

# Visiting Committee Member Checklist

## Previsit Preparation

- \_\_\_ 1. Receive the first letter from Visiting Committee chairperson that addresses:
  - a. Requests for preferred areas of coverage during the visit
  - b. Training session schedule reminder
  - c. The review of accreditation materials
- \_\_\_ 2. Attend WASC member training.
- \_\_\_ 3. Study the school description, the *Focus on Learning* manual, and the reference cards Sections of *Focus on Learning* to emphasize: The Big Picture; The Self-Study: Background Information; The Self-Study; The Visit; The Follow-up; The Tools: Criteria/Suggested Evidence; Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (Schoolwide Learner Outcomes); Gathering Evidence.
- \_\_\_ 4. Become aware of the parameters of the self-study followed by the school:
  - the involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study
  - the clarification of the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes)
  - the assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria
  - the development of a schoolwide action plan and integrated subject area/support program that addresses identified growth needs
  - the development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan
- \_\_\_ 5. Review the WASC criteria and suggested evidence and appropriate curricular/ educational references.
- \_\_\_ 6. Receive additional instructions from chairperson, including:
  - a. Writing assignments
  - b. Review of the criteria as the self-study report is analyzed
  - c. Prior to the visit, the chair will request members to prepare questions to pursue during the visit. Members will be assigned tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the school report. The chair should receive these prior to the initial team meeting in order to compile a tentative Visiting Committee Report.
  - d. Visit schedule
- \_\_\_ 7. After receiving the School Report, complete previsit preparation:
  - a. Review the criteria with respect to the analysis of the School Report; study other

- pertinent materials.
  - b. Compare the school's findings to the concepts of the criteria and the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes). Critique action plan.
  - c. Write questions regarding issues, concerns, clarifications, and evidence that should be pursued during the visit and develop tentative narrative statements for assigned sections of the Visiting Committee report. Send these to Visiting Committee chair prior to visit.
- \_\_\_ 8. Receive final communication from chairperson that:
- a. Confirms receipt of school self-study
  - b. Offers assistance and clarification of tasks
  - c. Confirms initial meeting time and visit logistics
  - d. Reviews how reimbursable expenses are to be handled
- \_\_\_ 9. Bring the following materials to the visit:
- a. *Focus on Learning* manual
  - b. Reference cards
  - c. Self-Study Report
  - d. All notes
  - e. Credit card or cash to cover reimbursable expenses
- \_\_\_ 10. Arrive on time for initial meeting and have no other commitments during the time of the visit.

**The Visit:      How Do We Know Students Are Learning?  
                         What Is The Actual Program For Students?**

- \_\_\_ 1. Demonstrate an interest in the school's welfare and express a desire to be helpful. Establish a rapport with the staff.
- \_\_\_ 2. Utilize the concepts of the WASC criteria as a comparison base throughout entire visit.
- \_\_\_ 3. Look at the quality of program experienced by students and evidence of successful student learning — the degree to which the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) are being accomplished.
- \_\_\_ 4. Look for evidence of an ongoing process for school improvement.
- \_\_\_ 5. Let the program unfold — don't prejudge. Validate, verify, and document. Be aware of personal biases that can influence observation.
- \_\_\_ 6. The gathering of evidence (class/program, observations, interviews, examination of student work and other information, dialogue with Home Groups) should be scheduled so the appropriate information is obtained.
- \_\_\_ 7. Assure teachers that classroom visits are not evaluative, but are planned to observe the

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general instruction atmosphere and climate of the school.

- \_\_\_ 8. Frame open-ended questions to all school committee members and individuals to elicit information without reflecting a value judgment.
- \_\_\_ 9. Allow adequate time for responses and give appropriate feedback in responses to questions.
- \_\_\_ 10. Concentrate on being a good listener. Be aware of nonverbal feedback.
- \_\_\_ 11. Meet and lead discussions with school committees that are pertinent to your assigned areas of writing responsibility.  
**Note:** Time is limited, so don't overemphasize particular concerns. The goal is to clarify information already in the School Report and secure information not yet provided.
- \_\_\_ 12. Don't allow pressure groups or individuals to distract you from the main task and schedule.
- \_\_\_ 13. Make every effort to avoid involvement in school issues that are not pertinent to the self-study and visit.
- \_\_\_ 14. Work cooperatively with all other Visiting Committee members as findings are discussed and decisions made.
- \_\_\_ 15. Write quality responses according to the suggested guidelines. Make sure they reflect the important concepts of the criteria in order to serve as guidelines for an effective educational curricular program.
- \_\_\_ 16. Provide regular feedback to the Leadership Team and other staff members regarding findings as a result of the ongoing visit.
- \_\_\_ 17. Meet with the Leadership Team to present and thoroughly discuss the synthesis of the concepts of the criteria, the school report, and the findings during the visit, as reflected in the draft Visiting Committee Report.
- \_\_\_ 18. Meet with other Visiting Committee members to investigate any issues or questions raised during the Leadership Team meeting.
- \_\_\_ 19. Make necessary Visiting Committee Report modifications and finalize the report.
- \_\_\_ 20. Individually review each WASC criterion within the four categories and overall findings. Individually make decisions regarding the quality of the school's educational program with respect to the four categories of criteria and the other factors impacting the term.
- \_\_\_ 21. Participate in the Visiting Committee discussion of the Recommendation for a Term of Accreditation with respect to the WASC criteria categories and all findings.

- \_\_\_ 22. Assist the chair in preparing the confidential Visiting Committee summary for the Commission ensuring that the correlation is evident between the recommended term and the Visiting Committee report.
- \_\_\_ 23. Complete the expense voucher and the optional chair evaluation form.
- \_\_\_ 24. Participate in the presentation of the findings to the entire staff. The recommended term of accreditation is confidential; don't imply the recommended term of accreditation.
- \_\_\_ 25. Support and encourage the school in its ongoing school improvement process.