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# **Preparing Interim Reports: 2021-22 Accreditation Cycle**

*Presented by the*

**Engineering Technology Accreditation  
Commission**

*to*

**Institutional Representatives**

February 17, 2021

# WELCOME!

## We will be recording today's webinar

- The recording and the slides will be available on ABET's public website
- All Institutional Representatives will receive a follow up email with the link to the recording and slides and instructions to their location on the ABET public website.

## Q&A

- You have opportunity to ask questions throughout the webinar using the Q&A button at the bottom of your Zoom screen.
- Chat function is disabled.

We will not be providing technical support during today's webinar. Recordings will be available after webinars are completed.

If we are unable to address all your question due to time constraints, please follow up by email to presenters.



# Agenda

- 1) Interim Review Descriptions (Types)
- 2) RFE Updates and Guidance for Writing Reports
- 3) The Process of Review
- 4) Expectations and Examples
- 5) Draft and Final Statement

Bonus: Interim Reviews with Visits

Our mutual goal is to have a successful and productive accreditation review!

# 2021-2022 ETAC Executive Committee & Today's Presenters



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# Interim Reviews: Description, Types, and Process

# Description of Interim Reviews

An Interim Review addresses shortcomings (D, W, and C) remaining from the last ETAC accreditation action.

- Programs submit a focused report addressing only unresolved shortcomings from the previous review (NOT a comprehensive self-study report addressing all criteria).
- Evaluation is based on the question:  
***“Have remaining shortcomings identified in the last review been resolved?”***
- Interim Reviews may cite new findings if they become evident in the course of conducting an interim review

# Interim Review Types

This presentation focuses on the most common review type:

- Interim Review – Report
  - Institution has programs with prior accreditation actions of Interim Report or Show Cause Report.

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If requested, other types of interim reviews involving a visit component can be addressed at the end of the presentation:

- Interim Review – Visit
  - Institution has programs with prior accreditation actions of Interim Visit or Show Cause Visit.
  - Institution may have new programs that require a visit.
- Interim Report and Visit Reviews
  - Institution has programs that don't require a visit (IR/SCR actions) BUT also have programs requiring a visit (IV/SCV actions and/or new programs).

# Interim Review Process

- ✓ • Institution submits Request for Evaluation **by January 31<sup>st</sup>** (about 6 months after previous final accreditation action).
- ETAC assigns Team Chair in April or May.
- Institution submits Interim Report **by July 1<sup>st</sup>** via AMS
- TC reviews report, may contact institution during the review for clarification, and writes draft statement.
- Draft statement created by TC in late August and it is reviewed by Editors 1 and 2 and ETAC adjunct accreditation director.



# Interim Review Process (continued)

- Institution receives draft statement at the end of September or early October via the ABET AMS.
- Institution has 30 days to submit due-process response.
- TC reviews response and the creates a final statement, which again goes through the editing chain.
- Post-30-day due-process information may be submitted only if a 30-day due-process responses is received and TC agrees.
  - If so, revised final statement goes through editing chain again.
- Commission votes on accreditation action during July meeting.
- The institution is contacted when the final statement is available via ABET AMS.



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# Request for Evaluation (RFE) and Guidance on Writing Reports

# Request for Evaluation (RFE)

- All programs under interim review (IR, IV, SCR or SCV) must use criteria from same accreditation year. If there are new programs, they will be evaluated using criteria for the current year.
- **Institution should specify the criteria year to be used for their review (original or newer) in the RFE**
- Thus, the institution can use either the current criteria (2021-22) OR
  - For a first cycle IR or SCR, the relevant old criteria (2019-20) can be selected.
  - For a second cycle IR, the relevant old criteria (2017-18) can be selected.
- See <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/>
- In all cases, the **current** Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual (APPM) are used.
- RFE can be modified if you wish to change the criteria year.

# Interim (Progress) Report

- A interim report is required for all interim reviews
  - IR and IV actions based on remaining Weakness shortcomings
  - SCR and SCV actions based on remaining Deficiency shortcomings.
- Write a separate report for each program with unresolved shortcomings, even if multiple programs have identical shortcomings.
- Reports are uploaded into AMS by dean or dean's delegate (not by individual programs).
- Submit reports either as separate files or combine reports for all programs into one file before submitting.
- Reports are due July 1<sup>st</sup>

# Guidance on Writing Interim Reports

For each unresolved shortcoming cited in the previous final statement:

- Begin by quoting the shortcoming verbatim from the previous final statement.
- Any remaining Concerns are part of the interim review. They should not be omitted.
- Clearly describe actions taken to resolve the shortcoming. Focus only on the remaining shortcoming elements.
- Provide evidence that the shortcoming has been resolved.
- If the body of evidence is large, include it in an appendix. Only provide what is relevant to the remaining elements of the shortcoming.
- A plan, without action, does not resolve a shortcoming.
- Be thorough but concise. The report does not have to be long; but it should adequately address actions related to the shortcoming.



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# Review Process

# IR and SCR Evaluations

- TC reads the last final statement(s) and focuses on shortcomings ***not resolved*** in previous final statement(s).
- TC will evaluate interim report contents to determine: ***“Have shortcomings identified in the last review been resolved?”***
- TC may contact institutional rep with questions to clarify interim report content
  - For example, “Please explain how the assessment data in Table 3 were obtained.”
  - This is ***not*** an opportunity for the institution to rewrite the interim report – just provide requested clarifications.
- If a ***new*** issue(s) becomes apparent when the TC reviews progress on shortcomings or compliance with the APPM; a new shortcoming may be cited.

# Finding Severity Can Change

**APPM: I.E.8.a.(2)(b) 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.**

- If there has been no remedial action to strengthen compliance with the criterion, the severity of the shortcoming may change, e.g., from Weakness to Deficiency.





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## Expectations and Examples:

What is the TC (or team in an IV or SCV) looking for?

# Example: Criterion 1 Shortcoming

*This criterion states: “Student progress must be monitored to foster success in attaining student outcomes, thereby enabling graduates to attain program educational objectives.” In two of six transcripts reviewed, students took courses without appropriate prerequisites. There is a manual system removing students from courses if prerequisite courses are not in place. However, documentation of approval reasons for taking courses without the appropriate prerequisites was provided for only one of the two students.*

Evidence examples supporting resolution of the shortcoming:

- ✓ A revised process, implemented by the institution to automatically prevent students from registering for classes without proper prerequisites.
- ✓ A revised process that requires documentation of justification for overriding prerequisites.
- ✓ Documentation of implementation of these changes (including samples)

Note that each program is unique and should determine its own appropriate way to resolve shortcomings. The examples are provided to show possible ways to address the shortcoming.

# Example: Criterion 4 Shortcoming

*This criterion states: “The program must regularly use appropriate, documented processes for assessing and evaluating the extent to which the student outcomes are being attained. The results of these evaluations must be systematically utilized as input for the program’s continuous improvement actions.” The program had a detailed plan for assessing eleven student outcomes but changed to five student outcomes two years ago. During this transition, ad hoc assessments were conducted, but resulting data were not evaluated to identify improvement actions.*

Evidence examples to supporting resolution of the shortcoming:

- ✓ Documentation of revised continuous improvement plan, containing
  - ✓ Assessment cycle for each student outcome
  - ✓ Example of assessment data collected showing the level of attainment of student outcomes
- ✓ Results of evaluation of assessment data as input to the continuous improvement process
- ✓ Documentation of improvement actions identified and taken

Note that each program is unique and should determine its own appropriate way to resolve shortcomings. The examples are provided to show possible ways to address the shortcoming.

# Example: Criterion 5(b) Shortcoming

*This criterion states: “5(b). Baccalaureate degree programs will include the application of integral and differential calculus or other mathematics above the level of algebra and trigonometry appropriate to the student outcomes and program educational objectives.” During the visit, there was no evidence identified of the application of mathematics above the level of algebra and trigonometry appropriate to the student outcomes of the program.*

Evidence examples to supporting resolution of the shortcoming:

- ✓ Sample of course presentations or course work demonstrating the applications of mathematics above the level of algebra and trigonometry appropriate to the student outcomes
- ✓ Examples of student work
- ✓ Syllabus of required courses that include the application of mathematics above the level of algebra and trigonometry (along with evidence of material coverage in the course)

Note that each program is unique and should determine its own appropriate way to resolve shortcomings. The examples are provided to show possible ways to address the shortcoming.

# Example: Criterion 7 Shortcoming

*This criterion states: “Modern tools, equipment, computing resources, and laboratories appropriate to the program must be available, accessible, and systematically maintained and upgraded to enable students to attain the student outcomes and to support program needs.” The program uses laboratory equipment and instrumentation that is decades old and not compatible with modern industry equipment. Furthermore, some software applications are over 15 years old and no longer comparable (in interface or capabilities) with software used in industry.*

Examples of evidence to resolve shortcoming:

- ✓ Documentation of upgraded or updated equipment and software
- ✓ Paid invoices verifying that purchases
- ✓ Photographs showing the new equipment in service
- ✓ Student work samples from relevant courses showing the upgraded software and equipment in use
- ✓ A plan without implementation does not count as action or resolve a finding

Note that each program is unique and should determine its own appropriate way to resolve shortcomings. The examples are provided to show possible ways to address the shortcoming.

# Example: APPM Shortcoming

*Section I.E.5.b.(1) Facilities states: "... instructional and learning environments are adequate and are safe for the intended purposes." The university's laboratory safety inspections are not consistently addressed by the program (e.g., chemical labeling). In addition, appropriate safety equipment is not present, e.g., eyewash station in laboratory area. Lack of appropriate safety equipment and processes puts students and staff at risk of injury.*

Examples of evidence to resolve shortcoming:

- ✓ Documentation of process to ensure that lab inspection results are addressed
- ✓ Meeting minutes documenting faculty approval of the new process
- ✓ Photos of labeled chemicals or new equipment
- ✓ Inspection documents demonstrating that safety issues have been addressed

Note that each program is unique and should determine its own appropriate way to resolve shortcomings. The examples are provided to show possible ways to address the shortcoming.



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# Draft and Final Statement Examples

# Draft Statement

- TC will use the previous final statement's shortcoming information to summarize and indicate the final status of each remaining shortcoming.
- Then, the evidence provided in the interim report will be described and evaluated relative to resolving these shortcomings.
- The TC will recommend a new shortcoming status— it remains, is resolved, or changed to a different level of severity.



# Draft Statement Example\*

## Example:

*The previous review noted that there was no evidence in the materials that “respect for diversity and inclusion” has been included in the curriculum. This omission was corroborated during interviews with faculty and students.*

The interim report provided evidence that “respect for diversity” has been added to the syllabus of ET 4023. However, there were no examples of student work or course material documenting that respect for diversity has been included in student learning activities.

The Weakness is unresolved.

\* Shortened for use in this presentation.

# After Receiving Draft Statement

If shortcomings remain in the draft statement, program should submit a 30-day due process response.

If additional time is needed for a complete response, the program should submit a 30-day due process response noting the need for additional time and the intent to provide additional materials as a post 30-day response.

# Due-Process Statement Example A\*

(Weakness is resolved)

30-Day Due-Process Response:

*The program provided examples of student papers that discussed respect for diversity and inclusion in a global environment.*

The Weakness is resolved.

\* Shortened for use in this presentation.

# Due-Process Statement Example B\*

(Weakness is not resolved)

30-Day Due-Process Response:

*The program provided documentation that, although the syllabus for ET 4032 had been changed to include “respect for diversity and inclusion,” the revised course had not been taught to date. Therefore, no evidence of student work was available.*

The Weakness remains unresolved. The ETAC anticipates that the program will provide documentation of student work that demonstrates respect for diversity and inclusion has been included in student learning activities.

\* Shortened for use in this presentation.

# What happens next?

- If Weaknesses and Deficiencies are resolved, the recommended action will be report extended (RE) or show cause extended (SCE). If validated by the ETAC, accreditation will extend until next general review.
- For an interim report, if Weaknesses remain, the recommended accreditation action will be either for another interim review (IR or IV) or potentially a SCR or SCV.
- For a show cause report, if Deficiencies remain, the recommended accreditation action will be not to accredit (NA).
- Commission votes on accreditation actions at the July Summer Commission Meeting.
- Institution is given final statement and accreditation action notification in August.



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# Thank you!

# Questions?

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**Please provide us your feedback for this session**

<https://www.formpl.us/form/1915146004>

- Survey is **only** for the Institutional Representatives
- There are **5 very short** questions
- Poll should begin automatically when this meeting ends
- Link can be opened using any browser or a smart phone

# Slides on Interim Review “with Visits” Follow



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# Interim Reviews with Visits



# Interim Review “with Visits”

## Two Types:

- Interim Reviews – Visit
  - Institutions has only programs with prior Interim Visit actions (IV or SCV).
  - May have new programs to visit.
- Interim Reviews – Report and Visit
  - Institution has programs that don't require a visit (IR/SCR actions)  
and
  - Programs that do require a visit (IV/SCV actions and/or new programs).

# IV and SCV Evaluations

Same review process as IR and SCR evaluations, with these additions:

- PEV(s) may be assigned to visit along with TC (depends on the number of programs involved in review).
- Visit will provide more opportunities for discussion and evidence finding to resolve shortcoming.
- New issues may become obvious during the visit, resulting in additional shortcomings.

# Interim Reviews “with Visit”

- ✓ Institution submits Request for Evaluation by **January 31<sup>st</sup>** (about 6 months after accreditation action).
- Team chair (TC) assigned in April or May.
- TC works with institutional representative to set visit dates.
  - Number of days depends on complexity of evaluation.
- PEV(s) are assigned in May or June.
  - Usually, one PEV per program, but depends on reason for evaluation.
- Institution submits Interim Report by **July 1<sup>st</sup>**.
- Interim report should mention or list additional evidence the team can expect to see during the evaluation.

## Interim Reviews “with Visit” (continued)

- TC and PEV(s) review interim report.
- TC works with institutional representative to arrange evaluation schedule focused on the shortcomings.
- Team evaluates programs, focusing on resolving shortcomings.
- Team reports at an exit meeting.
- Program audit forms (PAF) given to the dean following exit meeting.
- TC writes draft statement.
- Draft statement is reviewed by Editors 1 and 2, and Adjunct.

## Interim Reviews “with Visit” (continued)

- Institution is notified Draft Statement is available in AMS.
- Institution has 30 days to submit due-process response.
- TC writes final statement and sends up through editing chain.
- Post-30-day due-process information may be submitted if a 30-day due process report is submitted; and the TC agrees.
  - Revised final statement goes through editing chain again.
- Commission votes on accreditation actions during July meeting.
- Institution is given final statement and accreditation action notification in August.

# Interim Report Occurring along with Programs Experiencing “a Visit”

Interim evaluations sometimes occur where the institution has **both types of review** occurring, when there are:

- Programs that don't require a visit (IR/SCR actions)  
and
- Programs that do require a visit (IV/SCV actions)  
and/or
- Initial review for new programs

# Interim Report reviews along with “with Visit” reviews (continued)

- Programs requiring interim reports will follow normal interim report procedures.
- The visit for the IV programs or any new programs will following normal visit procedures.
- The schedule for an Interim Visit review will focus on resolving remaining shortcomings and likely be abbreviated.
- If a new program is being reviewed, a general review schedule is followed for that program and its PEV.

# Interim Report reviews along with “with Visit” reviews (continued)

- The team reports on all programs with visit reviews at the Exit Meeting.
  - Programs with reports only (IR or SCR) are not included in the Exit Meeting.
- Institution will receive one Draft Statement for all programs.
- The rest of the process is the same as that of general reviews.