

GUIDELINES ON READINESS REVIEWS (REvs)

This is an internal guideline document to assist Readiness Reviewers to understand the purpose of a REv, the process of conducting a REv, the expected role of a Readiness Reviewer, and a mechanism for communicating the result of a REv.

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I. Introduction

- I.A.1 REvs are intended to determine if a program has sufficient understanding of the accreditation process and applicable criteria to successfully participate in a formal review. In addition, it can reveal major non-compliance issues that may not be resolved in time for the upcoming accreditation cycle.
- I.A.2. Readiness reviewers conduct REvs to help HQ and institutions to determine whether a given program is appropriate to be considered by one or more of the ABET commissions and whether it is ready to initiate the accreditation process and receive an on-site review.
- I.A.3. REvs are conducted by volunteer experts who are *not* current Board of Directors, or Commissioners for the upcoming cycle. Readiness Reviewers can be past commissioners, commissioners in their 5th year (going off commissioners), current/past Board of Delegates, current/past Area Delegations, and past Board of Directors.
- I.A.4. Results of a REv should not be allowed to bias any accreditation review teams. Readiness reviewers are asked not to disclose REv results and details to anyone outside the REv process including team chairs, program evaluators, or editors.
- I.A.5. REvs are not consultative reviews. Readiness Reviewers should not discuss their findings with the relevant institution/program. It is up to the institution/program to release the REv results to any party that is not involved in the REv process.
- I.A.6. Readiness reviewers associated with review of program(s) at a given institution will be considered to have a conflict of interest with regard to subsequent review activities at that institution.
- I.A.7. Adjunct Accreditation Directors are responsible for recommending candidates for conducting REvs, recruiting readiness reviewers, making suggestions on review assignments, providing guidelines, answering questions, collecting feedback, and reviewing consistency of the collected recommendations from readiness reviewers for their primary commission.

II. Timeline for Internal Readiness Review Process

- **Two weeks prior to October 1, the REv submission deadline** – Adjunct Accreditation Directors (adjuncts) seek approval from Commission Executive Committees on review candidates based on the number of readiness review requests HQ anticipates receiving. The Adjuncts will contact the approved candidates for availability.
- **First week of October** – HQ staff finalizes the received Requests for Readiness Review (RREvs).
- **Second week of October** – After consultation with the appropriate adjunct, HQ staff sends assignments with this guideline document to reviewers.
- **November 5** – Reviewers return readiness review worksheets to the adjuncts.
- **November 10-15** (2nd week of November) – Adjuncts send the collected worksheets with their feedback to HQ staff for drafting feedback letters.
- **December 5-10** – HQ staff sends final drafts to Adjuncts for feedback and editing.
- **December 20** – HQ staff sends REv results to institutions.

III. Guidelines for Reviewers:

A REv is a screening process for an institution’s preparedness to have its program(s) reviewed and for the Readiness Review Committee to determine whether a given program is appropriate for one or more of the ABET commissions. It is not a detailed/in-depth analysis process for criteria compliance. However, reviewers are asked to focus on the following:

- III.A. **Program name** – Please examine whether the program name is descriptive of the curriculum, whether it is appropriate for the commission being requested, and whether it is properly aligned with the PEOs, SOs, transcripts, and the program website.

Note: Starting the 2022-23 Review Cycle, APPM Section I.C.4.c. requires that the program name, curriculum, electronic and print publications, program educational objectives, and graduate transcripts determine the commission and the criteria applicable to a program’s review. The name of a program is still main driver for determining a suitable commission and criteria applicable to the program’s review. However, whenever suitable commission(s) and criteria applicable to a program’s review cannot be determined based on the program name, it is necessary to further examine the PEOs, SOs, curriculum, etc.

- III.B. **Degree level** – Reviewers will also pay attention to whether the degree level the program is claiming is comparable to the degree level in the U.S. For example, in some countries, academic education and certification for professional licensing are united in a five-year academic program. Though it may seem that the program is at the master’s degree level because of the length of study or because of the education system in the program’s country, the program level may actually be equivalent to the Bachelor’s degree level in the U.S. One more example, in some countries, it is mandatory for high school graduates to complete a college preparation year prior to being admitted to a college program. College freshmen may have completed some college-level courses/credits before being admitted to the program under ABET review. In this case, those mandatory college-level courses/credits during the college preparation year can be included in the program review.

- III.C. **Campus(es) of the program offering** – If the program is requesting a review to cover only some of the program’s offering sites, it may be necessary for the campus information to be indicated explicitly on the institution’s electronic and print publications, graduates’ transcripts, and ABET RFE. If the program is requesting a review to cover all of the program’s offering sites, please examine whether there are any potential major non-compliance issues to prevent the program from seeking one accreditation to cover all locations.
- III.D. **Understanding key requirements applicable to a program review** -- Reviewers will read the response to Criterion 1 through Criterion 6 and program criteria if applicable to determine if the program understands the applicable requirements and is providing plausible responses from which a review team may begin the pre-visit analysis.
- III.E. **Preparedness for an on-site review** – Reviewers will discern whether the program may be ready for an on-site review based on progress completing C1 through C6 and program criteria if applicable.
- III.F. **Major Non-Compliance Issue** – A REv is not a detailed analysis of each possible issue. However, if the program appears to have any apparent/major non-compliance issue preventing the program from becoming accredited successfully, reviewers should report it. Reviewers should also comment on whether this could possibly be addressed in time before the on-site review or within the end of the upcoming review cycle. The length of time for resolving the non-compliance issue may impact the recommendation to “Postpone” or “Not Submit”.
- Please provide a sentence or two that could be included in the REv recommendation letter to the institution.
- III.G. **Applicable Program Criteria if any** – Please make sure the program is using the appropriate set(s) of program criteria.

For your reference, each program requesting a REv is asked to use the applicable Readiness Review Template posted on the ABET website at <http://www.abet.org/accreditation/get-accredited/accreditation-step-by-step/readiness-review/>, instead of the related Self-Study Template.

In general, regardless of the applicable commission, the following sections are NOT-REQUIRED for a Readiness Review:

- Supplemental materials
- Criterion 7 on Facilities
- Criterion 8 on Institutional Support
- Appendix C on Equipment
- Signature Attesting to Compliance

The following sections are REQUIRED for a Readiness Review. However, NOT all questions under each below-listed Section are required or some questions are adjusted to fit the purpose of Readiness Review. Refer to the applicable Readiness Review Template for details and adjusted requirements. Any questions, please contact the responsible Adjunct Accreditation Director for your commission.

- **Background Information**
- **Criterion 1 on Students**
- **Criterion 2 on Program Educational Objectives**
- **Criterion 3 on Student Outcomes**

- **Criterion 4 on Continuous Improvement**
- **Criterion 5 on Curriculum**
- **Criterion 6 on Faculty**
- **Program Criteria** (if applicable)
- **Appendix A on Course Syllabi**
- **Appendix B on Faculty Vitae**
- **Appendix D on Institutional Summary**

IV. Outcome of a Readiness Review (REv):

According to ABET Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual (APPM) section **I.C.5.b.(3)**, the outcome of a Readiness Review (REv) for a program is one of three non-binding options:

- I.C.5.b.(3)(a) A recommendation to submit the RFE in the immediate upcoming accreditation review cycle, addressing the REv suggestions, if any;
- I.C.5.b.(3)(b) A recommendation to postpone the RFE submission unless substantive changes in the Self-Study preparation and documentation are made; or
- I.C.5.b.(3)(c) A recommendation not to submit the RFE in the immediate upcoming accreditation review cycle because it is likely to be rejected.

Guidance for Each Type of Recommendation

Type of Recommendation	Scenario for Each Recommendation
Submit	Use this recommendation when the Self-Study shows that (1) the program understands the requirements of C1 through C6 and program criteria, and (2) there is nothing lacking that can be a major non-compliance issue for the program going through the review in the immediate upcoming review cycle.
Postpone	Use this recommendation when the Self-Study shows that (1) the program understands most of the criteria requirements but (2) there are one or more potential major non-compliance issues that may take time to address and prevent the program from being accredited in the immediate upcoming review cycle.
Not-Submit	Use this recommendation when the Self-Study shows that (1) the program does not seem to understand most of the criteria requirements and (2) there are apparent major non-compliance issues that the program will definitely need more time beyond the immediate upcoming review cycle to address.

Note: It is normal for there to be gray areas in terms of making a suitable recommendation. If the above Table doesn't help you make a suitable recommendation, please do not hesitate to discuss your case with the responsible Adjunct Accreditation Director.

APPENDIX

READINESS REVIEW (REV) WORKSHEET

(One Worksheet per Program)

Institution Name: _____

Program Name: _____

Applicable Program Criteria, if any: _____

Reviewer (Your Name): _____

Does the program name appear to align with the curriculum, PEOs, SOs, and faculty? Yes No (If no, please clarify)			
Does the program appear to be appropriate for the commission's purview? Yes No (If no, please clarify)			
Criterion/Policy	Understand What's been asked for? (Y/N)	Any Show Stoppers? (Y/N)	Reviewer's Comment
Students			
PEOs			
SOs			
CI			
Curriculum			
Faculty			
Facilities			
Institutional Support			
Program Criteria (if applicable)			
APPM			
Masters Level (if applicable)			
Recommendation (Submit, Postpone, or Not-Submit)			
Give brief reasons why you recommend the program to "postpone" or "not submit" as if writing to the institution.			