Visiting Committee Chair Checklist

Previsit Preparation

1. _____ Respond to the ACS WASC invitation accepting the invitation to chair the Visiting Committee.
2. _____ Attend the ACS WASC Chair Training.
3. _____ Become familiar with the Postsecondary Accreditation Manual.
4. _____ Begin regular communication with the administrator/director and Self-Study Coordinator to answer questions and give assistance.
5. _____ Arrange a one-day preliminary visit to the school campus.
   - Meet with the administrator/director, Self-Study Coordinator, Leadership Team, and other staff members as possible.
   - Discuss the logistics of the visit, progress made on the self-study, and read the rough draft of early chapters to offer suggestions.
   - Provide an overview of the accreditation process and duties of all stakeholder groups.
   - Validate committee organization/membership.
   - Determine how evidence has been gathered and analyzed with respect to the ACS WASC Postsecondary Criteria and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes.
   - Determine how learning data is analyzed and used in the Focus Group or Leadership Team discussions.
   - Determine if the Action Plan is supported by the Focus Groups and Self-Study Committees. Will the Action Plan effectively guide the work of the school and ensure quality learning for students? Can the Action Plan sections be implemented immediately within existing resources?
   - Establish the visit schedule to maximize time for dialogue with the Focus Groups and Leadership Team, the gathering of evidence (class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work, and meetings with institutional groups), and time for the Visiting Committee to complete its report.
   - Does the schedule for the visit permit daily dialogue with the Leadership Team regarding preliminary findings, thereby building the trust and rapport for ongoing communication and collaboration?
   - Work with the school to finalize the housing and visit arrangements.
   - Obtain the school’s previous Self-Study Report; the mid-cycle report; the probation reports, if applicable; the current Action Plan; the student/community profile; and other pertinent background materials.
6. _____ Receive roster of Visiting Committee members from the ACS WASC office.
   - Call each Visiting Committee member, welcome them to the team, and thank them for their willingness to participate.
• Send initial letter via email, including the school’s description, to the members; ACS WASC will send the postsecondary manual directly to the Visiting Committee members.
• Ask members to fill out the form indicating their preferences for the prewriting assignments for the rough draft of the *Visiting Committee Report*.
• Remind members that they are required to participate in Visiting Committee training.
• Make frequent contact with Visiting Committee members and keep them updated on visit details and documents in process.

7. _____ Maintain regular contact with the school.
   • Do they need further direct assistance?
   • Is there progress on the self-study?
   • Will the *Action Plan* impact quality learning for students?

8. _____ Send second letter to Visiting Committee members.
   • Assign prewriting assignments with careful instructions and deadlines.
   • Remind them to compare the school’s self-study to the ACS WASC Postsecondary Criteria and Schoolwide Learner Outcomes.
   • Ask members to send written questions about issues and concerns, and note clarifications and evidence that should be pursued during the visit.
   • Compile a list of questions to bring to the site visit.
   • Include the schedule for the visit.

9. _____ After the *Self-Study Report* has been sent to all Visiting Committee members by the school, contact the Visiting Committee members:
   • Confirm the receipt of the *Self-Study Report*.
   • Offer assistance with assigned tasks and prewriting assignments.
   • Remind members to submit written questions to be answered during the visit.
   • Confirm the initial meeting time.

10. _____ Write Chapters I and II of the *Visiting Committee Report*.

11. _____ Add the prewriting sections of Chapter III by the Visiting Committee members and create a rough draft of the *Visiting Committee Report* to bring to the site visit.

12. _____ Plan the orientation meeting for Visiting Committee members prior to the initial meeting at the school (e.g., Sunday afternoon). The meeting should cover:
   • The purpose of the visit, conducting the visit in an atmosphere of collaborative and open communication.
   • Emphasis upon the ACS WASC Postsecondary Criteria and the school’s Schoolwide Learner Outcomes as the basis for evaluating the *Self-Study* and the visit.
• Discussion of self-study: trends/perceptions, questions, concerns, and the relationship of the document to the ACS WASC Postsecondary Criteria and the Schoolwide Learner Outcomes.
• Discussion of ways to gather evidence.
• Review of the overall schedule.
• Review of the Accreditation Status Determination Worksheet and how consensus will be reached for a recommendation to the ACS WASC Commission.
• Plan out how to gather evidence through class/program observations, interviews, examination of student work and other data, and program and Focus Group meetings.
• Stress with Visiting Committee to avoid prescription and “how we do it at our school” discussions.

13. _____ Create a detailed timeline for the visit that will allow the Visiting Committee to complete its tasks of writing the Visiting Committee Report, Documentation and Justification Statement, and the Accreditation Status Recommendation.

During the Visit

14._____ Give the school leader a copy of the rough draft of the Visiting Committee Report on Sunday so that he/she has the chance to read it through Sunday night.

15._____ Meet daily with the school leaders, including the Leadership Team, about the Visiting Committee findings, questions, visit logistics, etc.

16._____ Guide the Visiting Committee members to discuss and investigate any issues or questions raised in the dialogue with the Leadership Team.

17._____ Facilitate the necessary Visiting Committee Report modifications as the report is finalized.

18._____ Facilitate the Visiting Committee discussion of the accreditation status that will be recommended to the ACS WASC Commission.

19._____ Complete the Visiting Committee Report, Documentation and Justification Statement, and sign the Accreditation Status Recommendation that will be submitted to the ACS WASC office.

• Be sure that the Visiting Committee Report is consistent and aligned to the Documentation and Justification Statement, and the status recommendation.

• Have Visiting Committee members sign the Accreditation Status Recommendation.

20._____ Have Visiting Committee members complete expense vouchers and give them an opportunity to complete the optional chairperson evaluation form.

21._____ Plan for the Exit Meeting — read major areas of strength and major key issues; give all members a chance to publicly say “thank you;” have the Visiting Committee stay briefly after the meeting concludes for some social interaction.
22._____ Do not imply the recommendation to the ACS WASC Commission; it is confidential.

23._____ Remind the school leadership to integrate the Visiting Committee suggestions and recommendations into the schoolwide *Action Plan* for immediate implementation.

**After the Visit**

24._____ Send appropriate “thank-you’s” to school leadership individuals and Visiting Committee members.

25._____ Notify ACS WASC right away of any problems that need to be addressed.

26._____ Submit the Visiting Committee Member evaluations, expense reports, etc. to the ACS WASC office.