

ABET
Computing Accreditation Commission

**MANUAL OF EVALUATION PROCEDURES
FOR
PROGRAM EVALUATORS**

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FOREWORD

A significant part of the work of the Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) is carried out by teams of program evaluators, each of whom visits an institution that has requested an evaluation of one or more of its computing programs. As a member of such a team, you are acting as a representative of the entire computing community and have a serious responsibility to the profession. Therefore, you are expected to provide:

- A thorough understanding of the *Criteria*, both general and program;
- Careful preparation and skill to determine all important relevant facts;
- Breadth of outlook and understanding of the institution's objectives and the relation of these objectives to the environment in which the institution operates;
- Sound judgment exercised wisely, sympathetically, and objectively;
- Encouragement, where appropriate;
- A full sense of responsibility to professional ideals, the welfare of the institution, the Computing Accreditation Commission, ABET, and yourself, as a professional and an individual.

As a program evaluator (PEV), you should be prepared to give considerable time and effort to your evaluation visit, and in return, you will have a unique experience that is challenging, stimulating, enjoyable, and rewarding.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

ABET has delegated to the Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) the responsibility for evaluating and taking accreditation actions on baccalaureate programs in computing. CAC depends on expert, volunteer, visiting teams to perform the crucially important and fundamental evaluation that is the basis of the CAC/ABET accreditation process.

This Manual of Evaluation Procedures is intended to provide information that will help you participate effectively as a program evaluator representing CAC/ABET, on normal, simultaneous, or joint visits to institutions.

A *normal visit* occurs when the CAC team is evaluating one or more programs and is the only ABET team visiting the institution during the time of the visit. On a joint visit a combined team from CAC and from another ABET commission review the same program for possible accreditation by both commissions. If a CAC team, which is evaluating an institution's computing program(s), and an ABET team from one or more other commissions are on campus at the same time, it is a *simultaneous visit*. Joint visits are normally simultaneous visits, but simultaneous visits need not be joint visits.

The official objectives and criteria for accreditation are included in the document entitled *CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITING COMPUTING PROGRAMS (Criteria)*. The criteria are continuously revised and updated to incorporate appropriate changes suggested by our constituencies. The *Criteria* document can be downloaded from the ABET Web site (<http://www.abet.org/>).

Only programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in computing that prepare graduates to enter a computing profession are within the scope of CAC/ABET. Other degree programs containing small amounts of computing, though they may provide a good educational experience for the student, are not eligible for CAC/ABET accreditation. CAC/ABET will always give sympathetic consideration to well-considered experimentation and educational innovation in computing programs. Such programs must demonstrate outcomes that meet or exceed the intent of the *Criteria*.

The objective of this manual is to provide you with sufficient background, reference material, and operational information to function effectively as a CAC program evaluator (PEV). The following sections provide a detailed overview of how you should prepare for a campus visit, what activities you are expected to carry out during the visit, and what reports you should submit after the visit.

1.1 ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT

When you agree to serve as a PEV on a visiting team, you make a serious commitment to do the pre-visit work, participate in the campus visit, gather and analyze data, and prepare timely reports. You should agree to serve only if you can keep this commitment. Some of this work must be done prior to the visit. Experienced PEVs typically spend the equivalent of one week, spread over a four- to five-week period, on activities associated

with the campus visit.

Upon being assigned to a visiting team, most PEVs have found it helpful to inform their supervisors of their planned participation in a CAC accreditation visit without identifying the institution to be visited. This may result in a greater appreciation of your commitment, and possibly lay the groundwork for assistance with conflicting time demands. Because it is very difficult to obtain an effective replacement on short notice, once set, the visit date should not be changed.

1.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCRETION

As a member of a CAC visiting team, you are participating in a confidential process and will handle sensitive material. ABET has found that the credibility of CAC accreditation is significantly improved when the review process is conducted with a high level of confidentiality and discretion. The sensitivity of any accreditation action makes it essential to maintain a high level of confidentiality.

The information supplied by the institution is for the confidential use of CAC and its agents. This information cannot be disclosed to any others without the specific written authorization of the institution. All discussions of the visiting team are kept confidential within the team. It is permissible to use email to communicate among team members.

Although you will have an opportunity to share your general impressions of the program's strengths and weaknesses with officials at the institution, you should never discuss your recommendations for a specific accreditation action with anyone except other members of your team or the two CAC editors assigned to review the team's findings. It is possible that the final CAC accreditation action will be different from the team's recommendation. The final accreditation action can be made only by the CAC. When the final CAC action differs significantly from the recommendations of individual team members, the reasons will be explained by the CAC, as appropriate.

You should not become a consultant to an institution you have visited until after the next CAC accreditation visit is made to that institution. A major reason is that you may be needed if the institution appeals the ABET accreditation action or takes other steps later.

ABET annually publishes an official list of accredited programs. ABET volunteers should reference this list when outside inquiries are made. There must be no comment given about any program that is not on the accredited list. ABET does not list the names of the programs evaluated that did not receive accreditation, nor is there any indication of interim evaluations. This information is considered to be strictly CONFIDENTIAL.

1.3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In making assignments to visiting evaluation teams, an effort is made to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. The most frequent conflicts arise from a potential evaluator having worked for or having a family member attend an institution that is scheduled to be visited. However, there are other possible conflicts. If you think there may be a potential conflict, contact your team chair as soon as possible. For a detailed discussion see <http://www.abet.org/rules-of-procedure/#code-conduct>.

2.0 TIMELINE OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

An evaluation visit is made only at the request of an institution. Although important, the campus visit is only one step in a long and complex accreditation process. To understand this process completely, you need to relate the events of the campus visit to all others in the accreditation cycle.

Each fall, information relative to the CAC/ABET accreditation process is sent to regionally accredited institutions in the United States that offer baccalaureate programs in computing. Requests for evaluating computing programs for accreditation (RFEs) are accepted until the end of January. At this time, each candidate program is confirmed to be within the CAC's recognized scope, and any special factors relating to a visit are identified. The institution is notified of the acceptance of its RFE and preparation for the visit begins.

The following are major events in the typical accreditation cycle.

February-June	The institution completes the Self-Study Report, following the format of the CAC Self-Study Questionnaire.
April-July	The team chairs are selected, and institutions are asked if there is a perceived conflict of interest with the potential team chair. The team chair sets the visit dates with the institution. CSAB assigns the program evaluators. The team chair confirms with the institution that they do not have a perceived conflict of interest or other objection with any of the program evaluators. The team chair also confirms with the program evaluators that they can serve on the team on the given dates.
July-August	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The institution mails copies of the self-study, catalog(s), and student transcripts to team members.2. Pre-visit preparation begins (See section 5.0 below.)

September-November	Visit
December-February	Two CAC Editors and the CAC Adjunct Accreditation Director review the forms and Draft Statement submitted by the Team Chair. After editing, the Draft Statement is forwarded to the institution.
January-April	The institution has 30 days to exercise its right of Due Process by responding to the Draft Statement, correcting any errors of fact or observation, and certifying any post-visit remedial actions.
February-May	The Team Chair prepares a draft Final Statement that includes the original Draft Statement to which a due process response analysis is added, and any necessary changes to the Draft Statement are made. The draft Final Statement is edited, and a final version is sent to the commission.
July	At its annual summer meeting, CAC votes on the final accreditation action.
August	The accreditation action and the Final Statement, incorporating the original findings, changes since the visit and due process, and any continuing concerns for future evaluation, are sent to the institution.

3.0 THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

CAC/ABET has published criteria used to evaluate programs in computing. The criteria are designed to ensure that an accredited program adequately prepares graduates for entry into the computing profession. The *Criteria* is composed of two parts: General Criteria and Program Criteria. The General Criteria are applicable to all programs accredited by CAC. All programs accredited by CAC must demonstrate that they satisfy the General Criteria. The Program Criteria provide discipline-specific accreditation criteria. Programs must show that they satisfy all of the specific Program Criteria implied by the program name.

ABET expects the team to apply the *Criteria* flexibly and to be satisfied that the quality of the program satisfies the *Criteria*. The goal of ABET is to accredit programs that produce graduates with a background at least as comprehensive as the one specified in the *Criteria*. ABET has no desire to dictate detailed course content or coverage requirements.

Each team member should carefully read and understand the statements in each criterion.

Careful preparation must be made to be sure that any comments or recommendations made during the visit or in the visit report are consistent with the published *Criteria*. Personal opinions must not be introduced, since they may change the stated meaning or purpose of the *Criteria*. Perhaps the most difficult part of the visit process is the application of the published *Criteria* to the program being evaluated. Subsequent sections of this manual consider some of the major problems that may be encountered and indicate how some of these problems may be handled.

4.0 TEAM ORGANIZATION AND VISIT ARRANGEMENTS

Normally, the chair of a visiting team is a current or past member of the CAC. The team chair acts as the official CAC/ABET representative to the institution being visited and assumes responsibility for arranging the visit; confirming the other team members; working with the institution to make sure all the necessary information is available for evaluation by the team; leading the visit; and finalizing all reports for the team, including the Draft Statement for Review and Comment to the institution, and the Short Form.

By the start of the visit, PEVs must be familiar with the Self-Study and all related literature supplied by the institution. If applicable, PEVs must also review any previous reports and actions sent to the institution as a result of a previous CAC evaluation. When available, this material is supplied by the ABET staff to the team chair who in turn distributes it to PEVs.

The team chair must plan to attend the annual CAC accreditation meeting, usually held in July, where all findings are discussed and accreditation actions are decided. At this meeting, each team chair presents the reports of programs that have received a recommendation for an interim visit, interim report, a show cause, or a not to accredit action. A thorough, open discussion of the program follows, and the team chair is given the opportunity to explain the accreditation recommendations made by the visiting team. In cases where an NGR, VE, or RE (see Section 8.0) has been recommended, commissioners review the Final Statements to make certain the actions are consistent.

4.1 TYPES OF VISITS

There are different visit formats designed to be responsive to special circumstances or needs. The most common is a general visit, which may be joint or simultaneous with another commission team. Another is a focused visit. A focused visit concentrates on shortcomings from the previous evaluation. CAC/ABET and CSAB carefully select a balanced team to include program evaluators with diversified backgrounds, so that the computing program(s) can be evaluated thoroughly and fairly. Modifications of the normal visiting team complement (one team chair and one PEV per program, with a minimum of two PEVs) may be necessary for joint visits, focused visits, or when a single program offers several real (or implied) options through alternative course requirements, alternative elective choices, or alternative satellite campus locations. In such cases, the team chair has the responsibility to ensure adequate evaluation of all curricular

possibilities within multiple programs and at all permissible campus locations. If a larger team is deemed necessary, the team chair should discuss the situation with the institution and with the CAC Chair for agreement on the total number of PEVs required to ensure an objective and thorough evaluation.

4.2 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Program evaluators, in consultation with the team chair about meeting times and transportation during the visit, must make their own travel arrangements. When making travel plans for a visit, the program evaluator should use the ABET travel agency (see the Travel Policy and Booking Instructions on the ABET web site at <http://www.abet.org/travel-information/>). Arrival should be planned for the day before the visit to discuss and develop an action plan. Usually the team arrives on Saturday evening, reviews course display materials and possibly some facilities on Sunday afternoon, holds Sunday morning and evening organizational meetings, and conducts the campus visit on Monday and Tuesday. Normally, the campus visit lasts two and a half days. Travel arrangements should allow enough time to complete all campus activities, hold an exit meeting on the last day, which may last until 4:00 p.m., and leave adequate time to travel to the airport and proceed through security.

4.3 TRAVEL EXPENSES AND REIMBURSEMENT

The travel agency recommended by ABET Headquarters or other travel source may be used to make airline reservations, but ABET prefers that you use the ABET agency. When making your travel arrangements through the ABET agency, free travel insurance is included when billed through ABET's travel credit account. Also, in case of an emergency, the ABET travel agency will handle ticket cancellations or modifications for the tickets it issues. The CAC asks that attention be paid to timing restrictions and promotional offers that will provide the lowest available discounted fares. Purchase your tickets at least three weeks in advance, as otherwise reimbursement limitations may apply. All extraordinary expenses, such as car rentals, should be coordinated with the team chair. In general, car rentals should be avoided unless needed for practical reasons, and normally only one rental should be used for the team. Costs associated with emergency changes in plans are reimbursed by CAC, along with travel and living expenses. Team members who are employees of government agencies or state universities are encouraged to request a government rate at hotels or motels. You should review the ABET travel policy on the ABET web site to be familiar with the travel policies.

ABET has an on-line tool for volunteers to use in submitting expense reimbursement reports at <http://www.abet.org/submit-expense-reports/>. When using this tool, you will enter detailed information about the expenses incurred while traveling on your ABET visit (instructions are available on the website). Enter each of the expenses for which you seek reimbursement, and, when done, upload a .pdf file containing a copy of your receipts. The team chair will be notified for approval of your expenses. An electronic copy of the ABET travel expense form is also available on the ABET web site if you

prefer to submit a hard copy of your expense report. The team chair will not approve travel expenses until all visit forms (e.g., Program Evaluation Report) have been received. While traveling on ABET business, team members are covered by two blanket ABET insurance policies, one for professional liability and one for accidents. ABET does not reimburse program evaluators for any trip insurance premiums.

4.4 TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Program evaluators act as reporters to record information about the institution and its programs, and as evaluators to interpret that information to help CAC and the institution assess the program's strengths and weaknesses. A thorough and thoughtful review of all material contained in the institution's Self-Study and any other documentation supplied directly to you is necessary for a professional evaluation.

A CAC visit is designed to:

- Assess, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, factors that cannot be documented in a written questionnaire; e.g., the intellectual atmosphere, morale of the faculty, administration, support staff, caliber of the student body, character of student work performed, and other intangible factors.
- Help the institution assess the strengths and weaknesses of its computing program(s).
- Examine in detail the local institutional environment and, most importantly, the required display of course materials, student work, and assessment materials compiled by the institution.

Program evaluators are also responsible for validating the Self-Study material and evaluating the overall quality of the program by reviewing course materials, by interviewing faculty, students and administrative staff, and by visiting laboratory and other support facilities. It is important to manage the limited time available to assure a complete and fair program evaluation.

During the initial Sunday meeting of the visiting team, the chair will make or confirm assignments given to each PEV. By noon of the final day of the visit, the team should have reached a consensus on its recommended accreditation action (see Section 8.0) for each program being evaluated. **Members of the team must never disclose this recommendation to institution faculty, administrative staff, or students.**

During the visit, each PEV will prepare a Program Evaluator Report (PER) and Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW). Parts of these two reports must be completed prior to the visit, and the reports are updated as the visit progresses. At the end of the visit, these completed reports are electronically submitted to the team chair. Program evaluators, in consultation with the team chair, also prepare a Program Audit Form (PAF) before the exit meeting, and the team chair leaves this completed form with the institution (usually

the dean or department chair) as a record of the shortcomings found during the visit.

Following the visit, the institution has seven days to correct any errors of fact reported by the team at the conclusion of the visit. Within 30 days after the conclusion of the visit, the team chair will complete and forward to ABET Headquarters the Draft Statement for Review and Comment and other necessary forms. Two CAC editors, drawn from the CAC Executive Committee, will then review and finalize the Draft Statement and forward it to ABET headquarters after which it is sent to the institution. The institution is then given 30 days to exercise its right to due process and respond to the report's findings. The institution's response should describe all remedial actions that the institution has taken in response to observed deficiencies, weaknesses, or concerns.

This Due Process Response is sent to the team chair, to the first editor, and to ABET Headquarters. The team chair may forward a copy to each of the PEVs for evaluation and comment. Using this information, the team chair and editors prepare a draft Final Statement to the institution to be discussed for final accreditation action at the CAC annual commission meeting in July. Following this meeting, ABET prepares the Final Statement for mailing to the institution in August.

5.0 PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Several weeks before the scheduled visit you will receive, from the institution, copies of the institution's catalog, the completed Self-Study, and a representative sample of transcripts of graduates from the most recent class.

1. Before the visit, download the current version of the forms that you will use for the visit from the ABET web site (<http://www.abet.org/accreditation-criteria-policies-documents/>). This includes deliverables, such as the Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW), Program Evaluator Report (PER), and Program Audit Form (PAF), and additional forms that may prove helpful during the visit.
2. PEVs should start completing the Program Evaluator Report (PER) and the Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW) based on the analysis of the materials sent to you by the institution. Although your analysis may change based on the campus visit and your initial responses may need to be modified, your team chair will use your PER and PEW as a starting point for discussions to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Although some of the information for the PER and PEW will have to be gathered during the visit, you should determine as much information as possible from the materials that the institution sends you. If additional information is needed in your pre-visit analysis, you should ask the team chair to contact the institution to request additional information. It is important to resolve as many issues as possible before the visit or to arrange for observations or interviews to obtain needed information during the visit.

- Once the pre-visit analysis has been completed, your Program Evaluator Report (PER) and Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW) should summarize strengths and weaknesses of the program. If you are unable to reach a conclusion from existing information, place a "?" in the appropriate location on the form to indicate questions or issues to be investigated and resolved later. Typically the team chair requests a copy of your PEW prior to the visit. In addition, a list of questions for discussion at the Sunday evening team meeting and lists of questions for various people in the program should be prepared prior to the visit.
3. If you are the only PEV for a program, prepare a Program Audit Form (PAF) and hand it to the Team Chair before the exit meeting. The team chair leaves the PAF with the institution. If you are one of two PEVs on a visit, you will be asked to prepare all or part of the PAF. You may start to write portions of the form before the visit, but the final wording will be completed during the visit.

5.1 CONFERENCE CALLS

Usually team chairs hold pre-visit conference calls with the team to discuss both the logistics of the visit and pre-visit observations. By the time of a call, program evaluators should have completed the Program Evaluator Report (PER) and Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW) to the extent possible. The team chair may request that one or more of these forms to be sent before a conference call. If a conference call determines that additional information is needed, the team chair can contact the institution before the visit for additional information or clarification. Programs appreciate learning of questions or issues you might have in advance of the visit. Your visit will go more smoothly with fewer surprises if potential shortcomings can be identified before the visit.

6.0 CAMPUS VISIT

The team's visit to the campus is the most important activity of the entire accreditation process. Usually the true status of the program comes into view at this time. This section provides an overview of the important activities that must be completed during the visit and indicates some of the techniques that can be helpful in applying the *Criteria*.

6.1 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

As described above, many team chairs hold pre-visit conference calls to discuss both the logistics of the visit and pre-visit observations. Nevertheless, the team will hold a planning meeting sometime, usually on Sunday, before the first official day on campus. Since the visit requires two days of very intensive activity, it is very important that the assignments of each team member are clearly understood. There will always be a number of specific questions that must be answered and program areas that must be observed to see how well the activities described in the institution's Self-Study are actually implemented.

This planning session should be used to review arrangements, schedules, and requirements associated with the visit, such as meeting times, places, and transportation to campus. It also is used to discuss the pre-visit analysis completed by each program evaluator using the Program Evaluator Report (PER) and the Program Evaluator Worksheet (PEW), and to develop a plan of action to gather the information necessary to resolve issues of particular interest to the team.

This first meeting also should be used to assign or confirm areas of responsibility and assign specific tasks to each program evaluator. Each assignment should specify individual responsibility for parts of the computing program (when only a single program is evaluated), supporting areas (library, computer center, etc.), possibly additional curriculum requirements (mathematics, science, information systems environment), and possibly general education (humanities, social science, arts and communications).

6.2 VISIT ACTIVITIES

The pre-visit analysis will have answered many of the quantitative aspects that must be evaluated for accreditation. The visit enables team members to clarify questions about some quantitative items; more importantly, it gives the team an opportunity to evaluate non-quantitative items (e.g. faculty morale). You will find the schedule to be demanding. To conduct a satisfactory visit, you must work efficiently through a well-organized plan.

The final review and evaluation of each criterion must be completed during the visit. The pre-visit analysis is supplemented by:

- On-site review and evaluation of the display of course materials
- On-site review of the assessment materials
- Interviews with faculty
- Interviews with students
- Visits to, observations and evaluations of offices, classrooms, laboratory and computing facilities
- Visits to the library and other support facilities
- Evaluation of supporting disciplines (if needed)

6.3 DISPLAY OF PROGRAM MATERIALS

The institution will have prepared and displayed materials for the courses in the program. These materials will include detailed syllabi, textbooks, copies of handouts, notes, examinations, and other instructional materials supplied to the students, along with samples of student work (exams, homework, reports, etc.) of high, medium, and low quality. The course materials will be available throughout the visit. These materials will provide information that will help the team assess the qualitative aspects of the

curriculum, such as the depth and breadth of coverage, the use of appropriate prerequisites, and appropriate coverage of the core materials. Usually the course materials are organized by course, but at the institution's discretion the materials may instead be organized by student outcome.

Also included in the display will be assessment materials. These should be examined to determine whether the program has adequately documented program educational objectives, student outcomes, processes for determining the extent to which each outcome has been met, and the use of assessment/evaluation results in continuous improvement of the program.

In some cases you may have received some of the display materials for the courses and assessment electronically for evaluation before the visit. However, there will usually be questions that will need to be resolved during the visit. For example, you may need to review team projects or specific textbooks.

6.4 FACULTY INTERVIEWS

For a small program, the team should interview all faculty members who teach computing courses in the program. For a larger program, a subset of the faculty may be selected. This selection should include a balance of junior and senior faculty members and should include those who can answer questions raised in the pre-visit analysis. In addition, faculty members who serve in such roles as curriculum committee chairperson, assessment committee chairperson, chief advisor, research coordinator, computing facilities coordinator, and laboratory coordinator should be included in the selection. Generally, at least eight to ten faculty should be interviewed. Although most interviews are one-on-one, it may be convenient to meet other faculty members as a group. For example, you may wish to meet with the whole curriculum committee or assessment committee as well as individual faculty members. To be effective, most faculty interviews should take approximately 30 minutes.

The faculty interviews should be conducted carefully, professionally, and as objectively as possible. If the interview is felt to be a threat, either to the individual or the department, the faculty member will most likely be defensive or non-responsive. The purpose of this interview is to gather and evaluate facts and information related to the *Criteria*. The team is not there to judge or comment on any specific individual(s). No faculty member is ever quoted by name in any report or Draft Statement for Review and Comment. The information conveyed by the faculty member will be used in the most constructive way possible. Therefore, the faculty member should be made to feel free to respond openly to all questions, such as – “if you were the program chair, what would you change first?” The PEVs comportment and attitude in these interviews will significantly affect the faculty member's feelings about the validity of the CAC/ABET accreditation process. Hence, it is very important that no signs of bias or pre-conceptions are shown.

6.5 STUDENT INTERVIEWS

A small group of at least eight to ten junior- or senior-level students should be interviewed in a separate meeting room, usually near the end of the first day of the visit, for approximately 45 minutes. An alternative is to request time in one of the scheduled classes. However, if this is done, care must be taken not to offend the instructor by this “invasion” of his or her classroom. The interview with students should be conducted without any institutional personnel present.

In either case, the session should begin with an explanation of the accreditation process and the reason for the meeting. Assurances that no one will be identified by name in any report will encourage an open discussion.

Students should be encouraged to give their impressions of the aspects of the computing program related to the *Criteria*, including advising, the faculty, the curriculum, and the computing and library facilities. They should also be asked to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Care should be taken not to cite comments from students as the basis for any significant finding. Problems identified by students should be corroborated by other observations before finding a shortcoming with respect to a criterion.

6.6 LABORATORY AND COMPUTING FACILITIES

The pre-visit analysis provides a preliminary assessment of these facilities, but the critical aspects of evaluation depend on the knowledge the team gains during the visit. There is no better way to determine the adequacy of laboratory and/or computing facilities than to visit them while they are in use, to discuss them with the faculty and students who use them, and to interview the computing staff members who maintain them.

Equipment should not be characterized as “obsolete” simply because it is older than equipment currently on the market. Older equipment that is well maintained and meets the objectives of the program may be completely acceptable. The only requirement for equipment is that it be adequate for the students to do the work that is expected of them to achieve the program outcomes.

The tour of the facilities along with discussions with students and other appropriate personnel will help in the evaluation of the degree of support the institution gives to the program. It is important to determine if there are adequate provisions for repair and maintenance of laboratory, test, and computing equipment; if there is a plan for updating equipment regularly; and if there are adequate technicians, systems programmers, and other support personnel to operate the facilities properly.

6.7 LIBRARY

Frequently, a pre-visit analysis of the library holdings may be made using the on-line catalog. However, one of the PEVs may be assigned the task of specifically evaluating the adequacy of the library in supporting the program, usually interviewing the

institution's head librarian. The other team members can assist in this evaluation by asking the faculty and students interviewed if the library is meeting the program's needs.

6.8 SUPPORT DISCIPLINES

As a member of the team you may be assigned to investigate one or more of the support disciplines. Either the dean or the department chair should be asked by the CAC team chair to make the appropriate arrangements.

6.9 EVENING OF THE FIRST DAY

Normally, the team will have a Monday evening dinner and a private meeting. The order in which these take place will be up to the team chair. Often the team meeting will be held in a secluded area in the hotel lounge or team chair's room. The team members will review their findings for the day. The list of problem areas enumerated at the organizational meeting the previous evening will be reviewed against the day's findings. Unresolved and newly found problem areas will be assigned to team members for investigation the next morning. For some problem areas the team chair may work with the assigned PEV.

The evening is also used to complete sections of the visit report form and to write the shortcomings that go into the Program Audit Form (PAF) and the statement for the exit meeting on the second day.

6.10 MORNING OF THE SECOND DAY

On the morning of the second day, the team reviews and resolves all outstanding problem areas. At a private working luncheon, the final accreditation recommendation will be decided, and statements will be prepared by each team member for the exit meeting. The PEV(s) will complete the Program Audit Form (PAF), which includes a script that they will read at the exit meeting. This script will be used by the team chair to create the Draft Statement for Review and Comment of the team's findings, and the script must conform to the format specified in the Draft Statement Template.

If you are the only PEV for a program, then your script for the exit meeting will be the complete section for your program in the Draft Statement, including the general program characteristics, strengths, shortcomings, and observations. If you are one of two PEVs for a program, then the team chair will designate your part (if any) in the exit meeting.

You should expect to have a practice session in which everyone will read his or her script just as it will be said during the exit meeting. A Program Audit Form (PAF) for each program also must be prepared as directed by the team chair. The team chair will leave it with the dean or other institutional representative. **The recommended accreditation action is never reported at the exit meeting.** Electronic copies of your completed PEW, PER, and PAF should be given to the team chair during this working meeting.

6.11 EXIT MEETING

Sometime during the afternoon of the last day, the visiting team conducts an exit meeting with the President/Chancellor of the institution and any other institutional representatives that the President chooses, usually the Provost or Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of the relevant School or College, and the chair(s) of the computing program(s).

The CAC team chair presents an overview, and then each team member reports on his/her area of responsibility by reading the script that is part of the PAF. It is most important not to let ordinary courtesy and congeniality leave a false impression that "all is well" if, in fact, the program has deficiencies, weaknesses, or concerns.

7.0 AFTER THE VISIT

The team chair will use the information from the PER and PAF, together with the team's conclusions about an appropriate accreditation action, to file a Short Form report with ABET Headquarters. This report will indicate the recommended accreditation action and indicate that the visit is complete.

Following the visit, if an extension was granted by the team chair, PEVs complete the PER and PEW. Because of severe time constraints, it is very important to complete and submit these reports electronically to the team chair by a date specified by the team chair, but usually no later than seven days after the visit. The institution also has seven days to submit additional information to the team chair to correct any errors of fact reported by the team at the conclusion of the visit. This information will be considered in preparing the Draft Statement for Review and Comment to the institution, as if it were available at the time of the visit.

Travel Expense Reports should be completed on-line as described in Section 4.3 above and submitted for review by the Team Chair within 10 working days after travel. If a hard copy of the expense report is used, forward to the team chair as soon as possible, and the team chair will then submit it to ABET Headquarters for reimbursement. If you use a hard copy be sure to download the latest form from the ABET web site. Your report should include receipts and other documentation, as required. **Expense reports submitted more than 60 days after completion of travel cannot be reimbursed.**

7.1 DRAFT STATEMENT TO THE INSTITUTION

The team chair will prepare the Draft Statement for Review and Comment to the institution by integrating the individual exit meeting scripts and editing them into a single document. This Draft Statement, after suitable editing by CAC editors, will be sent to the institution. It includes the findings of the visiting team and CAC/ABET opinion of each program's strengths and weaknesses.

The information presented in the Draft Statement must provide the institution with a

summary of how well the program being evaluated satisfies the CAC *Criteria*. The Draft Statement to the institution does not indicate the accreditation action that will be recommended by the visiting team or the CAC editors. It must be written, however, so that the information in the statement supports the recommended accreditation action. ABET allows the institution to respond to any findings that are thought to contain errors of fact or observation. It also allows the institution to describe any substantive remedial changes that have occurred since the visit.

The team chair forwards the Draft Statement to the first editor for evaluation and comment. This editor is responsible for making each statement correct, consistent, and complete. The editor will depend on the information in each program evaluator's Program Evaluator Report and communication with the team chair. Note that the editors do not have access to the institution's Self-Study, so your Program Evaluator Report should not cite pages in the Self-Study but should explicitly describe the observations and facts that lead to your findings. After the first editor has completed his or her work, the Draft Statement is forwarded to the second editor for additional editing and then to the CAC adjunct accreditation director. After the editing process is completed, the Draft Statement is sent to the institution for its "Due Process" response.

7.2 DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE

After reading and evaluating the contents of the Draft Statement, the institution may accept the statement without comment, or may submit a due process response indicating either or both

1. That the statement contains factual or observational errors. A detailed description of the perceived errors must be provided in the response.
2. That one or more of the shortcomings described in the statement have been addressed by a subsequent remedial action. A detailed description of how the problem was addressed, together with necessary documentation, must be provided.

A due process response is sent to the team chair, the editors, and ABET Headquarters. When appropriate, the team chair sends copies of the response to the other team members with a request for their comments. After all input has been collected from the program evaluators, the team chair prepares a Final Statement to the institution. This Final Statement is forwarded the editors and then to CAC for review and a decision of the accreditation action.

8.0 THE ACCREDITATION ACTIONS

During July the CAC meets to decide the accreditation action for all of the programs evaluated during the preceding year. All members of CAC (including all team chairs) receive a copy of the Final Statement to the institution, prepared after completion of the due process procedure. During this meeting, the team chair must be prepared to make an

oral presentation to the CAC on the findings during the visit, the team's analysis of submitted materials, and the team's recommended accreditation action(s) on the program(s).

There are nine accreditation actions that can be taken at the July meeting. They are:

NGR Accredit the program for six years and revisit

The program satisfies each criterion in the *Criteria*. On the next visit, the only actions normally permissible are SCV, SCR, IV, IR, or NGR. The revisit must be preceded by a new Self-Study.

IR Accredit the program for two years, with the requirement to submit a report at the end of the first year

The program is accredited for a period of two years with the proviso that at the end of the first year, the institution will submit a report to the CAC describing actions taken in response to the weaknesses identified in the Final Statement to the institution.

Based on the report, if the CAC finds that any criterion is not satisfied, it may change the action at that point to SCR or SCV. If the CAC finds that any weakness exists, an IR or IV action is required (if there is no deficiency). If the CAC finds that all weaknesses have been adequately addressed, it may recommend an extension of accreditation until the next general review (RE).

IV Accredit the program for two years with a revisit in one year

This is similar to the IR, except that the nature of the weaknesses warrants observation by a team, rather than the review of a written report. A VE action is awarded instead of an RE if all weaknesses have been adequately addressed. The visit occurs in the second cycle after the cycle of the evaluation yielding the IV action.

SCR Accreditation is extended for two years, with the requirement to submit a report at the end of the first year

Ordinarily, the Show Cause action is applied when a deficiency is observed as a result of evaluating a currently accredited program. A program having a deficiency, whose last accreditation action was an NGR, an IR, or an IV would ordinarily receive a Show Cause rather than a Not To Accredit (NA) action. Show Cause is not intended as an action that would be taken in cases where neglect or improper attention to the criteria requirements is the source of the deficiency. The program is accredited for a period of two years with the proviso that at the end of the first year, the institution will submit a report to the CAC describing actions taken in response to the deficiencies and weaknesses identified

in the Final Statement to the institution. The SCR action is only applied when remediation and resolution of any deficiencies can be completely and successfully verified through a report.

SCV Accreditation is extended for two years and a visit should be scheduled in one year (two years from the previous evaluation)

This is similar to the SCR. In general, deficiencies warrant observation by a team, rather than the review of a written report

NA Not to accredit (or reaccredit) the program

The program cannot be accredited, since it has a deficiency relative to the *Criteria*. The program may be a new program or one that received an SCR or SCV accreditation action at the last evaluation.

RE Accredit the program until the next general review

This action is taken after an IR report is evaluated and no deficiencies or weaknesses are identified.

VE Accredit the program until the next general review

This action is taken after an IV visit and no deficiencies or weaknesses are identified.

SE Accredit the program until the next general review

This action is taken after an SCR or SCV and no deficiencies or weaknesses are identified.

After hearing the team chair's presentation, the CAC votes an accreditation action for the program. This action is then forwarded to ABET.

The final step of the accreditation process is to edit the Final Statement to the institution that reports and explains CAC/ABET's final accreditation action. This statement is attached to a letter from the CAC Chair to the institution.

If the accreditation action is "Not to Accredite" (NA), the institution may appeal, submit a request for reconsideration, or request an immediate revisit. It should be noted that only NA actions may be appealed in accordance with the Appeal Policy located in the Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual (<http://www.abet.org/DisplayTemplates/DocsHandbook.aspx?id=3146>).