is to provide information on the program’s efficacy (its ability to achieve what it was designed to achieve).
- 3. Student outcomes should be defined to provide faculty with a common understanding of the expectations for student learning and to achieve consistency across the curriculum.** Well-defined student outcomes also communicate to students what learning will be expected as they progress through the program. Without agreed upon definitions of the student outcomes, faculty may have widely varying

understandings of what constitutes performance of a given outcome. When faculty have variable definitions of the student outcomes, it is almost impossible to determine the extent to which a student cohort has attained the outcomes. One way to establish a common and consistent understanding of what constitutes measurable performance of a student outcome is for those faculty involved to develop a few performance indicators for each student outcome. For further information on writing performance indicators, see the Student Outcomes and Performance Indicators.

- 4. A program does not have to collect data on every student in every course to know how well it is doing toward attaining student outcomes.** In fact, a program does not have to collect evidence of performance on every student. Because the focus of the assessment activity is on the program and not individual students, it is important that the cohort being used for data collection be representative of the range of students in the program. If a sample is drawn from the cohort, it must include the same proportion of student characteristics (grade averages, gender, diversity, etc.) that describe the program's student population. In programs that have a small graduation class, sampling may not be appropriate. However, if data are collected on a specific student outcome only every three years (see #5 below) a program would, in fact, be sampling regardless of cohort size as it is not collecting data on every student who leaves the program.
- 5. To provide evidence of attainment of student outcomes by the time of graduation for program reporting purposes, programs may choose to evaluate and report only data collected in core upper-level courses.** Although not required by the accreditation criteria, a best practice is to sample from strategically selected core courses toward the end of the curricular cycle (meaning those where the most representative sample of student attainment of outcomes can be gathered). There are many reasons why programs should collect data (baseline or other) in the lower-level courses over which they have control for their continuous improvement, but it is sufficient to choose from upper-level courses for ABET reporting purposes. In general, knowledge, skills, or behaviors that students demonstrate in lower-level courses are not as likely a result of the program's discipline-specific curriculum.
- 6. A program does not have to assess every outcome every year to know how well it is doing toward attaining student outcomes.** One

approach that often leads to difficulty is to collect too many data on individual students. This is certainly true if a program is requiring that faculty collect data in every course where student outcomes are being “covered.” Not only does this make the data collection process cumbersome, but it also makes it almost impossible to turn the data into useful information. A viable alternative data-collection approach is to use assessment cycles where, on a rotating basis, performance-indicator data for a portion of the student outcomes are sampled from two, or preferably three, core upper-level courses where every course supporting a given outcome is “covered.” Using this approach produces evidence that can be used for evaluation and decisions about actions that should be taken, and relieves faculty of unnecessary data collection. Staggering the data collection over the six-year accreditation cycle produces a process that is continuous and systematic.

7. The focus is continuous improvement based on information for decision making, not just data collection (i.e., data ≠ information). ABET accreditation criteria mandate that program faculty focus on continuous improvement using documented processes for assessing and evaluating attainment of student outcomes. The faculty member time and data collection requirements of these assessment processes should be consistent with day-to-day operations of the program, and the faculty should maintain these processes of assessment and subsequent evaluation across the interval between successive accreditation visits. Assessment processes that focus on the continuous improvement of the program produce results that can be systematically used by faculty and administration in meaningful ways.

The following are the underlying principles of continuous quality improvement of student learning at the program level:

1. The focus of Criterion 4 (continuous improvement related to student outcomes) is on the learning of students and not the assessment or evaluation of individual students.
2. The focus of Criterion 4 (continuous improvement related to student outcomes) is on the learning of students and not the assessment or evaluation of individual courses.
3. Student outcomes should be defined to provide program faculty with a common understanding of the expectations for student learning and to

achieve consistency across the curriculum.

4. A program does not have to collect data on every student in every course to know how well it is doing toward the attainment of student outcomes.
5. To provide evidence of attainment of student outcomes by the time of graduation for program reporting purposes, programs may choose to evaluate and report only data collected in courses towards the end of the curricular cycle.
6. A program does not have to assess every outcome every year to know how well it is doing toward the attainment of student outcomes.
7. The focus is on continuous improvement based on information for decision-making.

D. HOW DO I KNOW IF A PROGRAM HAS AN ADEQUATE CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS FOR STUDENT LEARNING?

Evidence of a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process would contain the following:

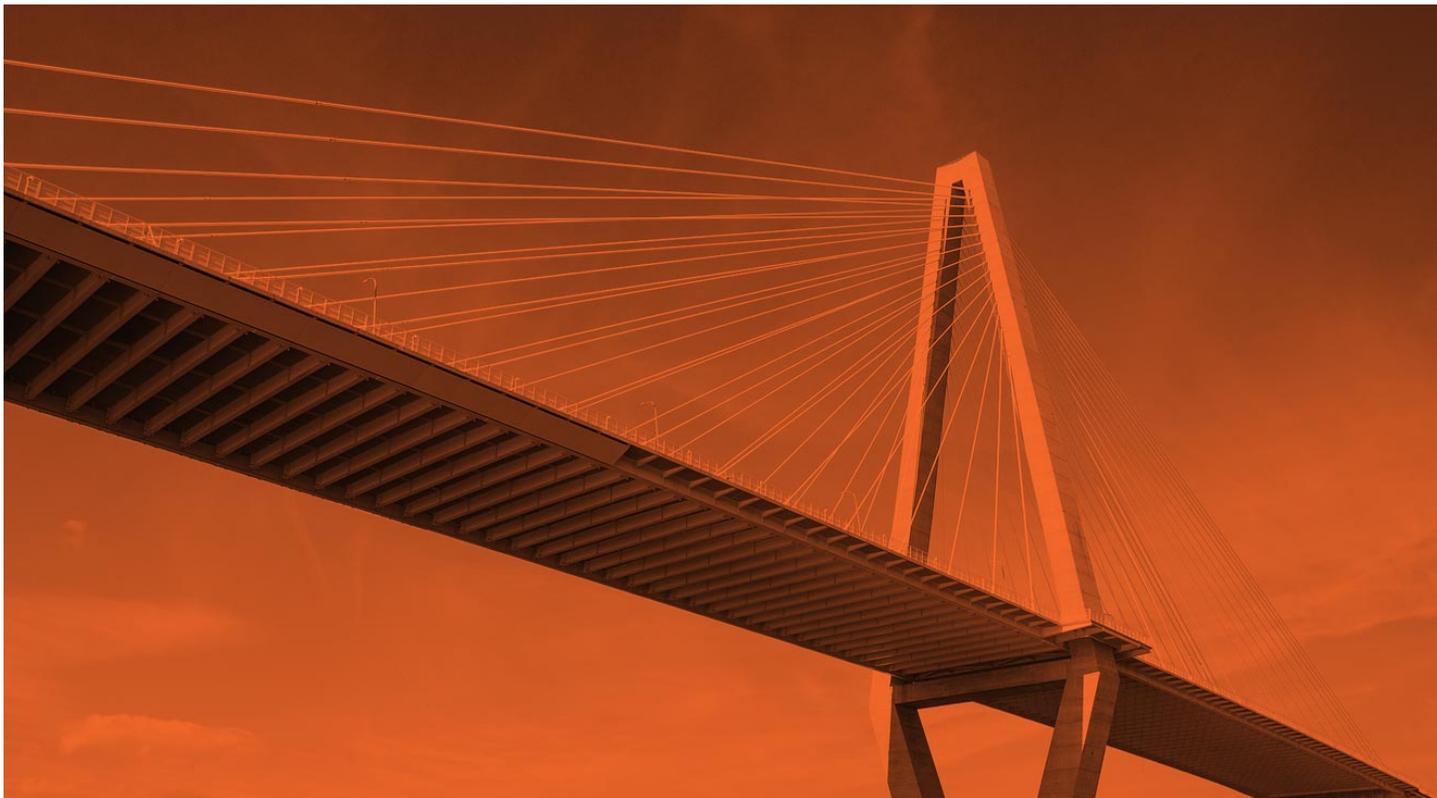
1. A timeline of repeated activities related to assessment and evaluation.
Possible question: "What is your data collection and evaluation timeline?"
2. Agreed upon definitions of student outcomes. (Identifying a few performance indicators per outcome is an effective way to develop measurable definitions.)
Possible question for faculty: "How does your program define its student outcomes to ensure consistent assessment across the curriculum?"
3. Systematic data collection that focuses on performance related to the student outcomes.
Possible question: "Where do you collect the data that is evidence of the learning of students?"
4. Systematic data collection that ensures coverage of each student outcome for the given student cohort.
Possible request: "Describe how the data being presented were collected."

5. Data collection and analysis that provide information that enables faculty to identify superior performance and opportunities for improvement related to the outcomes.

Possible question: “I see that X% of your students have attained outcome Y. Were there any notable positive or negative aspects of the students’ performance?”

6. An evaluation process that clearly communicates to program faculty opportunities for improvement in student learning.

Possible request: “Describe how the proposed actions improved student learning (or are anticipated to improve student learning) related to enhancement opportunities that were identified.



You have learned many of the fundamentals of the ABET Accreditation Process. Now you will apply what you have learned in a series of exercises, in checks for understanding, and, ultimately, in the simulated preparation for the site visit.

A. CRITERIA APPLICATION BASICS

- ABET accredits **educational programs** leading to degrees. (ABET does NOT accredit institutions, departments, or degrees.)
- ABET defines an educational program as an integrated, organized experience that culminates in the awarding of a degree. The program will have program educational objectives, student outcomes, a curriculum, faculty, and facilities.
- ABET does not dictate program names to an institution.

You can find a thorough explanation of the above in the [Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, Section I.C.](#)

B. UNDERSTANDING THE CRITERIA

Using the Criteria to evaluate a program's compliance begins with understanding the Criteria. ABET criteria are based on the principles of continuous quality improvement. General Criteria cover the following areas of an educational program:

- ✓ Students
- ✓ Program Educational Objectives

- ✓ Student Outcomes
- ✓ Continuous Improvement
- ✓ Curriculum
- ✓ Faculty
- ✓ Facilities
- ✓ Institutional Support

Your member society may also have additional criteria that cover minimum standards for the specific program discipline you will be evaluating. These are called “Program Criteria.”

[You will find ABET Criteria for each Commission here.](#)

C. COMMON ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH EACH CRITERION

The ABET Criteria are minimum standards that you apply with judgment. Over the years, ABET has identified common issues that may surface as you review a program’s Self-Study Report and make observations during a visit for evidence of compliance.

The issues listed below for each criterion area are not exhaustive. You may identify additional issues as you review the Self-Study Report. Additionally, some issues listed here may not by themselves represent a shortcoming relative to the criteria, but rather may indicate a need to seek additional information in order to determine whether there is a shortcoming. Remember each shortcoming must refer to specific requirements in the criteria that are not fully met or potentially may not be met in the future.

STUDENTS

Problems with Student Advising

- Ineffective or inconsistent advising
- Lack of understanding of curricular requirements, especially if many options are available

Ineffective Monitoring

- No documentation of course substitutions or missing prerequisites

Problems with Transfer Process

- No documentation on acceptability of transfer credits

PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Program educational objectives are not published or readily accessible to the public.
- Program educational objectives are not related to institutional mission or are inconsistent with the mission.
- Program educational objectives are not consistent with the needs of the program's various constituencies.
- Program educational objectives do not describe what graduates are expected to attain within a few years after graduation.
- There is no indication as to who are the program's constituents.
- There is no evidence the needs of the program's constituents have been considered in the formulation of the program's educational objectives.
- There is no process to periodically review and revise the program educational objectives.
- There is no evidence of constituency involvement in the periodic review and revision of program educational objectives.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

- Student outcomes are stated such that attainment is not measurable. (Note: Having student outcomes whose attainment is not measurable is not by itself a violation of any criterion, but if attainment of an outcome is not measurable then the extent to which it is attained may not be appropriately evaluated, as required in Criterion 4.)
- There is missing or incomplete justification as to how the student outcomes prepare graduates to attain the program educational objectives.
- The student outcomes do not reflect what the students should know and be able to do at the time of graduation.
- The student outcomes do not include all of the ABET-required outcomes (a-l or a-k) as appropriate.
- There is no process to periodically review and revise the student outcomes. (ANSAC, CAC, ETAC only.)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Processes

- The assessment and evaluation processes are not documented.
- The program cannot demonstrate the processes do what they claim.

- The assessment, evaluation, and improvement cycle is not complete.
- The process is not sustainable.

Assessment

- Indicators of student performance have not been defined and/or no a priori level of student performance has been established. (Although there is no criteria requirement for performance indicators or a priori levels of performance, without these or something equivalent it may be difficult to appropriately evaluate the extent to which student outcomes are attained, and additional information may be needed to determine the appropriateness of the evaluation process for outcomes attainment.)
- The program uses only anecdotal results (versus measured results).
- The program relies only on course grades as assessment for one or more student outcomes. There are many factors, rarely all relating to a single student outcome for the program, that are used to determine a course grade. Thus the level of granularity of course grades relative to student outcomes is almost always too coarse for course grades to be used as reliable indicators for attainment of specific student outcomes.
- There is an over-reliance on student self-assessment (e.g., surveys) as opposed to assessment methods based on actual student performance. As a rule, student self-assessment of outcomes attainment is considered much less reliable than attainment data from actual student performance relative to each outcome.
- Assessment data are being collected for only some outcomes.

Evaluation

- The data collected are not analyzed and used as input to a program improvement process.
- The continuous improvement process appears to ignore evidence that students are not attaining the student outcomes at the expected level of student performance.
- The evaluation of data does not provide the information needed to make program improvements.

Results

- Program improvement plans are developed but not implemented.
- There is no documentation of how the results of assessment and evaluation processes are used to determine needed program improvements.
- Results of the evaluation of student outcomes are not used to make needed improvements to the student outcomes.

- There is no evidence improvement efforts are being assessed and evaluated.

CURRICULUM

A program's curriculum provides the foundation for entry into the profession. The curriculum criterion varies among the commissions so the following issues related to this criterion may not all be applicable to your commission.

- Curriculum fails to meet credit hour requirements (if specified by criterion).
- Quality of the culminating or integrating experience, comprehensive project, capstone or major design experience (if required by the criterion).
- No culminating experience.
- Several courses with elements of a comprehensive project but not identified as the culminating experience.
- Multiple culminating courses or courses taught by different instructors that do not all satisfy the requirements of the criteria
- Culminating design experience not addressing multiple constraints and appropriate standards (EAC only).

Faculty

- Insufficient number:
 - To support concentrations, electives, etc.
 - To maintain continuity and stability
- Poor faculty morale affecting the program
- Lack of professional development
- Excessive workloads
- Retention/turnover rate
- Heavy reliance on temporary faculty appointments or adjuncts, potentially jeopardizing program stability
- Insufficient responsibility and authority to improve the program

Facilities

- Insufficient space
- Overcrowded laboratories and classrooms

Laboratories

- Unsafe conditions
- Some essential equipment inoperable
- Lack of modern instrumentation

Computing/Information Infrastructure

- Lack of software/hardware needed to support the curriculum

Institutional Support

- Unstable leadership affecting programs
- Dean and/or program head positions open or filled by interim appointments for an extended period
- Frequent turnover of university administration and unit leadership
- Inadequate operating budget affecting:
 - Acquisition and maintenance of laboratories and appropriate equipment
 - Faculty salaries, promotions, and professional development
 - Hiring and retention of faculty and staff
- Insufficient support staff:
 - Teaching assistants
 - Technicians for instructional laboratories, machine shops, and laboratory services
 - Administrative/clerical

Keep in Mind: You do not have to be an expert on assessment. The program must provide evidence it has a working and effective system in place. Note outcomes and continuous improvement are linked closely together.

Please Note: Your draft visit plan should detail with whom you will visit on-site to resolve any issues with program compliance with criteria, which are not explained to your satisfaction in the Self-Study Report.

D. THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

PRE-VISIT

Using the Program Evaluator Worksheet and Program Evaluator Visit Report specific to your commission, you should be able to make a preliminary evaluation of the program based on your review of the program's Self-Study Report. You should make a list of those issues that will require further investigation on site and discuss these with your team chair. Review the last visit Final Statement, if received from your Team Chair. Pay attention to shortcomings cited, to be sure the program has not allowed a particular criterion to degrade.

ON-SITE

Once on-site, you may revise your evaluation after conducting interviews with faculty members, students, and administrators; reviewing documentation; and visiting facilities. You will share your findings with your team members at team meetings on Sunday and Monday nights. This will assist you in refining your recommended action. At the conclusion of the visit, you will provide your team chair with the recommended action for your program and an Exit Statement to support that action. You will simulate the on-site activities during the face-to-face training component.

It is essential all team members make decisions on findings in a consistent manner. All team members should listen carefully to the proposed findings of other team members to identify potential inconsistent findings in different programs. For reaccreditation visits, team members should be cognizant of findings that may appear inconsistent with findings from previous evaluations, and should make clear the reasons for any finding that may appear inconsistent with a previous finding if possible.

POST-VISIT

The team chair develops the Draft Statement to the institution by combining and editing the program exit statement material from the program evaluators and adding material that applies to the institution as a whole. Two editors and ABET Headquarters staff review the Draft Statement for adherence to standards and consistency with other statements. It is then sent to the institution, which has 30 days to respond. The team chair uses the response from the institution to prepare the Final Statement, which is edited again and then provided to the full commission for action. In preparing the Final Statement, the team chair may consult with the program evaluators as needed to determine whether there are any changes to the recommended accreditation action because of the institution's actions since the visit. Final accreditation decisions are made at the Summer Commission Meeting in July of each year.

E. EVALUATING A PROGRAM'S COMPLIANCE WITH THE CRITERIA

To decide if a program complies with each criterion and to recommend an accreditation action, follow these steps:

- Identify issues by criterion. Remember you may find issues not listed in the Common Issues Associated with Each Criterion section above.
- Determine the appropriate finding.
- Select the key term that applies for the finding. Base your decisions on the criteria, NOT on your opinion. Consider the resulting recommended action. Is it consistent with the nature of the shortcoming?
- Explain each concern, weakness, and deficiency in relation to the specific criterion using wording consistent with the definition of the shortcoming.
- Recommend the accreditation action. Prior to the site visit, your team chair will ask you where the program stands in overall compliance to ABET Criteria. Based on your preliminary review, you will select one of the following potential actions as described in the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, Section I.E.12 (A001-18-19-Accreditation-Policy-and-Procedure-Manual-11-16-17.pdf?_&d2lSessionVal=T5VpekelbG3E4i33hpyLrsDIh&ou=6700). This preliminary judgment

may be revisited after you gather more information during the campus site visit. Your available accreditation actions include:

- Next General Review (NGR)
- Interim Report (IR)
- Interim Visit (IV)
- Report Extended (RE)
- Visit Extended (VE)
- Show Cause Report (SCR)
- Show Cause Visit (SCV)
- Show Cause Extended (SE)
- Not to Accredit (NA)

In Module 2, The Accreditation Process, you read about Levels of Compliance (<http://www.abet.org/network-of-experts/for-current-abet-experts/program-evaluator-candidate-training/module-2-the-accreditation-process#definition>), statements of compliance, concern, weakness, and deficiency, as well as observations with regard to your findings when evaluating a program. You can also find these in the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, Section II.E.8.a.(2).

GENERAL REVIEW TERMINOLOGY VS. ACTION

If the evidence supports a program Weakness for a given criterion, you must recommend either an Interim Report or an Interim Visit action (if there is no Deficiency). Note there is no difference in severity for the IR and IV actions. The only difference is whether the adequacy of the corrective action(s) can be determined based on a written report (with appropriate supporting documentation), or whether a visit is required in order to assess the adequacy of the action(s).

If the evidence supports a program Deficiency for a given criterion, you must recommend a Show Cause action if this is a re-review or a Not-to-Accredit action if this is an initial review. Also, note a Not-to-Accredit action can only result from an evaluation of a new program or from a show cause visit.

Please refer to the chart below for reference:

Actions	NGR	IR	IV	SCR	SCV	NA
Definitions	Next General Review	Interim Report	Interim Visit	Show Cause Report	Show Cause Visit	Not to Accredit (only for new programs)
Weakness?	No	Yes	Yes	—	—	—
Deficiency?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Duration (years)	6	2	2	2	2	—

F. ENSURING CONSISTENCY

Accreditation actions must be consistent across all programs and institutions. Accreditation actions must be consistent with actions given for other programs with similar shortcomings (Concern, Weakness, Deficiency). Throughout the ABET Accreditation Process, there are multiple checkpoints to ensure consistency.

H. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

Student transcripts provide direct evidence the institution's program requirements are met. In addition, transcripts provide evidence the curricular requirements are met. As part of your review of the Self-Study Report, you will need to analyze transcripts. Procedures for doing this include the following:

- Be sure the transcripts identify the name (title) of the degree received in a way that clearly identifies the program as an accredited program according to the institution catalog and other documents and in a way that distinguishes it from any non-accredited programs with which it could be confused by a potential employer. Identify any problems in this regard to your team chair.
- Make sure the courses counted toward the degree are consistent with the published requirements of the program. In cases where the transcript is for a graduate of an earlier curriculum, the institution must provide a copy of the appropriate curriculum. The institution also should provide justification for any variances, such as transfer credits or substitutions not clearly documented on the transcripts.
- Check to be sure prerequisites are taken before each course that requires them and the course sequence on the transcript does not vary unreasonably from the recommended sequence. If courses are taken out of sequence, check to see if there is an indication of difficulty for the students in terms of the course grades. (If there are difficulties for students, then there could be a problem with the mechanisms for advising and the enforcement of prerequisites. If there are no problems, it could indicate prerequisite requirements that are not needed.)
- Request clarification for any apparent problems in the transcripts. Do your transcript analysis and request clarifications soon enough to allow reasonable time for the institution to respond.
- Review transfer course and course substitution decisions for reasonableness related to course content and credit allocation. Review documentation of the decisions. If there are questionable substitutions, request clarification from the program.

[Please click here for commission transcript analysis guides.](#)

I. ANALYZING THE SIMULATED SELF-STUDY REPORT

Are you ready to apply your newly gained knowledge to simulating PEV pre-visit activities? Please use the following sample data and forms to:

REVIEW A SIMULATED SELF-STUDY REPORT AND SAMPLE PROGRAM STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS FOR YOUR COMMISSION CONCERNING A FICTITIOUS PROGRAM AT A FICTITIOUS INSTITUTION, UPPER STATE UNIVERSITY.

Important Note: These Self-Study Reports have been created for training purposes only. They should not be distributed. While based on responses typically seen in Self-Study Reports, these documents intentionally contain problems for training purposes.

APPLIED & NATURAL SCIENCE SELF-STUDY REPORT

- [ANSAC Upper State University Self-Study](#)
- [ANSAC Upper State University Student Transcript 1](#)
- [ANSAC Upper State University Student Transcript 2](#)
- [ANSAC Upper State University Student Transcript 3](#)

COMPUTING SELF-STUDY REPORT

- [CAC Upper State University Self-Study](#)
- [CAC Upper State University Student Transcript 1](#)
- [CAC Upper State University Student Transcript 2](#)
- [CAC Upper State University Student Transcript 3](#)

ENGINEERING SELF-STUDY REPORT

- [EAC Upper State University Self-Study](#)
- [EAC Upper State University Student Transcript 1](#)
- [EAC Upper State University Student Transcript 2](#)
- [EAC Upper State University Student Transcript 3](#)

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY SELF-STUDY REPORT

- [ETAC Upper State University Self-Study](#)
- [ETAC Upper State University Student Transcript 1](#)
- [ETAC Upper State University Student Transcript 2](#)
- [ETAC Upper State University Student Transcript 3](#)

COMPLETE THE SPECIFIED PORTIONS OF THE PEV VISIT REPORT AND/OR PEV WORKSHEET FOR YOUR COMMISSION:

APPLIED & NATURAL SCIENCE EVALUATION FORMS

- [Applied & Natural Science Program Evaluator Visit Report \(contains Program Evaluator Worksheet\)](#)
Fill out the visit and contact information portion of page 2; complete the Bachelor Degree Transcripts of Graduates from the Evaluated Baccalaureate Program; and, complete the Pre-Visit Estimate column of the PROGRAM EVALUATOR WORKSHEET.

COMPUTING EVALUATION FORMS

- [Computing Program Evaluator Visit Report](#)
Fill out the visit and contact information portion of page 2 and complete the TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS.
- [Computing Program Evaluator Worksheet](#)
Complete the Pre-Visit column of the PROGRAM EVALUATOR WORKSHEET.

ENGINEERING EVALUATION FORMS

- [Engineering Program Evaluator Visit Report](#)
Fill out the Basic Information Sheet; complete the CURRICULUM ANALYSIS, and the TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS.
- [Engineering Program Evaluator Worksheet](#)
Complete the Pre-Visit column of the PROGRAM EVALUATOR WORKSHEET.

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION FORMS

- [Engineering Technology Program Evaluator Visit Report \(contains Program Evaluator Worksheet\)](#)
Complete the Program Identification section, Criterion 1-Students through Criterion 8-Institutional Support, and the Pre-Visit column of the Baccalaureate Degree Program Review Worksheet.

COMPLETED REPORT FORMS AND/OR WORKSHEETS

To help with this task, the example completed Program Evaluator Visit Report Forms and/or Program Evaluator Worksheets below illustrate the types of responses used to complete these forms.

- [Information on completeing ANSAC PEV Visit Report](#)
- [Information on completing the Computing PEV Visit Report and Computing PEV Workbook](#)
- [Information on completing the Engineering PEV Visit Report and Engineering PEV Worksheet](#)
- [Information on completing the Engineering Technology PEV Visit Report](#)

MAKE A PRELIMINARY ACCREDITATION-ACTION RECOMMENDATION BASED ON THE FINDINGS.

Using the appropriate pre-visit forms for your commission, evaluate your program's Upper State University Self-Study Report and example student transcripts for compliance to the ABET General Criteria.

Once you have completed the required sections of your commission's evaluation forms, post the PEV Visit Report and/or PEV Worksheet (with completed sections as noted above) on the following page **by the required due date**.

Please note the following:

- You are reviewing the Upper State University program against General Criteria for your commission **ONLY**.
- This review may take eight (8) or more hours to complete.

REMINDER: The following MUST be completed no later than four (4) weeks before the PEVC Face-to-Face Training:

- The three (3) Proficiency Assessments
- The Program Evaluator Visit Report and/or the Program Evaluator Worksheet (as noted above)

The results of the three (3) Proficiency Assessments will be automatically recorded. Please post the Visit Report and Worksheet documents as Microsoft Word Files.

MODULE 6

You have been selected to participate in Program Evaluator Candidate Training because you meet a set of minimum qualifications and exhibit the characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes that ABET has identified as vital to high-performing Program Evaluators.

A. WHAT ARE THE ABET PEV COMPETENCIES?

The [PEV Competency Model](#) was developed with input from veteran Program Evaluators, team chairs, and ABET leadership. The competencies include characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes that are highly regarded in the workplace as well. You will be evaluated on how you demonstrate these core competencies during the training process and during your service as an ABET Program Evaluator.

The PEV Competencies are:

- Technically Current
- Effective at Communicating
- Professional
- Interpersonally Skilled
- Team-Oriented
- Organized

The ABET PEV Competency Model serves several purposes:

- It informs PEVs and PEV candidates of expectations of program evaluators.
- It serves as a tool for assessing candidates against the competencies.
- It serves as a focus for training PEV candidates.
- It provides standards for performance appraisal and enables continuous improvement feedback for PEVs and member societies.

The PEV Competency Model has raised the bar for PEV performance and improved the consistency of team evaluations. It is important program evaluators, team chairs, member societies, and program administrators and faculty be familiar with the PEV Competency Model and understand the expectations for each competency.

TECHNICALLY CURRENT

- Demonstrates required technical credentials for the position.
- Engages in life-long learning and current in the field.
- Demonstrates current knowledge of ABET General and Program Criteria and ABET policies and procedures.

EFFECTIVE AT COMMUNICATING

- Writes clearly and succinctly.
- Presents concise oral briefings and easily conducts interviews.

PROFESSIONAL

- Professional appearance.
- Committed to contributing and adding value.
- High integrity and ethical standards.
- Follows ABET Code of Conduct.

INTERPERSONALLY SKILLED

- Friendly and sets others at ease.
- Listens and places input into context.
- Open-minded and avoids personal bias.
- Forthright – does not hold back what needs to be said.
- Adept at pointing out strengths and shortcomings in non-confrontational manner.

TEAM-ORIENTED

- Readily accepts input from team members.
- Works with team members to reach consensus.
- Values team success over personal success.

ORGANIZED

- Adheres to meeting deadlines.
- Focuses on critical issues and avoids minutia.
- Displays take-charge initiative.
- Takes responsibility and works under minimum supervision.

Summarizing, a program evaluator should:

- Be knowledgeable about current standards in his/her field and ABET Criteria and policies and procedures.
- Have strong oral and written communication skills.
- Be professional in appearance and actions.
- Listen well, be open-minded and fair, and communicate clearly with the team.
- Be a team player.
- Do his/her part in completing required documents in a timely, complete manner.

As you prepare for your visit, keep these competencies in mind and allow them to guide you in your preparation.

Please take a moment and review the [Program Evaluator Competency Model](#). This document contains more details on the application of the competencies and desired proficiencies during a campus visit.

Note: There is also a [Team Chair Competency Model](#), which is used to select, train, and evaluate Team Chairs.



B. WHAT IS THE PEV PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS?

ABET has a strong commitment to continuous improvement. PEV performance appraisals:

- Evaluate against the PEV Competency Model.
- Clearly communicate to the PEV what is expected.
- Serve as a vehicle for professional development.
- Serve as a tool for continuous improvement.

Team Chair Appraisal of the Program Evaluator

Your qualifications were reviewed against the [PEV Competency Model](#) as part of your selection. Your performance will be evaluated as you complete the online training pre-work and Face-to-Face Training by both the support facilitator at your table and your peers at Face-to-Face Training.

Most important, your team chair, institution representatives, and fellow team members will appraise your performance each time you are assigned to an accreditation evaluation team. Think of this as a 360-degree review designed to ensure decisions are not made on a single data point.

The program evaluator performance appraisal forms are based on the competencies. The following are the appraisals that occur after a visit:

- Program Evaluator Appraisal of Program Evaluator (Peer-to-Peer)
- Institution Appraisal of the Program Evaluator
- Institution Appraisal of the Program Evaluator

The following images are an example of the Team Chair Appraisal of the Program Evaluator:

PROGRAM EVALUATOR APPRAISAL
MICHAEL OUDSHOORN

TEAM CHAIR EVALUATION OF PEV

WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK WITH THIS PEV ON ANOTHER VISIT TEAM?

Yes, without reservation
 Yes, but with some reservation
 No

Please check the area(s) of concern you have regarding this PEV.

ORGANIZATION

Preparation
 Time Management
 Responsiveness/Timeliness
 Organization of the evaluation process

PROFESSIONALISM

Showing respect for the institution
 Compliance with ABET's Code of Conduct
 Judgement in evaluating process

CURRENCY

Knowledge of general criteria
 Knowledge of program criteria

Invalid Valid **SUBMIT** **CANCEL**

PROGRAM EVALUATOR APPRAISAL
MICHAEL OUDSHOORN

COMMUNICATION

Information flow to Team Chair
 Team meeting participation
 Exit meeting presentation
 Effectiveness/appropriateness of suggestions
 Clarity of writing

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Ability to effectively interact with program faculty, staff and students
 Bias in assessing program
 Ability to express difficult observations in a diplomatic manner

TEAMWORK

Willingness to listen
 Willingness to help
 Collaboration to reach consensus

OTHER ISSUES

Please describe in detail...

0/50 character minimum (optional)

DO YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON ANY EXEMPLARY ASPECTS OF THE PEV'S PERFORMANCE?

0/50 character minimum (optional)

Invalid Valid **SUBMIT** **CANCEL**

Once performance appraisal forms are completed and submitted, ABET compiles a report for each program evaluator. These reports are sent to the appropriate commission executive committee and your

ABET member society. Reports will identify exceptional performers for recognition and any program evaluators who need remediation or removal.

Both the commission executive committee and your member society will review your performance report. If needed, your society will provide any additional input concerning your performance. Finally, the commission executive committee will make a determination for recognition, remediation, or removal. You will receive your performance appraisal results after the Summer Commission Meeting. This timeline assures programs that performance appraisals do not influence accreditation actions.



A. WHAT TO EXPECT AT FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

The PEVC Face-to-Face Training is a one-and-a-half-day experiential workshop. You will be seated at a table with other PEV Candidates for your commission. You will act as a visit team for the simulated Upper State University program. You will continue your evaluation of the Upper State University program. Please bring a printed copy of your completed online training pre-work (PEV Visit Report and/or PEV Worksheet) AND a portable computer with you. You will use both during the Face-to-Face Training.

Through lectures, exercises, role-plays, and team meetings, you will learn to:

1. Plan an effective, cordial, efficient site visit.
2. Interact with your team during a site visit.
3. Determine which criteria are relevant to determining the accreditation action given a specific situation or evidence.
4. Determine if the simulated program complies with a criterion. If not, determine the level of compliance and the accreditation action.
5. Conduct interviews of faculty, staff, and students.
6. Write an exit statement to the institution.
7. Conduct an informal debrief with the program head and exit meeting with leaders of the institution.

8. Complete Program Evaluator forms.

9. Demonstrate “in practice” effective use of the competencies in the PEV Competency Model.

Day 1 of Face-to-Face Training will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and conclude by 5:30 p.m. at ABET Headquarters in downtown Baltimore, MD. Please bring a portable computer for the Face-to-Face Training. Also, carefully review the material you have covered in the seven (7) modules of Online PEVC Training, paying particular attention to the following:

- Accreditation criteria and terms
- Definition of levels of compliance
- The simulated Upper State University Self-Study Report, including:
 - Transcript analysis
 - PEV Visit Report (and PEV Worksheet if applicable)
 - PEV competencies

There will be a “homework” assignment to be completed as directed on Day 1 of Face-to-Face Training.

Day 2 of Face-to-Face Training will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and conclude by 12:30 p.m. at ABET Headquarters in downtown Baltimore, MD. ABET will make arrangements for you to travel back to the Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport directly after Day 2 of Face-to-Face Training.

Dress is business casual.

The end of training evaluations will be similar to the performance appraisal forms completed by the team chair and fellow program evaluators. All evaluation forms will be completed online at the close of Day 2 Face-to-Face Training. Your evaluation results will be posted on the Training Secure Website a few days after the Face-to-Face Training. You will receive notification when they are posted.