

Instructions for Self-Study Coordinator & Head of School

Guidelines for Accreditation Visits

The Self Study Coordinator (SSC) and Head of School (HOS) share responsibility for ensuring the collaboration of a wide range of stakeholders in the accreditation-based school improvement process. They are also responsible for:

Prior to the visit:

- Familiarize yourself with the contents of the protocol and Data Dashboard.
- Attend the training session.
- Read other accreditation materials supplied on the HAIS and WASC websites.
- Review the report of the previous Visiting Committee to be certain progress has been made toward each identified area for improvement.
- Establish a calendar for deadline dates.
- Orient the school staff to the self-study and the accreditation process. It is critical to establish the appropriate spirit of inquiry and self-examination.
- Establish school committees and train committee chairs.
- Make a decision about the basic format of the Self-Study so it is presented seamlessly from the multiple committees.
- Choose an electronic collaborative writing tool (e.g. Google Docs)
- Consult your Visiting Committee Chair for direction or questions about the process
- Demonstrate evidence of schoolwide participation in the evaluation process.
- Check continually on the progress of the various committees.
- Distribute the school report.
- Make arrangements for the Visiting Committee, such as lodging, travel, and rental car.
- Communicate regularly with the Visiting Committee Chair. The chair:
 1. May come to the school to help with the development of the self-study, to help the school prepare for the visit and to orient the school staff, at the request of the school. The school must pay the expenses of this visit.
 2. Will keep in touch with you throughout the process of your self-study.

3. Will work with you in establishing a time schedule for the visit.

During the visit:

- Arrange adequate working space for the Visiting Committee. Provide evidence and reference materials in the work room. Arrange space for the Visiting Committee to meet with Focus Groups, either within the work room or in another location.
- Ensure stakeholders are aware of the Accreditation Visit schedule and understand their roles. The Visiting Committee has multiple responsibilities each day, so it is important that each scheduled meeting begins and ends on time.
- Provide Wi-Fi and printing access for the Visiting Committee.
- Organize lunches for the Visiting Committee. Recommend convenient options for breakfasts and dinners.
- Schedule a dinner meeting only if it is felt that a meeting will serve an important function and cannot be scheduled in any other way.

After the visit:

- Develop a Future Planning Document to address the Major Challenges, Opportunities, and Needs identified in the self-study and/or noted by the Visiting Committee.
- Establish a process that will facilitate the review and implementation of the school's Future Planning Document.
- Submit revised Action Plan to HAIS within 6 months of the Visit.

Self-Study Committees

The number of committees and the size of each will depend on the size and complexity of the school; the suggested size of any committee is no more than 12-15 members. Schools may choose to form a committee for each chapter or section of the self-study. These committees, or focus groups, tend to be interdisciplinary and include representatives of multiple stakeholder groups. Typically, each of these committees will appoint a chair. The chair of each committee, along with the Head of School and Self Study Coordinator form the Steering Committee for accreditation.

Consensus and Dissenting Opinions

While the self-study report generally reflects consensus, no attempt should be made to eliminate a major dissenting opinion that is not resolved in the self-study process. Do not try to hide deficiencies or hesitate to indicate strengths. The report should accurately reflect the school's assets and strengths, its weaknesses and needs, and its priorities for improvement.

Writing the Preface

As a Preface to your Self-Study report, provide a brief narrative history and current status of the school. Your audience is those who have little information about your school, such as members of the Visiting Committee, who would benefit from knowing background and unique circumstances that have contributed to the development of your school.

The second section of your Preface is a statement that describes the processes you followed in developing the self-study, including the various constituencies involved and how their participation was engaged. H AIS and W ASC expect wide participation by all constituencies in your self-study process, and the Visiting Committee will comment on this in their report.

The Progress Report is a written response to the Schoolwide Challenges, Opportunities, and Needs highlighted identified by the previous Visiting Committee as cited in the Visiting Committee Report. Suggested formatting for this section is to copy each Challenge, Opportunity or Need and follow each with a short, narrative description of any progress made toward addressing it during the previous accreditation cycle. It is an important aspect of self-evaluation as it reflects the extent to which the school engages in continuous school improvement. The Mid-Cycle Progress Report is a useful resource when completing the Final Progress Report.