



Adventist
Accrediting
Association

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

2019

**Accrediting Association
of Seventh-day Adventist
Schools, Colleges and Universities**

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PREFACE

The **Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities** is the accrediting body established by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to provide coordination, supervision, and quality control of its education system. It is responsible for evaluating the implementation of the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education in order to foster the unity and mission of the Church¹. The Association is commonly known as the **Adventist Accrediting Association** and operates under the acronym of **AAA**. The association serves the thirteen Divisions of the world church and is assisted in its work by the Divisions' directors of education and the educational commissions and committees of each Division.

Accreditation is a self-regulatory mechanism of the education community and plays a significant role in fostering confidence in the educational enterprise of the church. Accreditation and the self-study process serve to maintain minimum standards, enhance institutional effectiveness, and provide inter-institutional recognition.

Accreditation is concerned principally with the continuous improvement of educational quality in institutions operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church around the world. Accreditation of an institution by AAA signifies that the institution appropriately provides a Seventh-day Adventist education of sound academic quality to its constituency and has the resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish the institution's goals. Each Seventh-day Adventist educational institution shall seek AAA accreditation.

Like other accrediting bodies, the Adventist Accrediting Association evaluates compliance with defined threshold standards. Consistent with its broad definition of wholistic education in the context of a redemptive goal, the AAA moreover evaluates evidence that the school is comprehensively achieving success in the spiritual domain and that it is truly "Adventist." Accreditation by the AAA is available only to church-owned schools and degree programs. A variety of indicators are examined to affirm that the overall educational experience furthers the development of the whole person and promotes a biblical worldview. The complete list of standards and criteria for review are detailed in this Handbook.

The accrediting standards used by the Adventist Accrediting Association make up the benchmarks for accreditation. These standards are subject to periodic evaluation and provide consistent guidelines for the evaluation of educational institutions.

Institutions with a track record of maximum accreditation with regional/national bodies are eligible for review using abbreviated standards (Form B). This allows the evaluation team to focus on whether the school is achieving its mission in the spiritual domain and is integrating faith and learning in content areas, worldview and co-curricular elements. Cross-referencing the report done for national/regional accreditation eliminates unnecessary duplication.

As changes occur in the church and in the world, Seventh-day Adventist higher education must embrace and respond to the demands of such change. The international nature of Seventh-day Adventist higher education demands a wide range of attention to international standards by and for international contextualization. For this reason, there is no single best system, no one-size-fits-all approach to quality assurance. At the same time there must be assurances that loyalty to Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy and practice is preserved and that faithfulness to the church's values, ethos, and mission is strengthened.

¹ *GC Working Policy*, 2010-2011, FE 20 35, pp. 270-274.

In countries where the application of these procedures may seriously compromise the ongoing viability of the institution, because of the requirements of government and educational agencies, it is recognized that while the underlying principles will not differ, the application of those principles may vary.²

Therefore, in such circumstances the Division Board of Education shall provide to the AAA documentation of the institution's accreditation from its government, attesting to its academic and professional integrity, and shall relate to the AAA for endorsement of the institution's spiritual ethos and theological faithfulness. Under all circumstances institutions must maintain allegiance to their position and purpose in the Church.

A key component of the process of accreditation is the self-study. Each institution applying for initial or continuing accreditation is required to conduct a self-study of its philosophy, mission, purpose, programs, and services which shall be written up in a formal document typically referred to as the *Self-Study*. At the culmination of the self-study, the Association conducts an evaluation visit with a team of professional peer evaluators to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the institution and to evaluate the institution's effectiveness in reaching its stated goals and in complying with the criteria for review.

The visiting team will supply the AAA Board with a written report of their findings and make a confidential recommendation for a term of accreditation to be voted by the Adventist Accrediting Association Board.

Students and their parents select Adventist education from among other options. Through the accreditation process, the institution demonstrates how it aligns its efforts and resources to provide the best academic education possible—while also nurturing faith in God and preparing students for positions of leadership in their communities and churches. The accreditation process helps the institution accomplish these goals.

Accreditation provides not only accountability for the integration of faith and learning and for quality education, but also serves as a forum for reflection and re-commitment (including financial commitment by governing boards or sponsoring organizations). The process promotes transparency and demonstrates accountability to the constituency. Furthermore, this form of intentional dialogue fosters collaboration and understanding between the work of education and the mission of the Church.³

This *Accreditation Handbook* is the official handbook of AAA and provides details of the accreditation philosophy, the process of accreditation visits, accreditation standards, and the expectations of a *Self-Study*.

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² GCWP 2010-11, FE 20 55 7.

³ Beardsley, L. M. (2008). Purpose and function of the Adventist Accrediting Association. *The Journal of Adventist Education*, 70 (4), 15-19.

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HANDBOOK UPDATES

The table that follows identifies the dates of publication and implementation of *Accreditation Handbook* updates. The date of publication will be the date when changes to the *Handbook* are voted by AAA. On the date of implementation, all accreditation visits will operate under the terms of the new updates. By agreement between AAA and individual institutions, new procedures and/or documentation may be used in **advance** of the implementation date. Old procedures and/or documentation will normally not be acceptable **after** the implementation date.

Please note that new versions of the Handbook will be sent to all institutions accredited by the AAA. On occasions the date of implementation may precede the date of publication as policy changes may be announced to accredited institutions and published on the website more frequently than the update to this Handbook.

Date of Publication	Date of Implementation
April 8, 2004	January 1, 2005
April 7, 2005	January 1, 2005
April 15, 2012	July 1, 2012
April 9, 2013	April 9, 2014
April 3, 2019	April 3, 2020

USE OF THE ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

The *Accreditation Handbook* is in four parts. Each part can stand alone and has its own table of contents. However, only the *Accreditation Handbook* in its entirety explains and outlines the full accreditation process managed by AAA. A table of contents covering the full *Handbook* will precede Part I.

Users of the handbook may find the following a useful summary of contents.

Part I is concerned with the **accreditation philosophy** of AAA, its purposes, and the types of accreditation available through AAA. This section is useful to all involved in an accreditation visit as it provides the context for the accreditation visit, explains what the focus of the visiting team should be, and defines the expectations of the Adventist Accrediting Association.

Part II focuses on the **accreditation visit** in all its forms and on the roles and responsibilities of all involved in a visit. It also provides a timeline and outline of the final report for a regular accreditation visit. This is a basic manual for both an institution facing accreditation and for the members of a visiting team.

Part III provides **information for Form A institutions*** on writing the *Self-Study* and provides the standards that describe an institution of excellence in this category. It also identifies the Criteria for Review (CFRs) under each standard, with corresponding evidences. All involved in a Form A institution visit should be thoroughly acquainted with this section of the *Accreditation Handbook*.

Part IV provides **information for Form B institutions*** on writing the *Self-Study* and provides the standards that describe an institution of excellence in this category. It also identifies the Criteria for Review (CFRs) under each standard, with corresponding evidences. All involved in a Form B institution visit should be thoroughly acquainted with this section of the *Accreditation Handbook*.

A separate document, *The Accreditation Process: A Manual for Team Chairs*, is available from the General Conference Department of Education for all those asked to chair a AAA accreditation visit.

*An explanation of which institutions will be accredited under the terms of Form A and Form B are given in Part I of the *Accreditation Handbook*.

GLOSSARY

- AAA** Adventist Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges and Universities. The term Adventist Accrediting Association will also be used throughout the *Accreditation Handbook* to refer to the Association.
- BMTE** Board of Ministerial and Theological Education. This division-level board recommends to the General Conference IBMTE (see below) new programs in theology and pastoral studies and arranges for endorsement of religion/theology faculty.
- IBE** International Board of Education. This General Conference board approves new programs in all disciplines other than religion/theology and recommends new institutions for candidacy status to AAA.
- IBMTE** International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education. This General Conference Committee approves new programs in theology and pastoral studies recommended by the division BMTEs and approves processes for the management of pastoral training at division level.
- GC** General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The following terms will also be used as generic terms throughout the *Accreditation Handbook*, although in some division territories or institutions different terms are used.

Education Director is called the Vice-President for Education in some division territories.

President is the chief administrative officer of an academic institution. Throughout the world equivalents may include but not be limited to: Principal, Rector, and Vice-Chancellor.

Nontraditional programs, including distance education, refer to the delivery of education via a method other than the “traditional” teacher in front of a group of students in a standard classroom for a standard semester or quarter. Such programs may be delivered to students who are either younger or older than the traditional expectations, to part or full-time students, and may include a variety of modes including but not limited to mail and video correspondence, internet and web delivery, and short-term intensive sessions.

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Part I:

Philosophy,
Purpose, and Types
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2019

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SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Extracted from the Philosophy statement approved by consensus of the First International Conference of the Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist Education (2001) and incorporated into the Working Policy of the General Conference.

Aim

Adventist education prepares students for a useful and joy-filled life, fostering friendship with God, whole-person development, Bible-based values, and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission to the world.

Philosophy

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centered. Adventists believe that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God's character and purposes can be understood as revealed in the Bible, in Jesus Christ, and in nature. The distinctive characteristics of Adventist education—derived from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White—point to the redemptive aim of true education: to restore human beings into the image of their Maker.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to human beings on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate norm for human conduct and His grace as the means of restoration.

Adventists recognize, however, that human motives, thinking, and behavior have fallen short of God's ideal. Education in its broadest sense is a means of restoring human beings to their original relationship with God. Working together, homes, schools, and churches cooperate with divine agencies in preparing learners for responsible citizenship in this world and in the world to come.

Adventist education imparts more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person—spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. Its time dimensions span eternity. It seeks to develop a life of faith in God and respect for the dignity of all human beings; to build character akin to that of the Creator; to nurture thinkers rather than mere reflectors of others' thoughts; to promote loving service rather than selfish ambition; to ensure maximum development of each individual's potential; and to embrace all that is true, good, and beautiful.

Tertiary Institutions

Adventist institutions of higher education provide students a unique environment needed in pursuit of learning in the arts, humanities and religion, sciences, and various professions within the perspective of the Adventist philosophy of education and spiritual commitment. Adventist higher education:

1. Gives preference to careers that directly support the mission of the Church.
2. Recognizes the importance of the quest for truth in all its dimensions as it affects the total development of the individual in relation both to God and to fellow human beings.
3. Utilizes available resources such as revelation, reason, reflection, and research to discover truth and its implications for human life here and in the hereafter, while recognizing the limitations inherent in all human endeavors.

4. Leads students to develop lives of integrity based upon principles compatible with the religious, ethical, social, and service values essential to the Adventist worldview.
5. Fosters, particularly at the graduate level, the mastery, critical evaluation, discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and the nurture of wisdom in the community of Christian scholars.

Students completing the tertiary level at an Adventist institution should:

1. Have had the opportunity to commit themselves to God and therefore live a principled life in accordance with His will with a desire to experience and support the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. Exhibit proficiency in critical thinking, stewardship, creativity, appreciation of beauty and the natural environment, communication, and other forms of academic scholarship toward fulfillment of their vocations and lifelong learning.
3. Manifest social sensitivity and loving concern for the well-being of others in preparation for marriage and family life, citizenship within a diverse community, and fellowship within the community of God.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ACCREDITATION: PHILOSOPHY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for Quality Management and Accreditation

All institutions of higher education have a responsibility to ensure that they deliver quality education. Integral to this responsibility is the need for a strong, internal, and continuous quality improvement of educational and management processes. External accreditation does not replace this expectation; however, it provides an important objective measurement of an institution's success.

The Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges, and Universities (AAA) is the recognized accrediting body commissioned by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to carry out the accrediting process for Adventist institutions of higher education around the world. It operates from the General Conference Department of Education in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA, and works in cooperation with its regional Commissions on Accreditation in the following areas of the world:

- East-Central Africa: Nairobi, Kenya
- Euro-Africa: Bern, Switzerland
- Euro-Asia: Moscow, Russia
- Inter-America: Miami, Florida, U.S.A.
- North America: Columbia, Maryland, U.S.A.
- Northern Asia-Pacific: Koyang-city, Kyounggi-do, Republic of Korea
- Southern Africa-Indian Ocean: Pretoria, South Africa
- South America: Brasilia, Brazil
- South Pacific: Wahroonga, New SouthWales, Australia
- Southern Asia: Hosur, Tamil Nadu, India
- Southern Asia-Pacific: Manila, Philippines
- Trans-Europe: St. Albans, Herts., England
- West-Central Africa: Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

The major function of the AAA is to visit and consider accreditation or re-accreditation of all Seventh-day Adventist higher education institutions.

Philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist Accreditation

The Adventist Accrediting Association holds to the principle that denominational accreditation is not dependent upon regional, state or national recognition requirements. International experience, however, has shown that many of the academic, professional, and ethical criteria established by the Adventist Accrediting Association coincide with those required by other professional and governmental accrediting bodies.

The Adventist Accrediting Association supports the right of each institution to pursue its educational mission under the guidance of a governing board elected by its constituency; the right of the faculty to teach, carry out, and publish research; and the right of students to learn and to develop their God-given talents. However, the exercise of these rights must not interfere with the institution's obligation to provide quality education within the context of the beliefs, mission, educational philosophy, and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Accreditation Objectives and Responsibilities

In making its assessment of the institution visited, an accreditation team appointed by AAA will represent three significant groups:

1. The members of the institutional constituency (students, parents/guardians, alumni, church leaders and members, local and regional community), who want assurance regarding the quality of the programs and degrees offered, as well as the institutional congruence with the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
2. The other Seventh-day Adventist colleges and universities worldwide, which expect assurance of credit and degree reciprocity with the educational institution being visited.
3. The Seventh-day Adventist Church at large, whose leaders and members desire assurance of the overall quality and mission effectiveness of an institution that is part of its global educational network.

This team will seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. To evaluate, based on the Self-Study document and an on-site visit, the overall status of a specific Seventh-day Adventist educational institution.
2. To assess the degree to which the institution fulfills the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education in forming the character and developing the talents of young men and women who are committed to the Seventh-day Adventist message and who support the mission of the Church.
3. To determine if the degree programs offered by the institution are comparable in content and quality to those offered by similar Seventh-day Adventist and non-Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions, both in the same country and in other countries of the world.
4. To provide guidance to the administration and the institutional board on ways in which the institution may strengthen its operation and better achieve its educational and spiritual objectives and its overall mission.

Relation of AAA Accreditation to Government/Regional Accreditation/Approval

It is essential that all Adventist institutions operate within the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church, clearly reflecting Adventist identity and ethos. Accreditation and governmental approval can also be important to the ongoing health and credibility of educational institutions and their financial viability. These institutions must consequently work within the requirements and parameters of the local and national policies and goals, while affirming the calling to be true to the mission of the church.

Insomuch as the reason an Adventist institution exists is to fulfill the gospel commission by building Adventist intellectual capacity for the church and society, AAA accreditation seeks to ensure that each institution continues to uphold the mission of the church in the context of high quality academic programs. This is evidenced by:

1. Institutional mission statements that harmonize with the overall mission of the Church.
2. Administration, faculty, and staff who support the beliefs, behaviors, and values of the Church.
3. Policies and procedures of the institution that uphold the mission of the Church and institution.
4. Academic and student life programs that are consistent with the mission of the church and institution.
5. Board, leadership, faculty, and students who embrace the role and function of AAA accreditation.
6. An education system that offers a comprehensive, wholistic Seventh-day Adventist education, which also contributes toward national goals and aspirations of the country in which it functions.
7. A unique Seventh-day Adventist identity and purpose that is evidenced through quality assurance mechanisms.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ACCREDITATION PROCESSES AND BENEFITS

The International Board of Education (IBE) and the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE)

The Adventist Accrediting Association works in cooperation with two other boards in fulfilling its accreditation role: The International Board of Education (IBE) and the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE).

The International Board of Education (with its partner Boards of Education in each division territory) is the committee that approves new institutions (with its programs) for candidacy status. This action starts the process that leads to a first accreditation visit by the AAA. IBE also considers applications from established institutions for the addition of new programs (other than Religion or Theology), or substantive changes in existing programs (also excepting Religion and Theology). The International Board of Education has separate guidelines to identify these processes and these are available through the General Conference Department of Education. This Board recommends its actions to the Board of the Adventist Accrediting Association.

The International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) and the division Boards of Ministerial and Theological Education (BMTE) operate parallel to the IBE in relation to programs in Religion and Theology. They also respond to issues related to the hiring and endorsement of administrators and faculty in seminaries or theology departments. A separate handbook outlines the role and operating parameters of the IBMTE/BMTE and is available through the General Conference Department of Education. The IBMTE makes recommendations to the Board of AAA in relation to all new programs and in the expression of any concerns relating to the endorsement of faculty.

Candidacy Status and Initial Accreditation

The first step towards accreditation for an institution is candidacy status.

A recommendation for candidacy status is made by the International Board of Education to the Adventist Accrediting Association. This happens when the International Board of Education (IBE), usually based on a visit from an IBE team, concludes that the infrastructure, proposed curriculum, and proposed faculty of the institution under consideration for candidacy are sufficient and of a quality that give confidence in the proposed institution and its programs, and that the institution meets the mission expectations of the church. At the time candidacy is given, AAA is recognizing that the institution is in a position to offer accredited programs and that the programs approved are, as far as can be ascertained, likely to be of the quality of other similar AAA accredited programs. While receiving institutions always retain the right to decide whether they will accept the credits granted by an institution in candidacy, AAA recommends that such credits be accepted for transfer.

Candidacy is normally for a two-year period and the institution is expected to initiate an application to AAA for full accreditation early in the final year, jointly with application for regular status for any programs under candidacy status. Research degrees, however, remain in candidacy until the first cohort of students complete their degrees with a visit to occur within six months afterwards. Accreditation for degrees in medicine, dentistry, or pharmacy are preceded by preliminary candidacy (approved prior to the admission of students), provisional candidacy achieved at the mid-point of the initial cohort, and full candidacy achieved at the beginning of the final year of the first cohort.

If an IBE visiting team does not consider that the institution requesting candidacy reaches the required standards to offer tertiary education programs, its report will identify conditions that need to be met before candidacy can be granted. Only when those conditions are met, and usually after another team visit, can the IBE recommend candidacy status to AAA.

Continued Accreditation Responsibility

Once an institution has been accredited, the administration is responsible for ensuring that accreditation does not lapse. Ongoing quality and mission focus are assured by AAA through accreditation visits (the distinct types of visits are identified under “Types of Accreditation Visits” below). At the time of each visit, a confidential recommendation regarding re-accreditation will be made by the visiting team to the AAA Board. Accreditation will only be continued as long as an institution remains a quality Seventh-day Adventist institution.

An accredited institution is also expected to follow guidelines for the approval of new programs, according to the policies of IBE and IBMTE. The substantive change policy that outlines these expectations can be found at the end of this document.

Expectations of an Accreditation Visit

During an accreditation visit, members of the evaluation committee are expected to demonstrate the best qualities of a Seventh-day Adventist educational professional. These include:

1. Professionalism in preparing for the visit (by becoming acquainted with the Self-Study document and the context in which the college or university operate), in fulfilling assignments promptly as member of the committee, in expressing judgment, and in all personal contacts and statements during the visit.
2. Confidentiality in reporting any sensitive information that has been entrusted to him/her both during and after the visit.
3. A constructive spirit that assesses objectively the strengths and weaknesses of an institution, program, or individual, and seeks to enhance their respective potential through careful counsel.
4. Avoidance of any unethical behavior, such as using the accreditation visit as an opportunity to recruit faculty, staff, or students for another institution.

The administration, faculty and staff of the institution facing an accreditation visit will also be expected to show their professionalism by:

1. Cooperating with the accreditation process by producing documents as requested and in a timely manner.
2. Not pursuing personal agendas with the team members.
3. Accepting the response of the team to the institution in an open and constructive manner, and using the recommendations to strengthen the quality and mission of the institution.

Changes to Accreditation Status

While the accreditation status voted by the AAA following an accreditation visit to a campus is normally upheld for the full period granted to the institution, the AAA can vote to change this status based on one of the following:

1. Substantial changes to the institutional operation that give the AAA grounds for concern that the institution can no longer offer programs of quality, that the institution has experienced exceptional personnel issues that have left the institution in a critically unstable situation, or that the Seventh-day Adventist focus and mission of the institution is at risk. In such cases, the AAA will approve a focused visit to the institution. The report from this visit may recommend a change of accreditation status.
2. A substantial disregard of the conditions or expectations identified in the voted action from the previous AAA visit. This could include an institution not submitting required reports after being reminded by AAA. It could also include a situation when a condition attached to the accreditation action has not been met in the time agreed or after a reasonable time has elapsed. In these cases, the AAA may vote to decrease the length of accreditation to schedule a full site visit at an earlier time, place an institution on probation, or, in particularly serious situations, revoke accreditation completely.
3. Continued refusal to comply with IBE, IBMTE, or AAA expectations. When an institution continues to disregard church policies, and after dialogue and consultation between the institution and the relevant division and General Conference departments of education, AAA may place the institution on probation, or in extreme circumstances, revoke accreditation.

Extension of Accreditation

If an accreditation term has expired, an institution will be considered unaccredited unless a regular accreditation visit has taken place prior to the expiry date or an extension to the accreditation period has been voted by the AAA. Reasons for extensions are normally the following:

1. Political or other conditions in the country of the institution that make it difficult for a team to visit.
2. Significant recent changes in top personnel in the institution, making it difficult for the AAA team to effectively evaluate the institution's operation.
3. The timeline of government accreditations. It is usually advantageous to the institution and AAA to coordinate visits to institutions, so they do not conflict but rather complement government accreditation visits.
4. The inability of AAA to provide a team to visit the institution in the year expected.

In each of these cases an extension to accreditation will normally not exceed one year.

Benefits of AAA Accreditation

Accreditation by AAA provides the following benefits:

1. *Demonstrates accountability to mission.* Accreditation indicates that an institution is true to Seventh-day Adventist focus, philosophy, and mission.
2. *Engenders confidence.* The accreditation status of an institution assures the constituency, students, donors, and employers that the institution meets threshold standards of quality for its curriculum, faculty, spiritual life, and student life.
3. *Promotes financial viability.* Accreditation attracts prospective students, faculty, and staff. It demonstrates the worthiness of an educational institution to receive denominational subsidies. The actual granting of subsidies is at the discretion of the institution's sponsoring organization.¹
4. *Eases transfer of credits of study from one institution to another accredited by AAA.* Although accreditation is but one among several factors taken into account by receiving institutions, it is viewed carefully and is considered an important indicator of quality.
5. *Affirms that an educational institution functions as a denominational entity.* The institution is thus eligible for inclusion in the "Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook" listing of denominational organizations in compliance with the General Conference Working Policy and hence is eligible to use denominational trademarks.²
6. *Provides access to faculty development opportunities.* These include eligibility of teachers to receive denominational scholarships or bursaries if they qualify, subject to availability.
7. *Fosters health and safety.* Inspection of physical facilities and services are reviewed as part of accreditation to promote well-being and reduce risk. Accreditation is a consideration in terms of coverage under global risk management programs arranged by/through Adventist Risk Management.

¹ GC Working Policy FE 20 35

² General Conference Working Policy BA 40 ("Trademark Policy")

TYPES OF ACCREDITATION VISITS

Regular Accreditation Visit (Form A)

Most Seventh-day Adventist higher education institutions will be visited under the terms of Form A. A regular accreditation visit will take place at least every five years. This will require the completion of an extensive Self-Study by the institution in twelve areas.

Regular Accreditation Visit (Form B)

After a well-established institution has developed a strong record of delivering quality and focused Seventh-day Adventist education over an extended period, it may be considered for accreditation under the terms of Form B. This will require the completion of a Self-Study in seven areas. The focus will be more specifically on the mission and Seventh-day Adventist ethos of the institution.

Nominations of institutions to use Form B come from the division directors of education in cooperation with their General Conference Department of Education liaison. Approval of institutions to use Form B will be voted by AAA. In making recommendations, the directors of education will consider external and internal institutional quality indicators.

Examples of external indicators of institutional quality are:

- Accreditation (or equivalent) by recognized government or regional bodies through a process that is at least as rigorous in its demands as AAA accreditation. (Regional and government accreditation reports and updates must be regularly submitted to AAA.)
- A history of accreditation by the AAA of at least 20 years.
- The institution receiving the maximum length of accreditation from the AAA in the previous two visits.
- A track record of adhering to church educational policies.

Examples of internal indicators of institutional quality are:

- A strong, internal continuous quality improvement of educational and management processes.
- An adequate basis of financial support.
- A well-defined internal governance structure that ensures stable leadership and/or well-developed transition procedures when changes in leadership become necessary.
- A governance structure that ensures both (a) adequate constituent support of the institution and (b) appropriate monitoring of the effective operation of the institution.

Institutions which use Form B are also expected to have a high percentage of Seventh-day Adventist faculty and students (recommended minimums of 95% Seventh-day Adventist faculty and 75% Seventh-day Adventist students) or have a statement of mission and objectives that shows the institution has a non-traditional or special purpose requiring or resulting in different percentages.

The maximum accreditation term given under Form B is five years. However, if an institution accredited under the terms of Form B undergoes a regional or government accreditation process that gives an accreditation term of longer than five years, and after a successful administrative review visit, the AAA may extend its accreditation period for up to another five years to match the duration of the government accreditation term.

Interim Visit

An interim visit takes place in the middle of a voted accreditation term and is focused on the institution's response made to recommendations highlighted during the last accreditation visit. Also, it is expected that major recommendations will be fulfilled, and that 50% or more of other recommendations will be fulfilled or that significant progress toward fulfillment has been made by that time. The terms of the visit will have been identified by the AAA when the accreditation term from the regular visit is voted.

Administrative Review Visit

An administrative review visit is only available to institutions accredited under the terms of Form B that are also accredited through a strong regional/government accreditation process which gives an accreditation term in excess of five years. The administrative review visit takes place after the initial five-year accreditation period awarded by AAA and can recommend an extended term up to that awarded by the government/region, but not normally in excess of another five years.

Focused Visit

When an institution is facing a particularly difficult or challenging situation, a focused visit can take place, initiated by the institution, its board, or the AAA. See also "Changes to Accreditation Status."

The details of all the visits outlined above are discussed in Part II of this accreditation handbook.



Adventist
Accrediting
Association

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

Part II:

The
Accreditation
Visit

2019

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THE REGULAR ACCREDITATION VISIT

Parameters of Visit

The regular accreditation visit can take place under the terms of a Form A Self-Study or the more focused Form B Self-Study. Part I of the *Accreditation Handbook* outlines the basis on which an institution will be accredited under each of these two forms. In both cases, however, the regular accreditation visit is a full accreditation team visit in which the institution will be involved in an extensive self-evaluation process prior to the visit. The conclusions of the self-evaluation will be given in the relevant Self-Study document provided by the institution to the team. This *Accreditation Handbook* will outline the responsibilities of all involved in the visit and identify the possible accreditation recommendations that can be made to the AAA.

Initial Arrangements

During the year preceding that when a regular accreditation to a college/university is scheduled, the secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association will inform the institutional president that a visit is due. Along with this letter, the president of the institution will be sent a copy of the relevant sections of the *Accreditation Handbook*. Copies of the letter will be sent to the chair of the Board of Trustees of the relevant institution, the General Conference Education Department liaison to the division in which the institution is located, and to the Division Education Department Director. At the same time, a letter will be sent to the chair of the relevant division BMTE or equivalent with a copy to the institutional president and the board chair, reminding them of the need to ensure that all BMTE/IBMTE endorsement processes are completed prior to the AAA visit.

Once the institution is informed of the plan for an AAA visit, the relevant General Conference education department liaison will take the initiative in contacting both the director of the education department of the division in which the college/university to be visited is located and the president of the institution. They will agree on the appropriate timing for the visit during the scheduled year.

As soon as an institution is notified that an accreditation visit is due, they are advised to start the Self-Study process required for an AAA visit (see Parts III and IV of the *Handbook*).

Committee Selection

The General Conference liaison usually serves as chair of an accreditation committee and the education director of the division involved serves as the committee's secretary. These two individuals, in consultation with the institutional president, will then select the rest of the team. In some agreed situations, the chair will be an administrator from a Seventh-day Adventist peer institution. In this case, the General Conference and division representatives appoint the chair and the chair is invited to be involved in selecting the rest of the team. When the GC liaison is not the chair, he/she will normally serve as committee secretary.

The individuals recommended for an accreditation team will be experienced in various areas of administration and education, matching the profile of the institution. It is advised that one team member come from another division to the institution being visited and that at least one team member not be a denominational employee. The chair of the evaluation committee or, at his/her request, the committee's secretary will contact the members of the committee and obtain the approval of the employing organization for their involvement in the visit.

Financial Arrangements

Normally the transportation costs of any team member employed by the Seventh-day Adventist church is the responsibility of the employing organization. The local division is usually responsible for travel expenses of any individual not employed within the church system. The General Conference liaison may negotiate alternative funding arrangements for individuals traveling from other divisions where expenses are excessive.

The institution to be visited is expected to provide room and board in addition to local transportation to the members of the committee.

Pre-Visit Expectations

Approximately three months before the visit, the chair of the visiting committee will send correspondence to the committee members outlining the plans for the visit and including a copy of the report prepared by the last evaluation committee and a copy of the relevant portions of the *Accreditation Handbook*. Correspondence will be sent also to the president and the board chair of the college or university to be visited, outlining the plans for the visit. All correspondence will be copied to the relevant division education director. The chair of the committee will also work with the institution to establish a tentative schedule prior to arrival of the committee on site.

One-month prior to the visit, the president of the institution will be responsible for providing, through the GC Education Department liaison, to all members of the committee copies of the completed full Self-Study document. With this document, the president should send a current *Bulletin/Catalog/Prospectus* and a copy of the institutional strategic plan. A copy of the most recent audited financial statement should also be sent to the committee chair, in addition to a completed Institutional History & Profile and Financial Indicators. Templates for these latter reports will be provided by the GC Education Department liaison.

The president or his/her designee will also be responsible for assigning a committee room for the visiting team, including access to power, internet, a video projector or other display, and a printer. This room should also contain the documents identified by the AAA as required for a visit (see “Required Documentation”), and these should be in the room when the team arrives on campus.

Prior to arrival on campus, it will be the responsibility of the committee members to read the documents sent to them in advance of the visit and to inform the relevant individual identified by the chair of the time and place of their arrival, so that arrangements for their transportation and housing can be made.

Overall Schedule

The schedule agreed between the visiting team and the local administration should include times for the following:

- An organizational meeting of the visiting committee to agree on procedures and individual responsibilities.
- An initial meeting between the administrative team of the institution and the visiting committee to discuss the institution’s formal responses to the recommendations of the previous visit, as well as major developments, achievements, trends, and challenges in the following areas: academic, finance, student life, spiritual life, physical plant, industries, etc.

- Opportunity for group interviews with student representatives from various levels and departments, as well as with faculty, staff, alumni, and Board representatives, including its Chair.
- Opportunity for individual interviews between selected members of the committee and members of the administrative team to discuss specific issues relating to the institution and the Self-Study.
- A review of the physical master plan and projections of new buildings, followed by a selected guided tour of the facilities.
- Selected individual meetings between members of the committee and academic department chairpersons/deans, departmental faculty (without chairpersons), campus pastor and/or chaplain, heads of services (dormitories, library, computer center, laboratories, cafeteria, health clinic, industries, maintenance, etc.), and president/officers of the student association.
- Preparation of a written report (see Appendix A for an outline of the evaluation report), with input from all the members of the committee, formal agreement on the recommendation to be forwarded to the Adventist Accrediting Association, and approval of the draft of the report. The accreditation recommendation will be signed by committee members.
- Exit report. After the visiting committee has completed the preparation of the draft of their report, they shall use the following process in the presentation of the exit report.
 1. Review the findings with the institution's Board chair, officers, administrative officers verbally and correct any factual errors that may be pointed out.
 2. Present the report to the administration, faculty, staff, and Board representatives in a public meeting.
 3. The Chair of the visiting committee will not announce the confidential recommendation that will be made to the AAA Board pertaining to the accreditation term.
 4. The Chair shall invite the chief administrator and Board chair to say a few words to receive the report.
 5. No discussion of the report shall be encouraged during the process. Such discussions, if any, can be a part of the response of the administration to the chairman of the AAA committee.
- After the visit, a draft will be sent to the institution for correction of error of fact. The president will send corrections of error of fact to the site visit chair, with supporting documents if necessary. The site visit chair will update the document regarding any needed corrections of error of fact.
- After being voted by the AAA Board, the final copy of the report will be sent back to the institution by the AAA secretary. The board chair will present it to the Board and the college/university president shall present it to the faculty to initiate broad-based engagement in fulfilling the recommendations of the report. For example, administration may choose to form faculty committees to study one or more parts of the report to suggest a strategy for fulfilling the recommendations within a set timeframe. An institutional entity should be tasked with general oversight of the implementation of recommendations. The administration should also present to the Board an annual progress report regarding the implementation of recommendations.

Required Documentation

The following documents and materials must be available to members of the accreditation committee in a room designated for their work on campus at the time of their arrival on campus:

- The Self-Study and supporting evidences
- The *Board Handbook* or *Manual*
- The latest edition of the college or university *Bulletin*
- The *Faculty/Staff Handbook*, including job descriptions for administrators, faculty, and staff
- The *Student Handbook*
- Minutes of the Board and the Administrative Committee for the last three years
- All audited annual financial statements since the last regular accreditation visit (or three years in the case of Form B institutions)
- The current institutional budget
- A year-to-date financial operating statement
- Report of the Financial Oversight committees (Audit and Compensation Review).
- Annual report of the treasurer/chief financial officer that is provided to the Board. This report must include the financial statement, all schedules—including loans receivable or loans guaranteed or cosigned for subsidiary organizations, assets pledged as collateral, and any off-balance-sheet obligations of the organization concerned
- A copy of the class schedule and the academic calendar
- Campus map
- Institutional master plan(s), including spiritual master plan(s) if not integrated in a detailed manner into the full master plan
- Documents on affiliations and extensions
- Representative sample of course syllabi, organized by schools and departments, with information on how the integration of faith and learning takes place in classes
- Listing of church affiliation of each administrator, faculty, and staff member by department
- Church affiliation percentages for the student body, for traditional and non-traditional students
- Institutional publications, including news releases and PR materials used with the university/college constituency
- Records of faculty research/publication. Access shall also be provided to faculty files/portfolios
- Administrative/faculty/staff pay scales as related to the approved denominational scales or approved by Board action
- A list of recommendations for endorsement of relevant faculty teaching in the seminary/department of religion and a copy of any alternative International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) process approved for the institution
- Copies of any national/regional accreditation/validation material (annual reports, self-studies, government accreditation/validation notifications, any correspondence changing accreditation/validation status, etc.)

The Accreditation Report

The accreditation report written during the accreditation visit will follow the outline identified in Appendix A. While the chair and secretary of the committee will be responsible for ensuring the completion of the report, all team members will be involved in writing the report, particularly the writing of findings, commendations, and recommendations in their areas of expertise. Appendix B provides advice to team members on writing recommendations and commendations.

Accreditation Recommendation

The accreditation recommendation is the overall recommendation on whether an institution should be accredited or reaccredited, and, if so, for what term and with what conditions, if any.

In considering the accreditation recommendation (to be reached by a majority vote), the visiting committee will have at its disposal the following options (a visualization of these options and their corresponding criteria may be found in Appendix C):

1. *A five-year institutional accreditation with no interim visit. Interim reports may be requested.* This option is typically for an institution that (a) has fulfilled or satisfactorily addressed all recommendations from the prior AAA visit, having successfully resolved persistent issues and concerns identified in prior AAA reports; (b) shows strength in each Area of its operation; (c) has submitted an acceptable Self-Study at the designated time; (d) presents evidence that all programs offered have been approved by the IBE/IBMTE; and (e) presents no major circumstance which would negatively impact its mission, its Seventh-day Adventist focus or identity, or the financial or administrative well-being of the institution. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)
2. *A five-year term of institutional accreditation, with a report and administrative review visit at the end of that period, with the possibility of extension of the term to the duration of the regional or government term of accreditation. Interim reports may be requested.* This option is typically for an institution that (a) has a strong track record of success in external accreditations; (b) has fulfilled or satisfactorily addressed all recommendations from the prior AAA visit, having successfully resolved persistent issues and concerns identified in prior AAA reports; (c) shows strength in each Area of its operation; (d) has submitted an acceptable Self-Study at the designated time; (e) presents evidence that all programs offered have been approved by the IBE/IBMTE; and (f) presents no major circumstance that would negatively impact its mission, its Seventh-day Adventist focus or identity, or the financial or administrative well-being of the institution. (*Option valid only for Form B institutions.*)

At the time of the administrative review visit, the team will expect to find that the institution has: (a) met the major recommendations of the previous visiting committee, (b) made significant progress toward meeting all other AAA recommendations, and (c) evidenced satisfactory progress in addressing the relevant issues raised by the regional accrediting or governmental review process. Only if these criteria are met, may the visiting committee recommend, and the AAA grant, an extension of the accreditation term that will match the number of years of the term granted by the regional or governmental agency. If these requirements have not been met, the visiting committee shall recommend, and the AAA may grant, a one-year extension of accreditation to the institution to allow it to prepare a Self-Study and be ready for a full accreditation visit at the end of the one-year extension.

3. *A five-year institutional accreditation with an interim visit. Interim reports may be requested.* This option is typically for an institution that (a) has fulfilled or satisfactorily addressed all recommendations from the prior AAA visit, having successfully resolved persistent issues and concerns identified in prior AAA reports; (b) has submitted an acceptable Self-Study at the designated time; and (c) presents evidence that all programs offered have been approved by the IBE/IBMTE. Nevertheless, the institution shows weaknesses in one or more Areas of its operation; or is experiencing or will experience in the near future important circumstances in its administration, finances, status, programs, or size which could negatively impact the institutional mission, or its Seventh-day Adventist focus or identity. These specific issues will

be identified in major recommendations. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)

At the time of the interim visit, the team will expect that the institution has fulfilled or made substantial progress in fulfilling all the major and other recommendations. The approximate time for the interim visit will be identified in the accreditation recommendation. If these requirements have not been met at the time of the interim visit, the visiting committee may recommend, and the AAA may grant, a shortening of the accreditation term.

4. *Three or four-year institutional accreditation. Interim reports or visits may be included.* This option is typically for an institution that does not qualify for a five-year period of accreditation, in that, while having submitted an acceptable Self-Study at the designated time, it (a) has not fulfilled or satisfactorily addressed one or more major recommendations from the prior AAA visit; (b) has not resolved persistent issues and concerns identified in prior AAA reports; or (c) has not presented evidence that all programs offered have been approved by the IBE/IBMTE. Only on rare occasions, where external situations result in institutional instability beyond the control of the institution, may a team give a recommendation of regular accreditation of less than three years. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)
5. *Deferral.* Deferral is not a final decision. It is interlocutory in nature and designed to provide time for the institution to correct certain deficiencies. This action allows the AAA Board to indicate to an institution the need for additional information or progress in one or more specified areas before a decision can be made. Deferrals are granted for a maximum period of one year, during which the prior accreditation status continues. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)
6. *Probationary status, with a specific time limit of two years or less.* This is typically for an institution where the accreditation visit is unsatisfactory or the pre-work by the institution is unacceptable. One or more of the following will be evidenced:
 - The institution has not submitted an acceptable Self-Study
 - The institution has not submitted a Self-Study on time
 - The institution has not made significant progress in fulfilling the recommendations of the previous evaluation visit
 - The institution shows substantial weaknesses in major areas of its operation or leadership
 - The institution is not representative of Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy, policy and/or practice
 - The institution disregards IBE/AAA guidelines and/or actions

These weaknesses need to be carefully documented, with specific conditions, expected evidence of their fulfillment, and a timeframe for the removal of the probationary status. In situations where one department/school shows significant weaknesses, the visiting team may recommend a focused visit to the institution within a two-year period to review that program. If the college or university has not resolved the identified problems by that time, then the whole college/university may be issued an Order to Show Cause. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)

7. *Issue an Order to Show Cause.* An Order to Show Cause is a decision by the AAA Board to suspend or terminate the accreditation of the institution within a maximum period of one year from the date of the Order, unless the institution can show cause why such action should not

be taken. Such an Order may be issued when an institution is found to be in substantial noncompliance with one or more Standards or Criteria for Review, or has not been found to have made sufficient progress to come into compliance with the Standards. An Order to Show Cause may also be issued as a summary sanction for unethical institutional behavior or persistent disregard of IBE/AAA guidelines or actions. In response to the Order, the institution has the burden of proving why its candidacy or accreditation should not be suspended or terminated. The institution must demonstrate that it has responded satisfactorily to AAA Board concerns, has come into compliance with all Standards, and will likely be able to sustain compliance. (*Option valid for either Form A or Form B institutions.*)

While the candidacy or accredited status of the institution continues during the Show Cause period, any new site or degree program initiated by the institution during this period is regarded as a substantive change and requires prior approval. In addition, the institution may be subject to special scrutiny by the AAA Board, which may include special conditions and the requirement to submit prescribed reports or receive special visits by representatives of the AAA. The Order to Show Cause is sent to the president of the institution and the chair of the governing board.

8. *Suspension of accreditation.* This is typically for an institution that either refuses to fulfill the recommendations of previous evaluation visits, does not welcome an AAA visit, or openly deviates from the philosophy and objectives of Seventh-day Adventist education. These will need to be carefully documented, with specific conditions that will allow the institution to regain regular status with the Adventist Accrediting Association. (*Option valid for either Form A or B institutions.*)

Right of Appeal

Appeals on actions related to the approval of new programs or programs undergoing substantive changes may be submitted to the International Board of Education. Appeals regarding accreditation are submitted to the Adventist Accrediting Association. The reasons for the appeal must be predicated on one of the following: the team or Board drew their conclusions based on inaccurate information, the team or Board failed to follow procedure, or the team or Board acted unprofessionally (for example, through conflict of interest, prejudice, etc.).

Right of Appeal—Division. Within 90 days of the Division Board of Education and/or Executive Committee issuing a decision, the involved institution may request reconsideration of the decision by the division education committee, provided the request is based on new information. Such review may be supported by representation of no more than three persons appearing before a meeting of the division education committee. The division education committee in executive session shall then render its final decision. If, after the final decision is rendered by the division Education Committee, the matter is not resolved, written appeal by the institution may be made to the International Board of Education or the AAA, through the General Conference Department of Education which shall have discretion to determine whether to accept the appeal for review. The Department of Education may recommend an independent assessment of the proposal and make a recommendation to the IBE/AAA based on its independent conclusions.

Right of Appeal—Site Visit Report. Applying institutions can appeal the overall conclusion of the on-site team by writing a response to the team report within 90 days of receipt of the final report. This will only be considered by the IBE/AAA if the appeal is in reference to the major recommendation regarding approval of the proposed new/changed program. Disagreement with other statements in the report may be documented, but these will not constitute an appeal. Any appeal should succinctly identify the reasons for disagreement with the findings of the site team, provide supporting

evidence for the request for a differing conclusion, or demonstrate where the team did not follow procedure. An appeal must be submitted within 90 days of the completion of the original report and at least 10 working days prior to the meeting of the IBE/AAA. Such an appeal may be supported by a representation of no more than three persons before a meeting of the board. The board, in closed session, shall then render its decision.

Right of Appeal—IBE/AAA. If the International Board of Education/Adventist Accrediting Association changes the recommendation of the on-site team to the detriment of the applying organization, that organization can appeal the Board action by submitting a written request for a reconsideration of the action within 90 days of receiving notification. This request must provide reasons, with supporting documentation attached, for why the Board action is considered unfair by the organization. This appeal will be considered at the next meeting of the IBE/AAA. Such an appeal may be supported by a representation of no more than three persons before a meeting of the board. The board, in closed session, shall then render its decision. In extreme and far-reaching decisions, further appeal may be made to the General Conference Executive Committee.

Accreditation Recommendation for an Institution Facing Initial Accreditation

An institution facing its first accreditation after being awarded candidacy status can be given any of the accreditation terms identified in 1, 3-5 above, although its Self-Study will respond to recommendations made at the time candidacy was granted.

If the visiting accreditation team considers that an institution in candidacy status does not reach the required standard for accreditation, it may recommend that the institution be dropped from candidacy and that no accreditation be awarded, or it may extend candidacy for a maximum of two years. If an extended term of candidacy is awarded, the institution will need to have met both the initial recommendations from the team recommending candidacy and any additional recommendations/conditions made at the time of the first AAA visit before the end of the extension period. An extension to candidacy can only be given once.

Final Report and Accreditation Action

The committee chair and secretary will ensure that the executive secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association will receive the final report no later than two months after completing the visit, including the confidential recommendation regarding the term of accreditation or other options. The date when the AAA will consider the report and the accreditation recommendation will be identified to the institution. (Note: Given the international nature of the AAA, the board meets twice annually.)

Once the draft accreditation report is received by the institution from the visiting team, it can be used immediately for planning and action. It is expected that the president of the institution visited will distribute copies of the evaluation report among the members of the board and review its recommendations during the next board meeting. In addition, the president will propose to the board a process for addressing each recommendation and assign responsibilities for their fulfillment, with timeframes, among his/her administrative team.

However, while the team report can be used as a working document, it will still be considered a draft until the report is voted by the AAA Board. The AAA Board reserves the right to make changes to the terms of accreditation recommended and to make alterations to the submitted report. The institution and its board chair will receive copies of actions taken by AAA Board as soon as practicable after the meeting.

THE INTERIM ACCREDITATION VISIT

Parameters of Visit

An interim evaluation of an Adventist university or college takes place when the AAA Board, upon the recommendation of an appointed visiting team, deems it necessary for the AAA to visit the institution in between the times of regular accreditation visits. The decision for an interim visit is voted as part of the AAA action following a regular accreditation visit.

Initial Arrangements and Committee Appointments

As with regular accreditation visits, in the year preceding an interim visit, the Executive Secretary of AAA will inform the institutional president of the visit that will take place the next year and of the institutional responsibilities in preparation for that visit. The chairman of the institutional board, the education director for the relevant division, and the GC liaison for that division will also receive copies of the correspondence.

Once this correspondence has been conveyed, the GC liaison will contact the administration of the institution to be visited and, in consultation with the division education director, will establish the dates of the visit.

The committee appointed to conduct an interim visit will be smaller in size than the one appointed to conduct a full accreditation visit. Its composition will be agreed upon by the GC liaison for and the education director of the world division in which the institution is located. These individuals usually serve as chairman and secretary of the committee. Other members of the committee will be selected in mutual consultation, taking into consideration the areas or functions of the institution that will be evaluated.

Financial Arrangements

Normally the relevant sending organizations will be responsible for the travel costs of the team members to the college/university campus. The administration of the institution visited will provide local transportation as well as room and board to the members of the committee during the visit. The division education representative will be responsible for all practical arrangements for the trip.

Pre-visit Expectations

Approximately three months before the visit, the GC liaison will forward to the members of the committee a copy of the report of the last full evaluation visit and a copy of the relevant sections of the *AAA Accreditation Handbook*. He/she will also confirm the plans for the visit in writing with the institutional president and board chair and will agree to a preliminary schedule.

The president of the institution being visited, in turn, will provide the members of the visiting committee, one month in advance of the visit, a written report identifying progress made on the recommendations made by the last full AAA team, with particular focus on the major recommendations.

The Visit

The interim visit will review progress on the recommendations made by prior AAA team(s) with special focus on the major recommendations made at that time and on the manner in which the college/university administration has addressed and responded to all recommendations. The

committee members will meet with board representatives, administrators, faculty, staff, and students, as required, to ascertain the satisfactory fulfillment of these recommendations.

In preparing its report, the visiting committee will reinstate the recommendations only partially fulfilled or unfulfilled, and may add others that require attention before the end of the accreditation period. In cases of institutional disregard for the recommendations made by the last full evaluation, the interim committee may recommend that the period of accreditation be shortened, that the institution be placed on probation, or that its denominational accreditation be suspended. In any of these cases, the committee will provide specific documentation and evidence in support of these recommendations. The report should follow the pattern of regular accreditation visit reports using commendations and recommendations. Members of the interim evaluation committee will sign the report.

Before leaving campus, the committee will present an exit report of the major findings of the visit to the chair of the board, the institutional president, and others as agreed with the president.

Follow-up

The chair of the committee will be responsible for sending a final copy of the report to the Executive Secretary of the AAA, with copies to the institutional president, the board chair, and the division education director no later than one month after completing the visit, although the overall recommendation remains confidential. The institution may consider the report as a working document as soon as the report is received and should discuss its findings at the next meeting of the institutional board. However, the AAA reserves the right to make changes to the recommendations at the time a vote is taken by the AAA Board.

The AAA Board will consider the report at its next full meeting. This will include any recommendation that would change the status of the institution with the AAA or the length of time to the next full accreditation visit. After action is taken by the AAA Board, the Executive Secretary of the AAA will be responsible for informing the institution of the action.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW VISIT

Parameters of Visit

An administrative review visit takes place when an institution accredited by the AAA under Form B guidelines has been given a maximum term of accreditation by the AAA (five years) but has a regional/government accreditation term that runs for a longer period. An administrative review visit is intended to provide an opportunity for the AAA to interface in a formal way with an institution after five years have passed since its previous full visit, but without expecting the institution to prepare a full Self-Study. If the team is satisfied with the progress made during that time, it may recommend to AAA an extension of the five-year term to coincide with the number of years of the term given by the regional/government accreditation body.

Initial Arrangements and Committee Appointments

As with regular accreditation visits, the Executive Secretary of AAA will ensure that in the year preceding the visit, the institutional president is informed of the visit that will take place the next year and is reminded of the preparation that will need to be made. The chairman of the institutional board, the education director of the relevant division, and the General Conference liaison for that division will also receive copies of the correspondence.

The administrative review team will typically include at minimum the appropriate GC liaison, the division director of education, and an administrator of a peer institution (ideally an individual present at the last full visit). If the chair of the last visit was a peer institutional administrator, that individual (or a suitable replacement) will typically be asked to chair the administrative review team and the General Conference liaison will serve as the secretary. In other cases, the General Conference liaison will serve as the team chair and the education director of the division will be the secretary. The appointment of the team will be by the General Conference liaison and division education director.

Once the committee is determined, the division education director will contact the administration of the institution to be visited and, in consultation with other team members, will establish the dates of the visit.

Financial Arrangements

Normally the relevant sending organizations will be responsible for the travel costs of the team members to the college/university campus. The administration of the institution visited will provide local transportation as well as room and board to the members of the committee during the visit. The division education representative will be responsible for all practical arrangements for the trip.

Pre-Visit Expectations

Approximately three months before the visit, the GC liaison will forward to the members of the committee a copy of the report of the last full evaluation visit and a copy of the relevant sections of the AAA Accreditation Handbook. He/she will also confirm the plans for the visit in writing with the institutional president and board chair. The correspondence will include an invitation to the board chair to meet with the team in person, or to speak to them by telephone or video conference call.

In preparation for an administrative review, the institutional administration will prepare a written report that:

1. Reviews the institution's progress in meeting the recommendations of the last full accreditation visit. (The team will expect that substantial progress has been made in meeting all major and other recommendations.)
2. Identifies key changes and developments in the institutional operation since the last full visit that have impacted on the institutional mission. This might include, for example, major changes in key personnel, shifts in institutional strategy, curriculum developments, the financial status of the institution, and the relationship between the institution and its external accrediting body (bodies).
3. Discusses future directions/plans that will impact the mission.
4. Raises other items of institutional concern that the administration wishes to discuss with the visiting team.

This report will be sent to all team members at least one month prior to the visit. After receiving the report, the GC liaison will be responsible for developing a schedule that will include selected meetings with administration, faculty, staff, and students as necessary.

The team will also want to see, at a minimum, the latest Self-Study report written by the institution for the AAA, and the Self-Study most recently prepared for any government accreditation visit (or equivalent) along with the response from that accreditation team. These should be made available

to the team on arrival on campus. The committee may also direct the institution to have other documentation ready for their examination at the time of the visit.

The Visit

Typically, the administrative review visit will be about two days in length and will largely focus on the content of the institutional report.

The team report will respond to the report from the institution and the follow-up discussions resulting from that report. It will be written in the same format as regular AAA reports, using commendations and recommendations, and will be signed by all members of the team. Based on their findings, the team will recommend either a continuation of accreditation to match overall the term given by the local accrediting body, up to a maximum extension of an additional five years or that the AAA visit the institution in a year's time with a full team. The next visit after an administrative visit will be a regular full visit.

The administrative review team will give an exit report to the administration at the end of its visit. The board chair will also be invited.

Follow-up

The final report must be forwarded to the Executive Secretary of the AAA within a month of the conclusion of the visit. The institutional president and board chair shall also receive a copy of the recommended report, although the overall recommendation remains confidential.

The AAA Board will act on the recommendations of the report at its next scheduled meeting. The institution can consider the report as a working document until that time and its findings should be shared with its institutional board at its next meeting. However, the AAA reserves the right to make changes to the recommendations when a vote is taken by the AAA Board.

The Executive Secretary of the AAA will inform the president of the college/university visited of the final AAA Board action.

FOCUSED ACCREDITATION VISIT

Parameters of Visit

Once the AAA Board takes an action regarding the length of an accreditation term, this decision will be upheld. However, in exceptional circumstances, the AAA may decide to visit an institution during an accreditation term to respond to an identified area of concern.

A request for a focused visit may be initiated by the institution's administration, board, or constituency, or by the AAA board itself responding to circumstances observed in the institution.

Exceptional circumstances may include the following:

1. A financial crisis that could have an adverse impact on the wider church
2. A crisis of mission—where the identity of the institution as a Seventh-day Adventist College or University is at risk. This could be the result of institutional policies that operate outside the expectations of a church institution.

3. A refusal of the institution to respond to the professional requests/expectations of the church—such as in providing information and reports that are integral to the accreditation process.
4. Exceptional personnel issues that leave the institution in a critically unstable situation.

Procedures

Where an institution recognizes it is facing a critical situation, the administration and board may choose to approach the AAA to ask for a focused visit. Such a request should be channeled through the appropriate division department of education. Such a visit will be considered informal. The team membership will be agreed upon between the institution, the division education director, and the GC liaison. The report with recommendations will be provided to all groups involved in making the original request.

A special visit may also take place by the request of the church organization directly responsible for the organization (normally the union or division), the relevant division department of education, or due to substantial concern on the part of the General Conference Department of Education. In each of these cases, the AAA, through the GC liaison, will coordinate the visit with the administration of the relevant division through its department of education.

When a visit is initiated outside the institution, other than by the AAA board itself, the AAA will send a letter of enquiry to the chairman of the board and the chief administrator of an accredited institution with a copy to the division education director outlining the issue at hand and requesting a formal response within 30 days. Based on the response received and in consultation with the division education director, the AAA staff will decide whether (a) the answer resolves the issue, (b) additional information is required, or (c) a focused visit is warranted. If the staff agrees to recommend a focused visit, all members of the AAA Board will be contacted, and a two-thirds vote of members casting a ballot will be required to proceed with the visit, which should take place within 60 days of the action. If a focused visit takes place, the GC liaison for the respective division will normally serve as the chair of the team.

Financial Arrangements

Normally the relevant sending organizations will be responsible for the travel costs of the team members to the college/university campus. The administration of the institution visited will provide local transportation as well as room and board to the members of the committee during the visit. The division education representative will be responsible for all practical arrangements for the trip.

Follow-up

The written report of the focused visit, with recommendations, will be considered by the AAA Board and the relevant division administration for appropriate action.



Adventist
Accrediting
Association

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

Part III:

Institution of
Excellence and
the *Self-Study*
(Form A)

2019

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INSTITUTION OF EXCELLENCE

When the Adventist Accrediting Association accredits an institution under the terms of Form A, it will be considering both the overall quality of the institution as a tertiary institution and the way

the college/university operation and life fully aligns with institutional and Seventh-day Adventist identity and mission. Within these parameters, an institution of excellence will be defined as an institution that meets the following standards:

1. A clear sense of Seventh-day Adventist mission and identity, reflected in statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics; and evidenced in the life of the institution.
2. A coherent and vibrant spiritual life program, encapsulated in a spiritual master plan that widely involves and impacts the institution and its communities.
3. A coherent governance structure, organization, and administrative leadership that provide strong mission-driven direction to the institution, that ensure the institution's educational objectives are met, and that nurture a campus environment characterized by effective communication, inclusive decision-making, and strong internal continuous quality improvement.
4. A financial operation that effectively supports institutional mission and Adventist identity, and evidences efficient management and a strong financial base, including support from the church.
5. A curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions both in the country and within the Seventh-day Adventist college/university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, preparing students for service in the church and in the broader society.
6. Faculty and staff personally supportive of the institutional mission, effective in their transmission of both their discipline and biblical values in the classroom, along with administrative processes to ensure adequate faculty and staff development, and evaluation procedures that include mission-focused elements.
7. Library, resource centers, and information and communication technology services that provide adequate resources to support the academic program, and policies to adequately address ethical and mission concerns.
8. Clear academic policies and records procedures that are efficient and secure, and which reflect best practice in tertiary institutions.
9. Student services that provide solid support for the personal and spiritual needs of students, and which model and nurture Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle in a constructive manner in all areas of student life.
10. A physical plant that provides adequate and well-maintained facilities for the development of a quality education program, and development plans that are supportive of the institutional strategic plan.
11. A public relations program that provides an opportunity for dialogue with external constituencies, that results in useful and accurate feedback to the institution, and that positions the institution and its mission positively in the minds of the various constituent groups.
12. Pastoral and theological education with a curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions offering pastoral and theological education within the Seventh-day Adventist college/university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, particularly in the preparation of students for denominational service.

These standards of excellence and their corresponding criteria for review will be used as the benchmarks for evaluation by AAA, and the basis for the institutional Self-Study.

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-STUDY FUNCTIONS

The development of an institutional Self-Study is a significant part of the accreditation process. It serves the following vital functions:

1. For an educational institution, it provides an opportunity for a formal review and evaluation of its mission, objectives, resources, and outcomes, and the relationships among them.
2. For the Adventist Accrediting Association evaluation team, it provides the detailed information that enables them to familiarize themselves with the institution and its direction, and draft relevant commendations and recommendations.
3. For the Adventist Accrediting Association and the institution, it reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the institution in relation to how well it meets the accreditation standards. Thus, the Self-Study indicates the areas where the institution must grow and improve, as a means of achieving or maintaining eligibility as an accredited institution.
4. For other colleges, universities, and accrediting bodies, it provides a mechanism with which to determine the value of the credits and degrees offered by the institution.

SELF-STUDY PROCESS

An institution is advised to start the Self-Study process as soon as it has received notification of the AAA visit. The Self-Study should be developed with wide input across the campus. A steering committee (and, if appropriate, subordinate task forces) should be appointed to prepare the document.* The completed Self-Study shall be approved by the administrative committee of the institution and will be sent to the AAA liaison for the institution at least one month prior to the accreditation visit. The AAA liaison will distribute copies of the Self-Study to team members upon receiving the institutional report.

The Self-Study should demonstrate accomplishment of each benchmark and should provide a reflective analysis and evaluation of institutional processes. The AAA expects to find an institution that is self-reflective and proactive in development of its spiritual mission and identity.

**Explanatory note: Ideally, every staff member would be appointed to one of the 12 sub-committees. This can be a good opportunity for staff and faculty to be fully involved in periodic meetings (weekly or bi-weekly) for a number of months prior to the visit. In these sessions, the committee carefully works through each CFR, constructing appropriate surveys, conducting interviews or focus groups, analyzing data, and drawing relevant conclusions. This reflective process can result in:*

- *Staff involvement, as individuals from the various areas of the institution engage in the process of continuous improvement.*
- *Staff cohesion, as staff in different areas and disciplines engage meaningfully in the mission, vision, and direction of the institution.*
- *A safe context for professional conversations.*
- *Distribution of responsibility, avoiding an inordinate burden on a single individual or small group.*
- *Eager anticipation of the AAA visit, knowing that every aspect has been thoroughly explored and well-documented.*

SELF-STUDY INSTRUMENT

There will be two sections to a Form A Self-Study.

Self-Study Section A

Section A of the Self-Study will respond to the recommendations from the latest regular or interim accreditation visit, with any additional recommendations from a focused visit.

The institution will identify:

1. Each item that has been fully implemented, including how the implementation was accomplished and evidences of its fulfillment.
2. Each item that has not been fully implemented and the reason for non-compliance.

In their response to Section A, the team will consider the percentage of recommendations that have been met, if there is clear evidence that they have been met, and if the reasons for not meeting recommendations are acceptable.

Self-Study Section B

Section B of the Self-Study will provide evidence in response to the twelve standards with corresponding Criteria for Review (CFRs) identified by AAA as indicators of excellence in Form A institutions.

In the tables that follow, each Area with its corresponding Standard is identified. This is followed in the left-hand column by a list of the CFRs that are indicators of excellence to which the institution will respond in its Self-Study.

Next to each CFR in the right-hand column are preferred evidences that serve to document compliance. In some instances, examples for clarity have also been provided. Where appropriate, institutions may provide alternate evidence highlighting strengths of a particular CFR. In the case of alternate evidence, the institution is advised to consult with the General Conference Department of Education prior to the submission of the Self-Study, to verify that the proposed evidence will be deemed applicable and adequate.

In certain Areas, the CFRs call for evidence based on the results of anonymous surveys conducted by the institution with current students, faculty and staff, members of the Board, and/or alumni. These surveys should ask questions regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its mission and objectives, among other matters, and should be conducted within one year prior to the date scheduled for the visit.

While the Self-Study and the Site Visit focus on outcomes, it is acknowledged that some of the most important outcomes, such as spiritual commitment and ethical behavior evidenced throughout the life of a graduate, are difficult to measure, and, furthermore, difficult to attribute to a specific part of the student's educational experience due to the influence of intervening variables. Consequently, inputs and processes are utilized as proxies for such outcomes.¹

A Self-Study will therefore include, and a Visiting Team will consider, a variety of both direct and indirect indicators to evidence progress and results. These indicators may include quantitative measures (such as an attendance rate or student/teacher ratio) and qualitative evidences (such as individuals' judgments or perceptions regarding a topic), as well as performance indicators at various stages of the results chain, including inputs, processes, outputs, and impacts. Together,

¹ "Indicators: Definitions and Distinctions." UNICEF Training Resources.
http://www.ceecis.org/remf/Service3/unicef_eng/module2/docs/2-3-1_indicators.doc

these provide a platform for evidence-based decisions regarding priorities, strategies, activities, and outcomes.²

² At various junctures through Section B, reference is made to the mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church and to the philosophy of Adventist education. The mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church may be found online at www.adventist.org, as well as in various denominational publications. A document summarizing the philosophy of Adventist education may be found at <http://education.gc.adventist.org>, at <http://adventistaccreditingassociation.org/>, as well as in various theme issues of *The Journal of Adventist Education* (available online at <http://www.jae.adventist.org>).

Area 1: Philosophy, Mission, and Objectives

Standard: The institution has a clear sense of Seventh-day Adventist mission and identity, reflected in statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics, and evidenced in the life of the institution.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>1.1 The institution has clear and current Board-approved statements of philosophy, vision, mission, and objectives and/or core values, that are congruent with Seventh-day Adventist mission and values, and with the Adventist philosophy of education, and are readily available to constituents, employees, and current and prospective students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, and core values^{1a} • The most recent Board action approving these institutional statements • A description of the processes of development or revision and approval of the corresponding statements • An explanation of how these institutional statements share the mission and values of the Church, as well as its philosophy of education^{1b} • A description of how institutional statements are made available to constituents, employees, and current and prospective students
<p>1.2 The institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, and core values are reflected in the policies and procedures of the institution, and in various aspects of institutional life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the alignment between institutional statements and the corresponding statements of institutional units • A representative sample of institutional policies and procedures that operationalize institutional statements • The profile of desired attributes for all graduates • Results of surveys of current students, faculty and staff, Board members, and alumni surveys regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its mission and objectives
<p>1.3 The institution is actively and broadly involved in supporting the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of institutional involvement in and support of the mission of the Church^{1c} • Examples of how the institution's educational and co-curricular programs prepare students to commit to and participate in the mission of the Church • Evidence of the active support of church standards and mission by the personal commitment of administrators, faculty, and staff to biblical values and lifestyle • Examples of a positive relationship between the institution and its local church, conference, union, and/or division • Examples of how the institution cooperates with other Adventist educational institutions

1.4 The institution is responsive to the needs of its constituencies, to denominational and national/regional developments, and to societal and educational trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from surveys of the needs and expectations of institutional constituencies • An analysis of key developments within Adventist higher education as these relate to the institution • An analysis of denominational and local demographics • A description of the institution's perceived role and place in denominational and societal contexts • An analysis of the perceived impact of educational issues and trends in the country/region, with a sample of committee minutes of discussions of current issues and trends • A description of how the college/university maintains its ethos as an Adventist institution while relating and responding to these issues and trends • Evidence of institutional success in maintaining both local credibility and denominational focus
1.5 Student experiences and learning outcomes are congruent with the institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of student and alumni surveys that assess the alignment of experiences while at the institution with the values, beliefs, and priorities embedded in the official statements of the institution • Results of assessments that determine the extent to which the values, beliefs, and priorities of the institution are reflected in the lives of its graduates and alumni^{1d}
1.6 The institution has clear, readily available, and current Board-approved statements of professional ethics/code of conduct (including a policy addressing sexual misconduct), congruent with the Adventist philosophy of education, compliance with which is required of all employees and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional codes of ethics/conduct for employees and for students • A description of the procedure for approval of the codes of ethics/conduct and to ensure alignment with the Adventist philosophy of education • Explanation of the way compliance is required and ensured of all administrators, faculty, staff, and students
1.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.	

Explanatory notes:

^{1a} Where schools/departments have mission statements, these should also be included. In larger institutions, these statements are expected.

^{1b} Concepts that contribute toward a clear Seventh-day Adventist identity include:

- The nature of God (e.g., as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer) and the nature of humankind (e.g., human value and God-given potential)
- The nature of learning (e.g., God as the ultimate Source of knowledge and wisdom)
- The great conflict between good and evil, including the fall, redemption, and restoration
- Whole-person development, including character formation

- The integration of faith, learning, and life
- The role of ethics and aesthetics
- Respect for the environment and for diverse cultures
- Education for this life and for eternity
- Other fundamental beliefs of the Church, including the Sabbath and the Second Coming

^{1c} Examples of institution involvement and support include:

- Membership and participation of institutional employees in Church organizations and initiatives
- Employee and student involvement in outreach and evangelistic activities of the Church
- Formalized collaborative relationships with other Church entities, including its institutions of higher education

^{1d} Examples of assessment elements include:

- The experience of a whole-person formation, including physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions
- Evidences of commitment to a life of witness and service
- Incorporation of a healthy lifestyle
- Active support of the ministry, activities, and ideals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Area 2: Spiritual Development, Service, and Witness

Standard: The institution has a coherent and vibrant spiritual life program, encapsulated in a spiritual master plan that widely involves and impacts the institution and its communities.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
2.1 The institution has an intentional, coherent, detailed, and current Board-approved spiritual master plan, which serves as the basis for the effective spiritual development of faculty, staff, and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current spiritual master plan of the institution^{2a}• A listing of key performance indicators, and a description of the process to assess and update the outcomes of the spiritual master plan• Evidence that administration, faculty, and staff have been involved in the development of the spiritual master plan and that it has received Board approval• Evidence of the implementation of the current spiritual master plan, including specific results from the assessed outcomes as well as how the plan has been dynamically updated based on this assessment^{2b}• Recent annual reports to the Board regarding the institution's spiritual life and the implementation of the spiritual master plan• A description of how the spiritual master plan includes the spiritual nurture of all student populations (residential, commuter, face-to-face, online, hybrid, undergraduate, graduate, full-time, or part-time)
2.2 Administration, faculty, and staff are actively involved in the spiritual development of students and of one another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of administration, faculty, and staff involvement in student and new faculty/staff mentoring programs that include spiritual nurture^{2c}• A description with examples of the extent of participation of administration, faculty, and staff in specific Spiritual Life programs and activities• Examples of groups and programs for service and for witness led or sponsored by administration, faculty, or staff• A description of the level of participation of administration, faculty, and staff in devotional and worship meetings• Examples of the intentional work of administration, faculty, and staff on behalf of non-Adventist and of off-campus students, including any alternative learning modalities

-
- 2.3 Students are actively involved in a variety of nurture, service, and witnessing programs.
- Evidence of the involvement of students in developing and implementing the spiritual master plan, as well as in planning nurture, service, and community engagement activities^{2d}
 - Description of the possibilities for student involvement in spiritual activities as participants and as leaders
 - Description of how the institution selects student spiritual leaders
 - Number of students actively involved in various in-reach and outreach activities, some of which should be student-initiated and developed
 - Description of curricular requirements for student involvement in service learning, as well as training and opportunity for witness, including students in any alternative learning modalities
 - Evidence of the strength of the student mission program, including short-term evangelistic and outreach experiences, as well as a formal student missionary program
 - Student survey responses on the outcomes of spiritual program opportunities
-

- 2.4 Campus chaplains and/or the pastor(s) of the campus church exert a significant role in the spiritual formation and life of the students.
- Description of the role that the campus church pastor(s) and/or the chaplain(s) and their associates play in the spiritual development and life of the students
 - Job descriptions of the campus chaplains and/or pastor(s) of the campus church^{2e}
 - Description of the selection process for the campus church pastor(s) and/or the chaplain(s), indicating institutional involvement
 - Description of the way the chaplaincy ministry of the institution is organized and of student services provided
 - Description of the relationship between the campus church(es) and the institution, with evidence provided of collaborative planning and involvement
 - Results of formal evaluations of services provided by the chaplain(s) and/or campus church pastor(s)
-

2.5 Students experience spiritual development, and a deeper commitment to social responsibility and witness, because of their educational experience at the institution.

- Results of assessments that document the extent to which students experience and graduates/alumni attain spiritual development while at the institution, as well as the factors that may have contributed to or detracted from this development^{2f}
- Results of student and alumni surveys that seek to assess the level of participation in service, both while at the institution and after graduation, as well as the development of a personal service ethic
- Results of student and alumni surveys that assess the level of participation in witness, both while at the institution and after graduation, as well as the development of a worldview in which they see themselves as active witnesses for God

2.6 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{2a} The institutional spiritual master plan should be in harmony with “A Guidebook for Creating and Implementing a spiritual master plan on Seventh-day Adventist Campuses of Higher Education,” available online at the AdventistAccreditingAssociation.org website. At minimum, the spiritual master plan should incorporate:

- A list of beliefs, values, and behavioral outcomes to be conveyed to faculty, staff, and students, based on institutional philosophy, mission, objectives, and/or core values
- A summary of the results from surveys of present status as well as of the spiritual needs of faculty, staff, and students
- A listing of specific objectives for the intentional transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs, principles, values, and lifestyle
- A description of corresponding curricular and co-curricular programs and activities
- A presentation of corresponding action plans, including budget requirements, timelines, and responsibilities

^{2b} Examples of additional supporting evidence which may be included:

- Samples of minutes of the Spiritual Life Committee and other committees that deal with spiritual development
- Samples of survey instruments utilized with faculty, staff, and students
- The plan of spiritual events for the current semester/quarter. This may include devotional and worship opportunities, campus ministry activities, outreach and mission programs, small group interactions, residence hall programming, etc.
- Samples of evaluation instruments used in assessing the effectiveness of the spiritual master plan

^{2c} Examples of the primacy of spiritual development could include:

- Time and physical space set aside for prayer and reflection
- Time dedicated to corporate worship without the imposition of conflicting events

^{2d} Examples of student nurture, service, and community engagement programs may include Bible study groups, drug and alcohol prevention, evangelism, campus ministry retreats, periods of spiritual emphasis, chapels, vespers, church services, Sabbath School, and personal witness.

^{2e} Examples of elements in the corresponding job descriptions include (a) line of authority and responsibility; (b) purpose of the position; (c) role in the involvement in the development and implementation of the spiritual master plan; and (d) relationships with administration, faculty, staff, students, and denomination, including the Division Chaplaincy Endorsing Department.

^{2f} Examples of elements that may be incorporated in the assessments of spiritual development include a sense of a deeper relationship with God, of the assurance of salvation, of a Spirit-filled life, of growth in faith, of the need of Bible study and prayer, of the formation of a biblical worldview to guide one's life, and of a better understanding of and commitment to the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Area 3: Governance, Organization, and Administration

Standard: The institution has a coherent governance structure, organization, and administrative leadership that provide strong mission-driven direction to the institution, that ensure the institution's educational objectives are met, and that nurture a campus environment characterized by effective communication, inclusive decision-making, and strong internal continuous quality improvement.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>3.1 The Board of Trustees/Council supports the mission of the institution as a reflection of the mission of the Church and seeks to ensure its own commitment to the philosophy of Adventist education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board/Council Bylaws, including matters of authority and responsibility, trustee qualifications and selection • Board/Council handbook • Board/Council minutes since the prior accreditation visit and records of implementation of actions • Current Board/Council membership, including explanations regarding expertise, representation, and compliance with Working Policy regarding denominational membership • Board/Council process of induction for new members, particularly in matters pertaining to institutional philosophy, mission, objectives, and core values • Board/Council self-evaluation instruments, process, and results
<p>3.2 The Board of Trustees/Council establishes policies that safeguard the Seventh-day Adventist identity and mission of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution and bylaws of the institution, with an explanation of how these documents safeguard Adventist identity and mission, and evidence alignment with denominational Working Policy • Documents that define the relationship of the institution to other entities (e.g., the Church, government, accrediting bodies, and educational institutions, including affiliations and extensions), with an evaluation of each to institutional mission • Board/Council policies regarding the hiring and evaluation of administration, and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council policies regarding faculty and staff hiring and renewal practices, and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council policies regarding instruction that is in harmony with the vision, mission, and values of the institution and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council approved goals related to spiritual mission and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same

<p>3.3 The institution’s administrative team provides effective leadership to achieve the institutional mission and a clear Adventist identity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions for top-level administrators • A description of the process, with sample instruments, for performance appraisals and self-evaluations of top-level administrators, especially relating to the mission of the institution and of the Church • Examples of the support of institutional mission and Adventist identity by top-level administrators
<p>3.4 The organizational structure of the institution facilitates the fulfillment of mission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational and committee charts • A listing of all administrative staff and responsibilities • An explanation of how the institution fulfills the expectation that all leadership positions are filled by individuals who are regular members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church • A listing of all campus-wide committees, giving their membership, terms of reference, frequency of meetings, and inter-relationships • An explanation of how key committees relate to the planning processes of the institution, including spiritual life • A description of how organizational structure facilitates the fulfillment of institutional mission
<p>3.5 The administration develops a Board-approved strategic plan that furthers institutional mission and is responsive to the constituent needs in the context of societal and educational trends.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-range strategic plan for the institution^{3a} • An explanation of how the strategic plan was developed, was communicated to faculty, staff, and constituents, and is periodically updated • A description of how the institutional strategic plan is guided by institutional mission, is based on an analysis of constituent needs, as well as institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and is developed within the framework of institutional philosophy and values • A representative sample of detailed, mid-range plans for institutional development and improvement, particularly those which directly contribute to mission • Recent reports of administration to the Board of Trustees/Council regarding implementation of the strategic plan

3.6 The institution evidences best practice throughout its governance and administrative structure and process.

- A description of Board/Council frequency and location of meetings, as well as a description of its committees^{3b} and their frequency of meetings
 - An explanation of the quality of contacts of Board/Council members with the institutional community, and of procedures for receiving constituency input
 - A description of the scope of the support of Board/Council members toward the institution
 - A description of the arrangements that the Board/Council and the administration have in place to receive legal advice on institutional matters, including harassment, equal opportunity, conflict of interest, and compliance with government regulations
 - A list of policies regarding hiring, employment conditions and benefits, and dismissal of officers
 - A description and assessment of the process by which decisions of the Board/Council and the administrative committee are communicated to the faculty, staff, constituency, and students
 - A description and assessment of the process whereby faculty, staff, students, and constituents convey ideas and concerns to administrators
 - An explanation regarding how committee members are chosen to ensure representation and broad involvement of faculty and staff, and how committee actions are communicated
 - An explanation of the role and voice of faculty and staff in administrative operation, and an assessment of the perception of its effectiveness by faculty and staff
 - An outline of the policies and procedures the institution has in place to respond and relate to unexpected events and institutional crises, including press relations
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3.7 The Board/Council and the administration evaluate the success of the institution, particularly in fulfilling its identity and mission as a Seventh-day Adventist institution.

- A description of the continuous quality improvement and assurance of educational and management processes as evidenced through outcomes
- A description of the processes in place for assessing institutional effectiveness, especially regarding the success of the institution in fulfilling its mission as an Adventist institution, with examples of how this feedback is used in institutional planning
- Examples of Board/Council evaluation of the institution's Church-related mission, including the results of the most recent assessment
- Results from institutional research assessing the fulfillment of institutional identity and mission, including internal and external constituencies as well as current students and recent graduates
- Samples of institutional reports provided to internal and external stakeholders, particularly those relating to institutional identity and mission

3.8 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{3a} The strategic plan of the institution (at least 5 years, ideally with a dynamic window to the future updated annually) should be the result of campus-wide conversations involving faculty and staff, first in selecting the core values that the institution wishes to convey, and then in identifying strategic means of attaining these values. The strategic plan should include supporting documents for student enrollment projections, spiritual life development, financial resources, academic programs, faculty and staff, and infrastructure.

^{3b} Typically, the committees of the Board/Council will include Audit, Compensation Review, and Academic Affairs committees, among others. The Academic Affairs Committee is typically chaired by the Union/Division Education Director.

Area 4: Finances, Financial Structure, and Industries

Standard: The institution has a financial operation that effectively supports institutional mission and Adventist identity, and that evidences efficient management and a strong financial base, including support from the church.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>4.1 The financial operation of the institution is prioritized to support institutional mission and Adventist identity, while safeguarding the financial well-being of the church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report on the financial health of the institution, including indices identified in denominational policy^{4a} • A description of the impact of institutional finances on the financial stability of related church organizations • A report on the support of the sponsoring church organizations, including subsidies and appropriations as a percentage of total income and instructional income • A report on government funds received, including the percentage of total income and instructional income that these represent, as well as institutional policies that govern their receipt • A description of how institutional budget and expenditures reflect institutional mission^{4b}
<p>4.2 The institution operates on a sound financial basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audited financial statements and letters to management for the prior three years • Provision of key financial indicators from the past five years for liquidity, working capital, solvency, and financial performance • If working capital and liquidity percentages are not at policy level, a description should be provided regarding what timed plans are in place to ensure that policy expectations are met • A copy of reports of the Financial Oversight Committees (Audit and Compensation Review), as well as the annual report of the institutional financial officer to the Board • A report that indicates the level of accounts payable and enumerates all outstanding loans and the commitment of the institution to any long-term debt, including its reasons, how it is managed, and the realism of plans to meet outstanding debt obligations

4.3 The financial area of the institution operates efficiently and effectively.

- A description of the organization and staffing of the business and accounting offices, and the respective responsibilities
- An explanation of how the organization of the financial area and its lines of authority contribute to its effectiveness
- A description of the budgeting process, identifying how cost centers participate and how priorities are decided
- A list of policies and procedures for effective financial control, cash receipt and expenditure, and audit
- A report on the effectiveness and timeliness of financial processes

4.4 The institution follows best practice in its financial operations.

- A list of policies regarding student fees, including policies and procedures for appropriately determining fee levels and for effectively keeping accounts current
- A description of the institution's fund-raising programs, strategies, and results
- A description of endowments, endowed earnings, and endowment appropriations, as well as the policies, procedures, and expenditure controls that guide investment and ensure the appropriate and ethical use of restricted funds
- A description of the risk management program and insurance coverage for the institution, personnel, and students, evidencing adequacy of insurance coverage according to Union/Division guidelines.
- A description of the funding and use of depreciation funds, evidencing congruence with church policies
- Evidence that the compensation and benefits paid to all elected or board-appointed officers are reviewed annually to determine reasonableness and compliance with denominational policies

4.5 The institution provides significant avenues for students of limited economic means to obtain access to education at the institution, including opportunities of student work where possible.

- A description of the opportunities for student labor, including trends in the number of students in each of these venues since the last accreditation visit, both during the school and during the long vacation period
- A description of the policies and guidelines for student labor, including aspects of remuneration, supervision, and performance evaluation, among others
- An outline of the institutional industries and/or centers for training and development, including the off-campus sale of Adventist literature, to incorporate an organizational chart and description of managerial responsibilities and staffing
- A description of the performance of institutional industries in relation to institutional mission and goals, impact on institutional finances, and the level of provision of work for students

4.6 The institution has developed a realistic financial plan aligned with its strategic plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three-year plan regarding operating finances • Explanation of the process utilized to develop the financial plan, including the relationship between income and expenditure of prior years
4.7 The institution has a plan, policies, and processes in place for capital expenditures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditures and budget for capital improvements and expenditures for the last, current, and following year • Description of the process for the approval of plans for capital expenditures • Explanation of the ability of the institution to adequately fund capital needs
4.8 Plans for development and improvement within this area.	

Explanatory notes:

^{4a} Examples of financial GC Working Policies include:

- Working capital (i.e., current assets above the total of current liabilities) should equal or exceed 20 percent of the operating expense, or, for interim statements, the latest 12-month actual operating expense of the latest complete fiscal year
- Liquidity—cash and bank plus securities and investments divided by total current liabilities and gross/certain allocated funds (see GC Working Policy S 25 73)
- Use of the tithe in educational institutions (GC Working Policy V 14 15)

^{4b} Examples of ways in which financial priorities reflect mission may include:

- Financial programs and policies provide opportunity for a greater proportion of Seventh-day Adventist young people who desire to receive an Adventist education to attend
- Financial programs and policies provide the means for a whole-person educational perspective, by means of a funded work-study program
- Service, witness, and spiritual life programs are adequately funded

Area 5: Programs of Study

Standard: The institution provides a curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions both in the country and within the Seventh-day Adventist college/ university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, preparing students for service in the church and in the broader society.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>5.1 The institution demonstrates how its own mission, objectives, and core values, and how the mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are reflected in its programs of study, including those offered through non-traditional delivery methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of curricular development and evaluation procedures that ensure alignment with institutional mission, objectives, and core values, and with the mission and beliefs of the Church• A description of how the beliefs, values, and lifestyle practices of the Church are conveyed through the programs of study• A description of how the institution prepares graduates for service in the Church as employees and lay members• A representative sample of the statements of mission, philosophy, and/or program outcomes or graduate profiles linked to institutional mission, objectives, and/or core values• A representative sample of course objectives linked to institutional objectives and/or core values• A description of how any alternative learning modalities, including distance education and web-based technology, fulfill institutional mission and integrate its core values, while also contributing toward fulfilling the mission of the Church and integrating its beliefs and values• Results from student/alumni evaluations of programs of study that assess effectiveness in transmitting both institutional mission, objectives, and values, as well as the mission and beliefs of the Church, with evidence that results inform curriculum development and revision• Results from denominational employers that assess institutional effectiveness in meeting the needs of the Church, and evidence that results inform curriculum development and revision

<p>5.2 The institution demonstrates the implementation of the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education and the meaningful integration of faith and learning throughout all disciplines and all course delivery modalities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of curricular development and evaluation procedures that focus on the integration of faith and learning and seek the salvation of the student • A description of procedures that encourage faculty members to approach their discipline from a biblical perspective, throughout all teaching modalities • A representative sample of course syllabi, required readings, teaching materials, learning activities, and evaluations that illustrate the integration of a biblical worldview,^{5a} throughout all teaching modalities • A description of ways in which the curriculum promotes whole-person development, including physical, mental, spiritual, social, emotional, and vocational dimensions • Examples of ways in which the curriculum prepares the student for a life of witness and service • Examples of ways in which the curriculum contributes toward character formation • Examples of ways in which the curriculum emphasizes high-level thinking, including application of knowledge, analysis, decision-making, and creative thought and innovation • Results from student evaluations of courses that assess effectiveness in the integration of faith and learning • Results from student and alumni evaluations of programs of study that assess effectiveness in achieving aspects of the Adventist philosophy of education
<p>5.3 The institution fulfills IBE/IBMTE processes regarding new programs of study and substantive changes to existing programs of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of institutional fulfillment of IBE/IBMTE processes regarding new programs of study and substantive changes to existing programs of study.
<p>5.4 The institution fulfills the AAA expectation regarding the inclusion of religion courses in the various programs of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation that students have met the stated religion requirement in all programs of study, in all modalities offered^{5b} • Course descriptions for the religion courses utilized in the various programs of study

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- 5.5 The institution employs best practices in developing, implementing, and updating the programs of study.
- A list of the programs currently offered, including degree requirements, course sequences, course descriptions, and credit definitions^{5c}
 - A copy of the academic master plan, specifying priorities regarding degree programs (including any alternative learning modalities), curricula, and instruction
 - A description of how the academic master plan aligns with the institutional strategic plan, with student enrollment trends, and with the availability of financial support for the plans
 - A description and evaluation of the procedures for curricular development, implementation, review,^{5d} and change, including the involvement of faculty, administrators, students, and constituency
 - A description of the criteria utilized for initiating and for terminating/suspending programs of study^{5e}
 - A description of core curriculum/general education requirements, and an evaluation of their success in supporting the total academic program and institutional mission
 - A description and assessment of any alternative learning curricula (including online, hybrid, and/or blended learning) and/or other nontraditional programs
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- 5.6 Instruction is carefully monitored and is effective.
- A description of the procedures for the evaluation and improvement of instruction, including any alternative learning modalities
 - A sample of the instruments used in the various forms of evaluation of instruction
 - An analysis of the results of recent evaluations of instruction and an explanation of how these have been utilized to plan for improvement
 - A description of the policies and procedures for course syllabi, with results from the most recent audit
 - An analysis of class size and instructor-student ratios, including any alternative learning modalities, in view of institutional policies
 - A description and assessment of the programs that accommodate the unique needs of special students
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5.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{5a} Examples of integrational elements include an understanding of:

- God as the Source of all truth
- The role of revelation, reason, research, and reflection in the understanding of divine truth
- The foundational role of Scripture in each discipline

- The great controversy between good and evil and how this affects each aspect of life
- The elements and formation of a Christian life and worldview
- The moral ethical dimensions of issues within each discipline and the role of biblical principles and values

Other integrational elements may be found in the “Statement of Philosophy,” available online at adventistaccreditingassociation.org, as well in essays provided by the Institute of Christian Teaching (ict.adventist.org) and articles on the topic published by *The Journal of Adventist Education* (jae.adventist.org).

^{5b} The AAA expectation for religion courses in all programs is as follows:

- Undergraduate: Every teacher is encouraged and expected to integrate faith with the discipline in all courses. Three semester (four quarter) credits of religion courses are required for each year of full-time study for a minimum of 12 semester (18 quarter) credits for a four-year degree or 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credits for every 32 semester (48 quarter) credits. Half of the credits must be based on study of the Bible.
- Graduate: Every teacher is encouraged and expected to integrate faith with the discipline in all courses. Two semester (three quarter) credits of graduate-level religion/theology courses are required for each year of full-time study (or the equivalent). At least one course must be based on study of the Bible. These required courses may introduce new material at a graduate level or examine previous knowledge and attitudes so that understanding is reconsidered and synthesized in light of new learning, and accepted practices undergo the rigor of the thoughtful analysis. Team-taught courses in which disciplinary knowledge is combined with religion/theology are acceptable (e.g., business ethics, religion and medicine) but the prefix and primary oversight must come from the religion/theology department. Institution may adopt variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework.

^{5c} These may be provided through an institution’s *Bulletin*, if it is up-to-date. Degree programs launched after the last accreditation visit must include the date on which they were recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist International Board of Education (IBE) or the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE).

^{5d} A description of the program review cycle should include when a program would be reviewed, justification for the need to review a program (e.g., tracer studies), and involvement of the various stakeholders, as well as the policies governing criteria and process for discontinuation of a program.

^{5e} Criteria for new programs should include the following factors, listed in approximate order of importance:

1. Direct contribution of the program to the proclamation of the gospel
2. Response of the program to an expressed high-priority need of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, crucial to fulfilling its mission
3. Alignment with the mission, values, and strategic plan of the institution
4. Response of the program to a frequently expressed need of the constituency and broader community, most directly of the Seventh-day Adventist membership, for themselves or for their families
5. Probability of acquiring any needed national/regional approval and/or accreditation
6. Availability and sustainability of qualified faculty, particularly those who are committed to Jesus Christ and uphold the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

7. Availability and sustainability of sufficient number of students, particularly the maintaining of a critical number of Seventh-day Adventist students to ensure a clear Adventist ethos
8. Financial viability and sustainability of the program, especially in terms of its cost/benefit ratio (which considers the investment required to start up the program, the ongoing expense to operate the program, and the probable number of students in the program, evidenced through student enrollment trends in the region/country and the results of formal interest surveys)
9. Availability and/or acquisition of needed physical facilities (including laboratories), equipment, and library resources

Area 6: Faculty and Staff

Standard: The institution has a faculty and staff personally supportive of the institutional mission, effective in their transmission of both their discipline and biblical values in the classroom, along with administrative processes to ensure adequate faculty and staff development, and evaluation procedures that include mission-focused elements.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
6.1 The institutional policies and procedures that pertain to faculty and staff identification/recruitment and hiring/contracting are aligned with the mission and values of the institution, and the mission and message of the Church.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional policies and procedures for identifying/recruiting and hiring/contracting of faculty and staff• A description and sample of the criteria and supporting documentation used in the decision-making process for recent faculty/staff acquisitions, including interview questions and the weighting of criteria• An explanation of how the institution has integrated missional expectations, of the institution and of the Church, into its policies and procedures on recruiting and hiring faculty and staff• Institutional policies and procedures for re-appointment/contract renewal and for promotion• A description and sample of the criteria and supporting documentation utilized in the decision-making process for recent faculty and staff reappointments/contract renewals and promotions• An explanation of how the institution has integrated missional expectations, of the institution and of the Church, into its policies and procedures for faculty and staff reappointment/contract renewal and promotion• Examples of employment contracts redacted to maintain confidentiality, with an explanation of how these convey the expectation of support of the institutional mission and values, and respect for the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church• A statistical table providing religious affiliation of administrators, faculty, and staff, disaggregated by full-time/salary and part-time/temporary contract status, and including an analysis of trends over time

<p>6.2 The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff orientation and development encourage and strengthen faculty support for the mission of the institution and of the Seventh-day Adventist church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institutional statement of academic freedom and responsibility • The institutional grievance policy^{6a} • The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff orientation • Evidence that orientation content contributes to a better understanding of the mission and values of the institution and of the mission and beliefs of the Church • The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff development, including faculty/staff in any alternative learning modalities • Recent examples of ways in which the professional development experiences have contributed to a better understanding of the philosophy of Adventist education and the integration of faith and learning • Results from faculty and staff assessments of institution-initiated professional development
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<p>6.3 Faculty and staff are effective in their roles as professionals and role models in a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of how faculty convey to students the mission, beliefs, and values of the institution and of the Church • The institution's policies and procedures for evaluation of faculty and staff, including in any alternative learning modalities^{6b} • A description of the overall system for the evaluation of faculty and of staff, including sample instruments encompassing teaching, research, mentoring, and participation in co-curricular activities, as relevant • A description of ways in which the institution integrates institutional and denominational mission, beliefs, and values in faculty and staff evaluation • A description of how results from faculty and staff assessments by students are used to enhance their effectiveness as professionals in an Adventist educational institution • A description of how results from faculty and staff assessments by peers and/or supervisors are used to enhance effectiveness as professionals in an Adventist educational institution • A description of the involvement of faculty and staff in local and wider church activities and responsibilities • A listing of the scholarly research and publications of the faculty since the prior accreditation visit • An explanation of how faculty service and research activities support institutional and Church mission

<p>6.4 The institution fulfills the AAA expectation regarding the qualifications of faculty who teach religion courses in the various programs of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A table identifying qualifications of faculty who teach religion courses in the various programs of study, including that they hold current ecclesiastical endorsement by IBMTE if teaching at least half time^{6c}
<p>6.5 The institution has in place qualified faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A statistical table of faculty members by school and department, disaggregated by academic qualifications, academic rank, employment status (full-time or part-time/contract), years of teaching experience, years of institutional service, denominational affiliation, gender, and those upgrading academic qualifications. • An explanation of institutional policies and procedures that ensure faculty fitness for the courses taught and the programs in which they are involved • An explanation of institutional policies and practices that relate to the number of contract/part-time teachers versus full-time teachers for the various programs • A description of the program for faculty and staff upgrading and professional development, including budget assigned for in-service training, attendance at workshops and seminars, and formal education, and the process and criteria whereby individuals are selected for release time and/or sponsorship • A description of the retention and stability of faculty and of staff
<p>6.6 Faculty and staff involved in any alternative learning modalities receive adequate training and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of policies and practices regarding the training and qualifications of faculty and staff engaged in the teaching and supervision of alternative learning modalities • A description of the technical and/or curricular support provided to faculty engaged in alternative learning modalities • An explanation of the policies and practices regarding the workload and assessment of faculty engaged in alternative learning modalities

6.7 Policies and procedures pertaining to faculty and staff evidence best practices.

- The current employee handbook, with an explanation of how it is reviewed and updated, and made available to faculty and staff
- Sample job descriptions of faculty and staff, and an explanation of the updating process and frequency, and the extent to which all employees have received a current job description
- An explanation of faculty/staff input in the employment process
- A list of policies and practices regarding teaching load, including an explanation of why these do or do not include committee work and administrative duties, student advisement, and involvement in research
- A list of policies and practices regarding academic rank, including an explanation of why these do or do not include years of teaching experience, research and publication, and service, including that rendered in the local community and to the denomination
- A list of policies regarding employment conditions and benefits
- An explanation of how the institution supports and encourages faculty research and publication
- A list of policies regarding the disciplining or dismissal of employees
- Sample service files, with an explanation of policies and procedures by which these are kept current

6.8 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{6a} Examples of related documents that can be provided include:

- The institutional statement of professional conduct
- Institutional policies and criteria regarding termination of employment
- Institutional grievance policies and procedures
- Samples of faculty and staff statements of philosophy and/or worldview

^{6b} Aspects that may be incorporated in student assessments of faculty and staff include:

- Evidencing positive relationships with students, including mentor and role models
- Taking a personal interest in each student
- Communicating appreciation for the value and potential of the student
- Communicating confidence in divine revelation through the Bible
- Demonstrating biblical norms of conduct and an Adventist lifestyle
- Seeking opportunities to converse about spiritual matters and to guide the student to a personal encounter with Christ
- Helping the student develop a personal sense of mission

^{6c} The AAA expectation is as follows:

- Undergraduate: All courses must be taught by a member of the religion/theology department who has a minimum of a master's degree in the discipline or a master's degree and 12 semester (18 quarter) graduate credits in theology/religion. Institutions may adopt

variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework. Institutions are responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty, including adjunct faculty.

- Graduate: All courses must be taught by a member of the religion/ theology department who preferably has an earned doctoral degree in the discipline or a master’s degree and 18 semester (27 quarter) graduate credits in theology/ religion. Team-taught courses in which disciplinary knowledge is combined with religion/ theology are acceptable (e.g., business ethics, religion and medicine) but the prefix and primary oversight must come from the religion/theology department. Institution may adopt variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework. Institutions are responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty, including adjunct faculty.

Area 7: Library, Resource Centers, and Technology

Standard: The institution has library, resource centers, and information and communication technology services that provide adequate resources to support the academic program, and policies to adequately address ethical and mission concerns.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>7.1 The library and its resources support institutional mission, the transmission of Adventist beliefs and values, and the spiritual development of students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of how the library helps students to distinguish truth from error and to engage in the ethical use of information • Policies for acquiring new library materials, with an explanation of how these policies support the Seventh-day Adventist ethos of the institution • A description of the implications of the institutional stand on academic freedom and responsibility on library operations • An explanation of resources that assist students and faculty in their study of the Bible and faith maturation • A description of processes to identify resources that contribute to a biblical worldview for the various disciplines, with examples of resources acquired • A description of special collections that contribute to institutional mission and faith (Adventist heritage and mission, fundamental beliefs, White Estate resources) • An explanation of how the library supports institution-wide faith activities and community outreach, and upholds the institution's faith-based policies
<p>7.2 The library and resource centers are adequately staffed and funded, and provide relevant materials to support the degree programs offered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of library and resource staff, their qualifications, job descriptions, and organizational chart • A description of professional development for library staff, including training for the support of any alternative learning modalities • A table identifying the funds budgeted and spent annually during the last three years for book acquisitions, journal subscriptions, audio-visual materials, electronic resources, and library operations, disaggregated by academic areas^{7a} • A summary of book holdings, journal subscriptions, audio-visual materials, and electronic resources, by subject areas

7.3 The library and resource centers operate efficiently and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outline of policies, criteria, and procedures for the recommendation, review, acquisition, and weeding of print and electronic resources, including the involvement of the faculty • Data of the usage by faculty and students of the library resources, including an explanation of how distance education and/or nontraditional students obtain library and technology support services • A description of the availability and usage of inter-library loan by faculty and students • An outline of plans and priorities regarding the library and resource center(s), delineating the integration of significant priorities in institutional strategic plans
7.4 Institutional technology resources are adequately staffed and funded, and provide sufficient support to the degree programs offered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the technology area, including its staff, annual budget, equipment, and services • A description of technology available to faculty for classroom use, including policies on acquisition and use, and the degree of faculty input to prioritize needs • A description of the professional support given to personnel in the technology area • A description of funding provided for the institution's technology resources over the past three years
7.5 The technology services operate efficiently and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on the usage of the technology resources by faculty and students • Evidence of orientation of students and personnel in the effective application of information technology • An outline of policies and procedures for computer use and internet access that reflect the mission and values of the institution, including an explanation regarding communication of policies and the procedures in case of the abuse of policies

7.6 The institution has in place a comprehensive and well-implemented technology resources plan.

- The institutional technology support and resources plan designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, communications, research, and operational systems, such as course management systems, server security, and authentication software
- An outline of the priorities in technology, delineating how these priorities are integrated in institutional strategic plans
- A description of how the institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure, hardware, software, and facilities to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution and to meet institutional goals
- Evidence that the institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and user satisfaction, and uses the results of evaluation as the basis of improvement

7.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory note:

^{7a} Figures presented should include the percentage of the academic budget devoted to the acquisition and operation (excluding salaries and benefits) of the library (typically 3-5% of the instructional budget).

Area 8: Academic Policies and Records

Standard: The institution has clear academic policies and records procedures that are efficient and secure, and which reflect best practice in tertiary institutions.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
8.1 Institutional policies clearly reflect Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstration of how the institution's policies exemplify and communicate biblical principles and values across the following policy areas: ^{8a}<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Lifestyle-related policies– Student discipline policies– Appeals policies and procedures– Grading and other academic policies– Residential life and worship attendance policies– Service-learning requirements• A description and assessment of the way in which the academic policies and records and its staff promote and support the transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and the spiritual development of students
8.2 Policies are clear, communicated to students, consistently applied, and comparable with those of other Seventh-day Adventist institutions of higher education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of policies and procedures regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– student recruitment, including financial aid– admission and registration– class schedules and length of academic terms– student records, with notation of any off-campus sites– academic conduct (including plagiarism)– assessment procedures and processes– advancement to candidacy, academic probation, and honors– residence requirements, transfer credits, and graduation requirements– alumni records• Explanation of how policies differentiate between undergraduate, graduate, and professional students
8.3 Grade assignment aligns with best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A summary of grade distribution by department for the past two academic years• A description of the policies and procedures that ensure fairness and consistency in the approach to grading

8.4 The records area operates efficiently and effectively, ensuring the integrity, security, and confidentiality of student information.

- A description of the way in which the records area is organized and staffed
 - An explanation of the policies and procedures that ensure the integrity, security, and confidentiality of student information
 - Results from a recent assessment of student perception of the records area services provided to the student, including registration and the retrieval of transcripts
-

8.5 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory note:

^{8a} Specific policies that could be discussed may include the following:

- Policies regarding intellectual property with an explanation of how these reflect the core values of the institution
- Policies regarding a student’s right to privacy with an explanation of how these reflect the biblical view of human beings
- Policies and procedures that promote student self-governance with an explanation of how this concept operates within the Adventist ethos of the institution
- Policies for accessing electronic media, including procedures in the case of an abuse of policies, accompanied by an explanation of how these reflect Adventist identity and the mission of the institution
- Policies that relate to student misconduct with an explanation of how these reflect a redemptive and transformational approach

Area 9: Student Services

Standard: The institution has student services that provide solid support for the personal and spiritual needs of students, and which model and nurture Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle in a constructive manner in all areas of student life.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
9.1 Student services clearly promote and support Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of how the institution identifies the unique needs among student groups and develops plans to respond to these needs, particularly in the context of the mission of the institution, based on a demographic trend analysis (since the prior accreditation visit) of students, disaggregated by age ranges, gender, nationality, off-campus and residence hall status, marital status, denominational affiliation, part-time vs. full-time status, undergraduate vs. graduate status, traditional vs. non-traditional status• The philosophy and/or mission statements of the various student services, with an explanation of how these align with institutional mission and core values• An analysis of the way each student service area assists in the transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values, models and nurtures an Adventist lifestyle, provides for the personal and spiritual needs of students, including those enrolled in non-traditional programs of study, and encourages whole-person development^{9a}
9.2 The policies and procedures of the student service areas align with institutional mission and values, and with the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current student handbook and an explanation of its availability to students• A description of incoming student orientation and the commitment expected• A description and assessment of student government policies and processes, including an explanation of election process, frequency of meetings, involvement of faculty/staff, and value for institutional objectives• A description and assessment of the way students can communicate ideas and concerns to administration• An explanation of how the institution fosters student leadership abilities• A description of the policies and procedures regarding student discipline, including the line of responsibility for their implementation and an assessment of the effectiveness of implementation and compliance

<p>9.3 The area of student services is well-organized to effectively meet the needs of students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organizational chart of the area of student services, a listing of the student services staff, job descriptions, and budget allocations • A description of contacts with parents/guardians/sponsors • A description of programs and facilities for student contacts with faculty outside the classroom • A description and assessment of the student guidance, counseling, career planning, and placement programs • A description and assessment of the student health care services • A description of the services provided by the campus store, as well as bookstore and/or book bank
<p>9.4 The institution provides adequate student residence experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies and procedures pertaining to student residents, and an explanation of their relationship to institutional mission • A description and assessment of the residence facilities for single and for married students • A description of residence supervisory staff, their qualifications, and their professional development pertaining to their position • A comparison of residence cost to the tuition of a full-time student, and to the denominational wage factor (annual) for the area where the institution is located
<p>9.5 The institution provides appropriate student food services, in harmony with the health message of the Seventh-day Adventist church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description and assessment of student food services facilities and equipment • A description of student food services staff, including their qualifications and professional development pertaining to their position • A description of policies and guidelines for student food services, including cafeteria supervision, nutritional aspects of diet, and student input

<p>9.6 The institution provides appropriate programs and resources to support student recreation, cultural events, and other co-curricular activities, aligned with institutional mission and values and the philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description and assessment of the programs, objectives, and budgetary resources provided to support student cultural events, recreation, clubs, and other co-curricular activities • A description of the involvement of students in planning cultural, recreational, and other co-curricular activities • An explanation of the supervision and coordination of student cultural events, recreation, clubs, and other co-curricular activities • A description and assessment of the recreational facilities and equipment provided, and their utilization by male and by female students • An explanation of how the student cultural events, recreation, clubs, and other co-curricular activities are congruent with the Adventist philosophy of education and denominational working policy, and with the mission and values of the institution
<p>9.7 The institution has in place mission-focused services to address the unique needs of student groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description and assessment of the student services provided for community students, including personnel responsible and the effectiveness of processes to identify and meet student needs • A description and assessment of the student services provided for international students, including personnel responsible and the effectiveness of processes to identify and meet student needs • A description and assessment of the student services provided for students enrolled in any alternative learning modalities, including the training of staff to identify and meet the needs of these students, and the effectiveness of these processes

9.8 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory note:

^{9a} Examples of student services which would typically be addressed include, among others:

- Residence halls
- Cafeteria
- Recreational facilities
- Health/wellness services
- Student counseling programs (e.g., career, spiritual, therapeutic, substance abuse)
- Placement services
- Student clubs and activities

Area 10: Physical Plant and Facilities

Standard: The institution has a physical plant that provides adequate and well-maintained facilities for the development of a quality education program, and development plans that are supportive of the institutional strategic plan.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>10.1 The physical plant and campus facilities promote and support institutional mission, Adventist beliefs and values, and the spiritual development of students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campus master plan (including 5- and 10-year schedules for building development), with supporting documents explaining the relationship of the campus master plan to the institutional strategic plan and delineating the realism of financial backing for these plans • A description of how the Adventist philosophy of education is reflected throughout the campus^{10a}
<p>10.2 The campus provides an aesthetic environment, evidences upkeep, and operates under a comprehensive maintenance schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description and assessment of the physical plant staffing, responsibilities, and procedures for the development and maintenance of buildings and facilities, gardens and landscape • Budget allocation and expenditures for the development and maintenance separately of the physical plant for the past 3 years • Maintenance schedule for buildings and other infrastructure
<p>10.3 The institution has a safe, hygienic, accessible campus, that evidences good stewardship of the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description and assessment of the campus security services • A description of policies and procedures regulating utilization and maintenance of roads, sanitation, lighting, and water supply • A description of policies and procedures pertaining to accessibility for individuals with physical limitations • A description of policies and procedures to enhance safety and minimize potential liabilities • Evidence that the level of insurance complies with denominational working policy • An explanation of the ways in which the campus evidences environmental responsibility

10.4 The physical plant and its services adequately support the educational functions of the institution.

- An explanation of how the size and number of facilities adequately support the student population and the academic programs offered
- Results from periodic surveys of students and personnel regarding the adequacy of the physical plant and campus services, including utilities
- A description of the laboratory facilities that support academic programs and an evaluation of their adequacy
- A description of facilities, equipment, and other resources essential to the viability and effectiveness of any alternative learning modalities, including an explanation of the process by which these facilities, equipment, and resources are evaluated and upgraded

10.5 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory note:

^{10a} Aspects which might be presented include the following:

- Examples of spaces for worship, for reflection, for physical activity, for collaborative learning, etc.
- Examples of how the physical plant reflects the stewardship of resources (e.g., ecological facilities, recycling efforts)
- Examples of aesthetic elements and décor throughout the campus that contribute to a sense of mission and/or Adventist identity
- Examples of the use of natural settings as educational contexts

Area 11: Public Relations and External Constituencies

Standard: The institution has a public relations program that provides an opportunity for dialogue with external constituencies, that results in useful and accurate feedback to the institution, and that positions the institution and its mission positively in the minds of the various constituent groups.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>11.1 Relationships with external entities affirm Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-year enrollment and recruiting plan which supports institutional strategy and mission • Demonstration of how branding, publications, advertising, publicity, and community relations foster an understanding of the institution’s spiritual values ^{11a} • A description of ethics and respect demonstrated toward other Adventist educational institutions, especially in terms of student recruitment • A description of how the institution engages its alumni in support of institutional mission • A description of how development and fundraising support the mission of the institution
<p>11.2 Publications and productions generated by or within the institution evidence breadth, quality, and alignment with institutional mission and values, and with the philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list and brief description of institutional publications and media productions since the prior accreditation visit, and of the policies and procedures governing their development and production • A list and brief description of student publications, including frequency and circulation • A description of the policies and procedures regarding institutional advisement and supervision of student-sponsored or coordinated publications
<p>11.3 The institutional website and presence on social media are current, accurate, attractive, and representative of the mission and values of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies, procedures, and personnel involved in development of and placement of information on the institutional website and through social media • An explanation of how the institutional presence on the internet is mission-focused and maximizes its effectiveness as a public relations and recruitment tool

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- 11.4 The public relations, marketing, and recruitment programs are well-developed, distinctively Seventh-day Adventist, and effective.
- A description of the public relations policies, procedures, budget, and personnel involved
 - An explanation of the way in which the institution presents its unique mission as a Seventh-day Adventist institution and promotes its academic programs, plans, and services to its constituency and other publics
 - An assessment of the response from constituency and other publics, including the government, to the public relations efforts of the institution, including a clear and attractive image as a Seventh-day Adventist institution
 - The communications plan for emergency situations, identifying the institutional spokesperson for the media, as well as constituency and government authorities
 - A description of the marketing and recruitment program, including the support and/or involvement of the board, administration, faculty, and staff
 - An evaluation of the marketing and recruitment strategy, including its linkage with the institutional strategic plan and its effectiveness
-

- 11.5 The institution is responsive to community and constituency needs.
- A description and assessment of institutional programs and activities, including the provision of educational opportunities, targeted at helping the local community
 - An explanation of the means of identifying community needs and receiving community feedback
 - An assessment of the effectiveness of institutional programs and activities focused on its surrounding community, including institutional perception
 - An explanation of the means of identifying constituency needs and receiving feedback
 - An assessment of the perception of the institution in the eyes of its constituency, including local churches
-

- 11.6 Alumni are well-connected to the institution, which conducts periodic assessments of its graduates.
- A description of the institutional programs, processes, budget, and staff related to alumni, including organization and opportunities to give input and support to institutional plans and programs
 - An assessment of alumni participation in and support of institutional plans and programs, and the linkage of these with overall institutional strategy
 - Instruments used to gather information from alumni
 - Explanation of the periodicity, scope, content, and processes of the formal assessment of graduates
 - Results from the most recent assessment of graduates, including continuing commitment to the mission and message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
-

11.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory note:

^{11a} It may be helpful to include a representative sample of materials utilized in advertising and student recruitment, accompanied by an explanation of how these convey the institution's philosophy and core values.

Area 12: Pastoral and Theological Education

Standard: The institution has pastoral and theological education with a curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions offering pastoral and theological education within the Seventh-day Adventist college/university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, particularly in the preparation of students for denominational service.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>12.1 The programs of study are congruent with institutional and Church mission and are aligned with IBMTE/BMTE requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curricula and graduation requirements for the various pastoral and theological programs, including all alternative learning modalities • An explanation of how the programs of study are congruent with institutional mission and of the Seventh-day Adventist Church • A table mapping the pastoral and theological curricula to those outcomes and competencies identified as essential by IBMTE/BMTE • Dates on which the various programs were recognized by the IBMTE
<p>12.2 The faculty members in the pastoral and theological programs are qualified to teach in the various disciplines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of all faculty teaching in the pastoral and theological programs, including academic preparation, areas of specialization, professional qualifications, and courses taught • Evidence that all courses are taught by a member of the religion/theology department who has an earned doctoral degree in the discipline or a master's degree and 18 semester (27 quarter) graduate credits in theology/religion.
<p>12.3 The faculty is involved in the spiritual development and the professional formation of pastoral and theology students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the nature and level of faculty involvement in the spiritual development of pastoral and theology students, including those enrolled in alternative learning modalities • Results from evaluations of current students and of recent graduates regarding the quality of the overall spiritual development and pastoral formation program and of the involvement of the theology faculty in the program
<p>12.4 The faculty members are involved in the life of the Church at various levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the breadth of pastoral and theology faculty involvement in the life of the Church at various levels, and an explanation of how this affects their classroom effectiveness • Examples of faculty annual reports

12.5 Pastoral and theological students are involved in evangelistic and nurturing activities connected with their educational experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the involvement of pastoral and theological students in evangelistic and nurturing activities, including those enrolled in alternative learning modalities, with an explanation of how these activities are linked with the academic program • Results from student program evaluations and graduate surveys of involvement in evangelistic and nurturing activities as a part of the academic program
12.6 The Board of Trustees/Council holds the administration accountable to ensure pastoral and theological programs and faculty are focused on and supportive of the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church, including current ecclesiastical endorsement of all religion/theology faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board/Council approved goals related to pastoral and ministerial graduate success and accepted performance indicators • A description of program review policies and procedures established by the Board /Council and utilized by the administration to ensure that the pastoral and ministerial programs are focused on the message and mission of the Church • Reports of the program reviews • A description of faculty appraisal policies and procedures established by the Board /Council and utilized by the administration to ensure that pastoral and ministerial program faculty are supportive of the message and mission of the Church • Reports of the faculty appraisals • A list of all religion/theology faculty, including ecclesiastical endorsement status for all religion/theology teachers who teach at least half time and explanation for any who are not endorsed or are in “under review” status
12.7 The dean/department chair and the other faculty in the school/department are selected to ensure that they understand the needs of the Church and are fully supportive of its mission and beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies and procedures by which the pastoral and theological faculty and the dean/chair are selected • Compliance of the institutional process with IBMTE requirements
12.8 The institution has a formal system for evaluating faculty and supervisor performance in the pastoral and theological programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies and procedures for evaluating pastoral/theological faculty performance, including support of mission • An explanation of how the evaluation system provides for fair treatment of faculty, while ensuring that the institution will transparently uphold Adventist beliefs^{12a} • A description of policies and procedures for selecting, developing, and evaluating internship supervisors • A sample of evaluation instruments and results

12.9 The program includes the evaluation of progression and placement procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures regarding student progression • A description of placement procedures^{12b} • Statistics regarding the placement of graduates • Results from field evaluations of the effective formation of graduates, including assessments of ministerial interns by supervising pastors
12.10 Effective communication is sustained between the department/school and the wider Church constituency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of communication processes between the department/school and the Church constituency, particularly in terms of matters such as program content and the specific needs of the constituency • Results from evaluations by the Church constituency of the effectiveness of these communication processes
12.11 The institution has in place means to assess and improve the effectiveness of the pastoral and theological education programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the means in place to assess and improve the effectiveness of the pastoral and theological education program, including all alternative learning modalities, in meeting its stated mission • Results of program assessments from recent graduates, employers, and Church leadership • Examples of the use of evaluations for making program improvements
12.12 Plans for development and improvement within this area.	

Explanatory notes:

^{12a} Examples of evaluation system components:

- Student assessments
- Feedback from peers and from leadership
- Measures of graduate satisfaction/success
- Assessment of mentoring pastors
- Faculty plans for improvement

^{12b} While placement refers principally to formal employment by the church for graduates to become a church pastor (or intern), placement may also apply to those graduates who join supporting ministries or become volunteers.



Adventist
Accrediting
Association

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

Part IV:

Institution of
Excellence and
the *Self-Study*
(Form B)

2019

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INSTITUTION OF EXCELLENCE

An institution accredited under the terms of Form B will have already demonstrated a continuous commitment to excellence. Its ongoing quality will be monitored and evidenced both externally and internally in a variety of ways. (Part I of the *Accreditation Handbook* identifies examples of the criteria used by the Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA) for deciding to accredit institutions under Form B.)

With this in mind, the AAA will focus its visit on the way the college/university operation and life are in harmony with institutional and Seventh-day Adventist mission and denominational Working Policy. Within these parameters, a leading institution of excellence will be defined as an institution that meets the following standards:

1. A clear sense of Seventh-day Adventist mission and identity, reflected in statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics; and evidenced in the life of the institution.
2. A coherent and vibrant spiritual life program, encapsulated in a spiritual master plan that widely involves and impacts the institution and its communities.
3. A coherent governance structure, organization, and administrative leadership that provide strong mission-driven direction to the institution.
4. A curriculum that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, preparing students for service in the church and in the broader society.
5. Faculty and staff personally supportive of the institutional mission, effective in their transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and biblical values in the classroom, along with administrative processes to ensure adequate faculty and staff development, and evaluation procedures that include mission-focused elements.
6. Elements of the educational setting, including finance, facilities, library, and student services, among others, support institutional mission and Adventist identity.
7. Pastoral and theological education with a curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions offering pastoral and theological education within the Seventh-day Adventist college/university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, particularly in the preparation of students for denominational service.

These standards of excellence and their corresponding criteria for review will be used as the benchmarks for evaluation by AAA, and the basis for the institutional Self-Study.

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-STUDY FUNCTIONS

The development of an institutional Self-Study is a significant part of the accreditation process. It serves the following vital functions:

1. For an educational institution, it provides an opportunity for a formal review and evaluation of its mission, objectives, resources, and outcomes, and the relationships among them.
2. For the Adventist Accrediting Association evaluation team, it provides the detailed information that enables them to familiarize themselves with the institution and its direction, and draft relevant commendations and recommendations.
3. For the Adventist Accrediting Association and the institution, it reveals the strengths and weaknesses of the institution in relation to how well it meets the accreditation standards. Thus, the Self-Study indicates the areas where the institution must grow and improve, as a means of achieving or maintaining eligibility as an accredited institution.

4. For other colleges, universities, and accrediting bodies, it provides a mechanism with which to determine the value of the credits and degrees offered by the institution.

SELF-STUDY PROCESS

An institution is advised to start the Self-Study process as soon as it has received notification of the AAA visit. The Self-Study should be developed with wide input across the campus. A steering committee (and, if appropriate, subordinate task forces) should be appointed to prepare the document. The completed Self-Study shall be approved by the administrative committee of the institution and will be sent to the AAA liaison for the institution at least one month prior to the accreditation visit. The AAA liaison will distribute copies of the Self-Study to team members upon receiving the institutional report.

The Self-Study should demonstrate accomplishment of each benchmark and should provide a reflective analysis and evaluation of institutional processes. The AAA expects to find an institution that is self-reflective and proactive in development of its spiritual mission and identity.

SELF-STUDY INSTRUMENT

There will be three sections to a Form B Self-Study.

Self-Study Section A

Section A of the Self-Study will respond to the recommendations from the latest regular or interim accreditation visit, with any additional recommendations from a focused visit.

The institution will identify:

1. Each item that has been fully implemented, including how the implementation was accomplished and evidences of its fulfillment.
2. Each item that has not been fully implemented and the reason for non-compliance.

In their response to Section A, the team will consider the percentage of recommendations that have been met, if there is clear evidence that they have been met, and if the reasons for not meeting recommendations are acceptable.

Self-Study Section B

Section B of the Self-Study will provide evidence in response to the seven standards with corresponding Criteria for Review (CFRs) identified by AAA as indicators of excellence in Form B institutions.

In the tables that follow, each Area with its corresponding Standard is identified. This is followed in the left-hand column by a list of the CFRs that are indicators of excellence to which the institution will respond in its Self-Study.

Next to each CFR in the right-hand column are preferred evidences that serve to document compliance. In some instances, examples for clarity have also been provided. Where appropriate, institutions may provide alternate evidence highlighting strengths of a particular CFR. In the case of alternate evidence, the institution is advised to consult with the General Conference Department of Education prior to the submission of the Self-Study, to verify that the proposed evidence will be deemed applicable and adequate.

In certain Areas, the CFRs call for evidence based on the results of anonymous surveys conducted by the institution with current students, faculty and staff, members of the Board, and/or alumni. These surveys should ask questions regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its mission and objectives, among other matters, and should be conducted within one year prior to the date scheduled for the visit.

While the Self-Study and the Site Visit focus on outcomes, it is acknowledged that some of the most important outcomes, such as spiritual commitment and ethical behavior evidenced throughout the life of a graduate, are difficult to measure, and, furthermore, difficult to attribute to a specific part of the student's educational experience due to the influence of intervening variables. Consequently, inputs and processes are utilized as proxies for such outcomes.¹

A Self-Study will therefore include, and a Visiting Team will consider, a variety of both direct and indirect indicators to evidence progress and results. These indicators may include quantitative measures (such as an attendance rate or student/teacher ratio) and qualitative evidences (such as individuals' judgments or perceptions regarding a topic), as well as performance indicators at various stages of the results chain, including inputs, processes, outputs, and impacts. Together, these provide a platform for evidence-based decisions regarding priorities, strategies, activities, and outcomes.²

Self-Study Section C

In harmony with the designation of Form B institutions as leaders of excellence within Seventh-day Adventist education, Section C of the Self-Study provides opportunity for the institution to showcase an aspect of its work that the institution has initiated or continued to develop within the period of accreditation that highlights the institution's commitment to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and/or the philosophy of Adventist education, particularly as it relates to student learning. Examples of best practice that an institution might wish to showcase include integrating service-learning, high-level thinking, or a healthy lifestyle throughout the curriculum, or developing a "green campus" or physical spaces for social interaction or for spiritual reflection, among other possibilities.

In Section C, the institution will present a report on its chosen area of best practice, utilizing a format of its own choosing, while incorporating reflection based on results and analysis of its impact on student experience. It is anticipated these reports, developed by leading Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions, may serve as models of best practice in Adventist education.

¹ "Indicators: Definitions and Distinctions." UNICEF Training Resources.
http://www.ceecis.org/remf/Service3/unicef_eng/module2/docs/2-3-1_indicators.doc

² At various junctures through Section B, reference is made to the mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church and to the philosophy of Adventist education. The mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist church may be found online at www.adventist.org, as well as in various denominational publications. A document summarizing the philosophy of Adventist education may be found at <http://education.gc.adventist.org>, at <http://adventistaccreditingassociation.org/>, as well as in various theme issues of *The Journal of Adventist Education* (available online at <http://www.jae.adventist.org>).

Area 1: Mission and Identity

Standard: The institution has a clear sense of Seventh-day Adventist mission and identity, reflected in statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics, and evidenced in the life of the institution.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>1.1 The institution has clear and current Board-approved statements of philosophy, vision, mission, and objectives and/or core values, that are congruent with Seventh-day Adventist mission and values, and with the Adventist philosophy of education, and are readily available to constituents, employees, and current and prospective students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, and core values^{1a} • The most recent Board action approving these institutional statements • A description of the processes of development or revision and approval of the corresponding statements • An explanation of how these institutional statements share the mission and values of the Church, as well as its philosophy of education^{1b} • A description of how institutional statements are made available to constituents, employees, and current and prospective students
<p>1.2 The institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, and core values are reflected in the policies and procedures of the institution, and in various aspects of institutional life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the alignment between institutional statements and the corresponding statements of institutional units • A representative sample of institutional policies and procedures that operationalize institutional statements • The profile of desired attributes for all graduates • Results of surveys of current students, faculty and staff, Board members, and alumni surveys regarding perceptions of the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its mission and objectives
<p>1.3 The institution is actively and broadly involved in supporting the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of institutional involvement in and support of the mission of the Church^{1c} • Examples of how the institution's educational and co-curricular programs prepare students to commit to and participate in the mission of the Church • Evidence of the active support of church standards and mission by the personal commitment of administrators, faculty, and staff to biblical values and lifestyle • Examples of a positive relationship between the institution and its local church, conference, union, and/or division • Examples of how the institution cooperates with other Adventist educational institutions

1.4 The institution is responsive to the needs of its constituencies, to denominational and national/regional developments, and to societal and educational trends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from surveys of the needs and expectations of institutional constituencies • An analysis of key developments within Adventist higher education as these relate to the institution • An analysis of denominational and local demographics • A description of the institution’s perceived role and place in denominational and societal contexts • An analysis of the perceived impact of educational issues and trends in the country/region, with a sample of committee minutes of discussions of current issues and trends • A description of how the college/university maintains its ethos as an Adventist institution while relating and responding to these issues and trends • Evidence of institutional success in maintaining both local credibility and denominational focus
1.5 Student experiences and learning outcomes are congruent with the institutional statements of philosophy, vision, mission, objectives, core values, and ethics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of student and alumni surveys that assess the alignment of experiences while at the institution with the values, beliefs, and priorities embedded in the official statements of the institution • Results of assessments that determine the extent to which the values, beliefs, and priorities of the institution are reflected in the lives of its graduates and alumni^{1d}
1.6 The institution has clear, readily available, and current Board-approved statements of professional ethics/code of conduct (including a policy addressing sexual misconduct), congruent with the Adventist philosophy of education, compliance with which is required of all employees and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional codes of ethics/conduct for employees and for students • A description of the procedure for approval of the codes of ethics/conduct and to ensure alignment with the Adventist philosophy of education • Explanation of the way compliance is required and ensured of all administrators, faculty, staff, and students
1.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.	

Explanatory notes:

^{1a} Where schools/departments have mission statements, these should also be included. In larger institutions, these statements are expected.

- ^{1b} Concepts that contribute toward a clear Seventh-day Adventist identity include:
- The nature of God (e.g., as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer) and the nature of humankind (e.g., human value and God-given potential)
 - The nature of learning (e.g., God as the ultimate Source of knowledge and wisdom)
 - The great conflict between good and evil, including the fall, redemption, and restoration
 - Whole-person development, including character formation

- The integration of faith, learning, and life
- The role of ethics and aesthetics
- Respect for the environment and for diverse cultures
- Education for this life and for eternity
- Other fundamental beliefs of the Church, including the Sabbath and the Second Coming

^{1c} Examples of institution involvement and support include:

- Membership and participation of institutional employees in Church organizations and initiatives
- Employee and student involvement in outreach and evangelistic activities of the Church
- Formalized collaborative relationships with other Church entities, including its institutions of higher education

^{1d} Examples of assessment elements include:

- The experience of a whole-person formation, including physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions
- Evidences of commitment to a life of witness and service
- Incorporation of a healthy lifestyle
- Active support of the ministry, activities, and ideals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Area 2: Spiritual Development, Service, and Witness

Standard: The institution has a coherent and vibrant spiritual life program, encapsulated in a spiritual master plan that widely involves and impacts the institution and its communities.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
2.1 The institution has an intentional, coherent, detailed, and current Board-approved spiritual master plan, which serves as the basis for the effective spiritual development of faculty, staff, and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current spiritual master plan of the institution^{2a}• A listing of key performance indicators, and a description of the process to assess and update the outcomes of the spiritual master plan• Evidence that administration, faculty, and staff have been involved in the development of the spiritual master plan and that it has received Board approval• Evidence of the implementation of the current spiritual master plan, including specific results from the assessed outcomes as well as how the plan has been dynamically updated based on this assessment^{2b}• Recent annual reports to the Board regarding the institution's spiritual life and the implementation of the spiritual master plan• A description of how the spiritual master plan includes the spiritual nurture of all student populations (residential, commuter, face-to-face, online, hybrid, undergraduate, graduate, full-time, or part-time)
2.2 Administration, faculty, and staff are actively involved in the spiritual development of students and of one another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of administration, faculty, and staff involvement in student and new faculty/staff mentoring programs that include spiritual nurture^{2c}• A description with examples of the extent of participation of administration, faculty, and staff in specific Spiritual Life programs and activities• Examples of groups and programs for service and for witness led or sponsored by administration, faculty, or staff• A description of the level of participation of administration, faculty, and staff in devotional and worship meetings• Examples of the intentional work of administration, faculty, and staff on behalf of non-Adventist and of off-campus students, including any alternative learning modalities

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- 2.3 Students are actively involved in a variety of nurture, service, and witnessing programs.
- Evidence of the involvement of students in developing and implementing the spiritual master plan, as well as in planning nurture, service, and community engagement activities^{2d}
 - Description of the possibilities for student involvement in spiritual activities as participants and as leaders
 - Description of how the institution selects student spiritual leaders
 - Number of students actively involved in various in-reach and outreach activities, some of which should be student-initiated and developed
 - Description of curricular requirements for student involvement in service learning, as well as training and opportunity for witness, including students in any alternative learning modalities
 - Evidence of the strength of the student mission program, including short-term evangelistic and outreach experiences, as well as a formal student missionary program
 - Student survey responses on the outcomes of spiritual program opportunities
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- 2.4 Campus chaplains and/or the pastor(s) of the campus church exert a significant role in the spiritual formation and life of the students.
- Description of the role that the campus church pastor(s) and/or the chaplain(s) and their associates play in the spiritual development and life of the students
 - Job descriptions of the campus chaplains and/or pastor(s) of the campus church^{2e}
 - Description of the selection process for the campus church pastor(s) and/or the chaplain(s), indicating institutional involvement
 - Description of the way the chaplaincy ministry of the institution is organized and of student services provided
 - Description of the relationship between the campus church(es) and the institution, with evidence provided of collaborative planning and involvement
 - Results of formal evaluations of services provided by the chaplain(s) and/or campus church pastor(s)
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2.5 Students experience spiritual development, and a deeper commitment to social responsibility and witness, because of their educational experience at the institution.

- Results of assessments that document the extent to which students experience and graduates/alumni attain spiritual development while at the institution, as well as the factors that may have contributed to or detracted from this development^{2f}
- Results of student and alumni surveys that seek to assess the level of participation in service, both while at the institution and after graduation, as well as the development of a personal service ethic
- Results of student and alumni surveys that assess the level of participation in witness, both while at the institution and after graduation, as well as the development of a worldview in which they see themselves as active witnesses for God

2.6 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{2a} The institutional spiritual master plan should be in harmony with “A Guidebook for Creating and Implementing a spiritual master plan on Seventh-day Adventist Campuses of Higher Education,” available online at the AdventistAccreditingAssociation.org website. At minimum, the spiritual master plan should incorporate:

- A list of beliefs, values, and behavioral outcomes to be conveyed to faculty, staff, and students, based on institutional philosophy, mission, objectives, and/or core values
- A summary of the results from surveys of present status as well as of the spiritual needs of faculty, staff, and students
- A listing of specific objectives for the intentional transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs, principles, values, and lifestyle
- A description of corresponding curricular and co-curricular programs and activities
- A presentation of corresponding action plans, including budget requirements, timelines, and responsibilities

^{2b} Examples of additional supporting evidence which may be included:

- Samples of minutes of the Spiritual Life Committee and other committees that deal with spiritual development
- Samples of survey instruments utilized with faculty, staff, and students
- The plan of spiritual events for the current semester/quarter. This may include devotional and worship opportunities, campus ministry activities, outreach and mission programs, small group interactions, residence hall programming, etc.
- Samples of evaluation instruments used in assessing the effectiveness of the spiritual master plan

^{2c} Examples of the primacy of spiritual development could include:

- Time and physical space set aside for prayer and reflection
- Time dedicated to corporate worship without the imposition of conflicting events

^{2d} Examples of student nurture, service, and community engagement programs may include Bible study groups, drug and alcohol prevention, evangelism, campus ministry retreats, periods of spiritual emphasis, chapels, vespers, church services, Sabbath School, and personal witness.

^{2e} Examples of elements in the corresponding job descriptions include (a) line of authority and responsibility; (b) purpose of the position; (c) role in the involvement in the development and implementation of the spiritual master plan; and (d) relationships with administration, faculty, staff, students, and denomination, including the Division Chaplaincy Endorsing Department.

^{2f} Examples of elements that may be incorporated in the assessments of spiritual development include a sense of a deeper relationship with God, of the assurance of salvation, of a Spirit-filled life, of growth in faith, of the need of Bible study and prayer, of the formation of a biblical worldview to guide one's life, and of a better understanding of and commitment to the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Area 3: Governance, Organization, and Administration

Standard: The institution has a coherent governance structure, organization, and administrative leadership that provide strong mission-driven direction to the institution.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>3.1 The Board of Trustees/Council supports the mission of the institution as a reflection of the mission of the Church and seeks to ensure its own commitment to the philosophy of Adventist education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board/Council Bylaws, including matters of authority and responsibility, trustee qualifications and selection • Board/Council handbook • Board/Council minutes since the prior accreditation visit and records of implementation of actions • Current Board/Council membership, including explanations regarding expertise, representation, and compliance with Working Policy regarding denominational membership • Board/Council process of induction for new members, particularly in matters pertaining to institutional philosophy, mission, objectives, and core values • Board/Council self-evaluation instruments, process, and results
<p>3.2 The Board of Trustees/Council establishes policies that safeguard the Seventh-day Adventist identity and mission of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution and bylaws of the institution, with an explanation of how these documents safeguard Adventist identity and mission, and evidence alignment with denominational Working Policy • Documents that define the relationship of the institution to other entities (e.g., the Church, government, accrediting bodies, and educational institutions, including affiliations and extensions), with an evaluation of each to institutional mission • Board/Council policies regarding the hiring and evaluation of administration, and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council policies regarding faculty and staff hiring and renewal practices, and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council policies regarding instruction that is in harmony with the vision, mission, and values of the institution and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same • Board/Council approved goals related to spiritual mission and Board/Council accepted performance indicators of the same

<p>3.3 The institution’s administrative team provides effective leadership to achieve the institutional mission and a clear Adventist identity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job descriptions for top-level administrators • A description of the process, with sample instruments, for performance appraisals and self-evaluations of top-level administrators, especially relating to the mission of the institution and of the Church • Examples of the support of institutional mission and Adventist identity by top-level administrators
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<p>3.4 The organizational structure of the institution facilitates the fulfillment of mission.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational and committee charts • A listing of all administrative staff and responsibilities • An explanation of how the institution fulfills the expectation that all leadership positions are filled by individuals who are regular members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church • A listing of all campus-wide committees, giving their membership, terms of reference, frequency of meetings, and inter-relationships • An explanation of how key committees relate to the planning processes of the institution, including spiritual life • A description of how organizational structure facilitates the fulfillment of institutional mission
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<p>3.5 The administration develops a Board-approved strategic plan that furthers institutional mission and is responsive to the constituent needs in the context of societal and educational trends.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-range strategic plan for the institution^{3a} • An explanation of how the strategic plan was developed, was communicated to faculty, staff, and constituents, and is periodically updated • A description of how the institutional strategic plan is guided by institutional mission, is based on an analysis of constituent needs, as well as institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and is developed within the framework of institutional philosophy and values • A representative sample of detailed, mid-range plans for institutional development and improvement, particularly those which directly contribute to mission • Recent reports of administration to the Board of Trustees/Council regarding implementation of the strategic plan

3.6 The Board/Council and the administration evaluate the success of the institution, particularly in fulfilling its identity and mission as a Seventh-day Adventist institution.

- A description of the continuous quality improvement and assurance of educational and management processes as evidenced through outcomes
- A description of the processes in place for assessing institutional effectiveness, especially regarding the success of the institution in fulfilling its mission as an Adventist institution, with examples of how this feedback is used in institutional planning
- Examples of Board/Council evaluation of the institution's Church-related mission, including the results of the most recent assessment
- Results from institutional research assessing the fulfillment of institutional identity and mission, including internal and external constituencies as well as current students and recent graduates
- Samples of institutional reports provided to internal and external stakeholders, particularly those relating to institutional identity and mission

3.7 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{3a} The strategic plan of the institution (at least 5 years, ideally with a dynamic window to the future updated annually) should be the result of campus-wide conversations involving faculty and staff, first in selecting the core values that the institution wishes to convey, and then in identifying strategic means of attaining these values. The strategic plan should include supporting documents for student enrollment projections, spiritual life development, financial resources, academic programs, faculty and staff, and infrastructure.

Area 4: Programs of Study

Standard: The institution provides a curriculum that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, preparing students for service in the church and in the broader society.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
4.1 The institution demonstrates how its own mission, objectives, and core values, and how the mission and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are reflected in its programs of study, including those offered through non-traditional delivery methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of curricular development and evaluation procedures that ensure alignment with institutional mission, objectives, and core values, and with the mission and beliefs of the Church• A description of how the beliefs, values, and lifestyle practices of the Church are conveyed through the programs of study• A description of how the institution prepares graduates for service in the Church as employees and lay members• A representative sample of program outcomes or graduate profiles linked to institutional mission, objectives, and/or core values• A representative sample of course objectives linked to institutional objectives and/or core values• A description of how any alternative learning modalities, including distance education and web-based technology, fulfill institutional mission and integrate its core values, while also contributing toward fulfilling the mission of the Church and integrating its beliefs and values• Results from student/alumni evaluations of programs of study that assess effectiveness in transmitting both institutional mission, objectives, and values, as well as the mission and beliefs of the Church, and evidence that results inform curriculum development and revision, with evidence that results inform curriculum development and revision• Results from denominational employers that assess institutional effectiveness in meeting the needs of the Church, and evidence that results inform curriculum development and revision

<p>4.2 The institution demonstrates the implementation of the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education and the meaningful integration of faith and learning throughout all disciplines and all course delivery modalities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of curricular development and evaluation procedures that focus on the integration of faith and learning and seek the salvation of the student • A description of procedures that encourage faculty members to approach their discipline from a biblical perspective, throughout all teaching modalities • A representative sample of course syllabi, required readings, teaching materials, learning activities, and evaluations that illustrate the integration of a biblical worldview,^{4a} throughout all teaching modalities • A description of ways in which the curriculum promotes whole-person development, including physical, mental, spiritual, social, emotional, and vocational dimensions • Examples of ways in which the curriculum prepares the student for a life of witness and service • Examples of ways in which the curriculum contributes toward character formation • Examples of ways in which the curriculum emphasizes high-level thinking, including application of knowledge, analysis, decision-making, and creative thought and innovation • Results from student evaluations of courses that assess effectiveness in the integration of faith and learning • Results from student and alumni evaluations of programs of study that assess effectiveness in achieving aspects of the Adventist philosophy of education
<p>4.3 The institution fulfills IBE/IBMTE processes regarding new programs of study and substantive changes to existing programs of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of institutional fulfillment of IBE/IBMTE processes regarding new programs of study and substantive changes to existing programs of study
<p>4.4 The institution fulfills the AAA expectation regarding the inclusion of religion courses in the various programs of study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation that students have met the stated religion requirement in all programs of study, in all modalities offered^{4b} • Course descriptions for the religion courses utilized in the various programs of study
<p>4.5 Plans for development and improvement within this area.</p>	

Explanatory notes:

^{4a} Examples of integrational elements include an understanding of:

- God as the Source of all truth
- The role of revelation, reason, research, and reflection in the understanding of divine truth
- The foundational role of Scripture in each discipline
- The great controversy between good and evil and how this affects each aspect of life
- The elements and formation of a Christian life and worldview

- The moral ethical dimensions of issues within each discipline and the role of biblical principles and values

Other integrational elements may be found in the “Statement of Philosophy,” available online at adventistaccreditingassociation.org, as well in essays provided by the Institute of Christian Teaching (ict.adventist.org) and articles on the topic published by *The Journal of Adventist Education* (jae.adventist.org).

^{4b} The AAA expectation for religion courses in all programs is as follows:

- Undergraduate: Every teacher is encouraged and expected to integrate faith with the discipline in all courses. Three semester (four quarter) credits of religion courses are required for each year of full-time study for a minimum of 12 semester (18 quarter) credits for a four-year degree or 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credits for every 32 semester (48 quarter) credits. Half of the credits must be based on study of the Bible.
- Graduate: Every teacher is encouraged and expected to integrate faith with the discipline in all courses. Two semester (three quarter) credits of graduate-level religion/theology courses are required for each year of full-time study (or the equivalent). At least one course must be based on study of the Bible. These required courses may introduce new material at a graduate level or examine previous knowledge and attitudes so that understanding is reconsidered and synthesized in light of new learning, and accepted practices undergo the rigor of the thoughtful analysis. Team-taught courses in which disciplinary knowledge is combined with religion/theology are acceptable (e.g., business ethics, religion and medicine) but the prefix and primary oversight must come from the religion/theology department. Institution may adopt variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework.

Area 5: Faculty and Staff

Standard: The institution has a faculty and staff personally supportive of the institutional mission, effective in their transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and biblical values in the classroom, along with administrative processes to ensure adequate faculty and staff development, and evaluation procedures that include mission-focused elements.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
5.1 The institutional policies and procedures that pertain to faculty and staff identification/recruitment and hiring/contracting are aligned with the mission and values of the institution, and the mission and message of the Church.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional policies and procedures for identifying/recruiting and hiring/contracting of faculty and staff• A description and sample of the criteria and supporting documentation used in the decision-making process for recent faculty/staff acquisitions, including interview questions and the weighting of criteria• An explanation of how the institution has integrated missional expectations, of the institution and of the Church, into its policies and procedures on recruiting and hiring faculty and staff• Institutional policies and procedures for re-appointment/contract renewal and for promotion• A description and sample of the criteria and supporting documentation utilized in the decision-making process for recent faculty and staff reappointments/contract renewals and promotions• An explanation of how the institution has integrated missional expectations, of the institution and of the Church, into its policies and procedures for faculty and staff reappointment/contract renewal and promotion• Examples of employment contracts redacted to maintain confidentiality, with an explanation of how these convey the expectation of support of the institutional mission and values, and respect for the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church• A statistical table providing religious affiliation of administrators, faculty, and staff, disaggregated by full-time/salary and part-time/temporary contract status, and including an analysis of trends over time

<p>5.2 The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff orientation and development encourage and strengthen faculty support for the mission of the institution and of the Seventh-day Adventist church.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institutional statement of academic freedom and responsibility • The institutional grievance policy^{5a} • The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff orientation • Evidence that orientation content contributes to a better understanding of the mission and values of the institution and of the mission and beliefs of the Church • The institution's policies and procedures for faculty and staff development, including faculty/staff in any alternative learning modalities • Recent examples of ways in which the professional development experiences have contributed to a better understanding of the philosophy of Adventist education and the integration of faith and learning • Results from faculty and staff assessments of institution-initiated professional development
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<p>5.3 Faculty and staff are effective in their roles as professionals and role models in a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of how faculty convey to students the mission, beliefs, and values of the institution and of the Church • The institution's policies and procedures for evaluation of faculty and staff, including in any alternative learning modalities^{5b} • A description of the overall system for the evaluation of faculty and of staff, including sample instruments encompassing teaching, research, mentoring, and participation in co-curricular activities, as relevant • A description of ways in which the institution integrates institutional and denominational mission, beliefs, and values in faculty and staff evaluation • A description of how results from faculty and staff assessments by students are used to enhance their effectiveness as professionals in an Adventist educational institution • A description of how results from faculty and staff assessments by peers and/or supervisors are used to enhance effectiveness as professionals in an Adventist educational institution • A description of the involvement of faculty and staff in local and wider church activities and responsibilities • A listing of the scholarly research and publications of the faculty since the prior accreditation visit • An explanation of how faculty service and research activities support institutional and Church mission

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| 5.4 The institution fulfills the AAA expectation regarding the qualifications of faculty who teach religion courses in the various programs of study. | • A table identifying qualifications of faculty who teach religion courses in the various programs of study, including that they hold current ecclesiastical endorsement by IBMTE if teaching at least half time ^{5c} |
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5.5 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{5a} Examples of related documents that can be provided include:

- The institutional statement of professional conduct
- Institutional policies and criteria regarding termination of employment
- Institutional grievance policies and procedures
- Samples of faculty and staff statements of philosophy and/or worldview

^{5b} Aspects that may be incorporated in student assessments of faculty and staff include:

- Evidencing positive relationships with students, including mentor and role models
- Taking a personal interest in each student
- Communicating appreciation for the value and potential of the student
- Communicating confidence in divine revelation through the Bible
- Demonstrating biblical norms of conduct and an Adventist lifestyle
- Seeking opportunities to converse about spiritual matters and to guide the student to a personal encounter with Christ
- Helping the student develop a personal sense of mission

^{5c} The AAA expectation is as follows:

- Undergraduate: All courses must be taught by a member of the religion/theology department who has a minimum of a master's degree in the discipline or a master's degree and 12 semester (18 quarter) graduate credits in theology/religion. Institutions may adopt variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework. Institutions are responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty, including adjunct faculty.
- Graduate: All courses must be taught by a member of the religion/ theology department who preferably has an earned doctoral degree in the discipline or a master's degree and 18 semester (27 quarter) graduate credits in theology/ religion. Team-taught courses in which disciplinary knowledge is combined with religion/ theology are acceptable (e.g., business ethics, religion and medicine) but the prefix and primary oversight must come from the religion/theology department. Institution may adopt variable structures and provide evidence of attainment of student learning outcomes and content mastery otherwise covered through the inclusion of specific religion/theology coursework. Institutions are responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty, including adjunct faculty.

Area 6: Educational Context

Standard: Elements of the educational setting, including finance, facilities, library, and student services, among others, support institutional mission and Adventist identity.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
6.1 The financial operation of the institution is prioritized to support institutional mission and Adventist identity, while safeguarding the financial well-being of the church.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audited financial statements and letters to management for the prior three years• A report on the financial health of the institution, including indices identified in denominational policy^{6a}• A description of the impact of institutional finances on the financial stability of related church organizations• A report on the support of the sponsoring church organizations, including subsidies and appropriations as a percentage of total income and instructional income• A report on government funds received, including the percentage of total income and instructional income that these represent, as well as institutional policies that govern their receipt• A report on institutional debt, if any, and how this is managed• A description of how institutional budget and expenditures reflect institutional mission^{6b}
6.2 The library and its resources support institutional mission, the transmission of Adventist beliefs and values, and the spiritual development of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A description of how the library helps students to distinguish truth from error and to engage in the ethical use of information• Policies for acquiring new library materials, with an explanation of how these policies support the Seventh-day Adventist ethos of the institution• A description of the implications of the institutional stand on academic freedom and responsibility on library operations• An explanation of resources that assist students and faculty in their study of the Bible and faith maturation• A description of processes to identify resources that contribute to a biblical worldview for the various disciplines, with examples of resources acquired• A description of special collections that contribute to institutional mission and faith (Adventist heritage and mission, fundamental beliefs, White Estate resources)• An explanation of how the library supports institution-wide faith activities and community outreach, and upholds the institution's faith-based policies

<p>6.3 The physical plant and campus facilities promote and support institutional mission, Adventist beliefs and values, and the spiritual development of students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campus master plan (including 5- and 10-year schedules for building development), with supporting documents explaining the relationship of the campus master plan to the institutional strategic plan and delineating the realism of financial backing for these plans • A description of how the Adventist philosophy of education is reflected throughout the campus^{6c}
<p>6.4 Student services clearly promote and support Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of how the institution identifies the unique needs among student groups and develops plans to respond to these needs, particularly in the context of the mission of the institution, based on a demographic trend analysis (since the prior accreditation visit) of students, disaggregated by age ranges, gender, nationality, off-campus and residence hall status, marital status, denominational affiliation, part-time vs. full-time status, undergraduate vs. graduate status, traditional vs. non-traditional status • The philosophy and/or mission statements of the various student services, with an explanation of how these align with institutional mission and core values • An analysis of the way each student service area assists in the transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values, models and nurtures an Adventist lifestyle, provides for the personal and spiritual needs of students, including those enrolled in non-traditional programs of study, and encourages whole-person development^{6d}
<p>6.5 Relationships with external entities affirm Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-year enrollment and recruiting plan which supports institutional strategy and mission • Demonstration of how branding, publications, advertising, publicity, and community relations foster an understanding of the institution's spiritual values^{6e} • A description of ethics and respect demonstrated toward other Adventist educational institutions, especially in terms of student recruitment • Evidence that the institution maintains positive and on-going relations with its constituencies, including processes for feedback • A description of how the institution engages its alumni in support of institutional mission • A description of how development and fundraising support the mission of the institution

6.6 Institutional policies clearly reflect Adventist identity and the core values of the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of how the institution's policies exemplify and communicate biblical principles and values across the following policy areas: ^{6f} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lifestyle-related policies – Student discipline policies – Appeals policies and procedures – Grading and other academic policies – Residential life and worship attendance policies – Service learning requirements • A description and assessment of the way in which the academic policies and records and its staff promote and support the transmission of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and the spiritual development of students
6.7 Publications and productions generated by or within the institution evidence breadth, quality, and alignment with institutional mission and values, and with the philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list and brief description of institutional publications and media productions since the prior accreditation visit, and of the policies and procedures governing their development and production • A list and brief description of student publications, including frequency and circulation • A description of the policies and procedures regarding institutional advisement and supervision of student-sponsored or coordinated publications

6.8 Plans for development and improvement within this area.

Explanatory notes:

^{6a} Examples of financial GC Working Policies include:

- Working capital (i.e., current assets above the total of current liabilities) should equal or exceed 20 percent of the operating expense, or, for interim statements, the latest 12-month actual operating expense of the latest complete fiscal year
- Liquidity—cash and bank plus securities and investments divided by total current liabilities and gross/certain allocated funds (see GC Working Policy S 25 73)
- Use of the tithe in educational institutions (GC Working Policy V 14 15)

^{6b} Examples of ways in which financial priorities reflect mission may include:

- Financial programs and policies provide opportunity for a greater proportion of Seventh-day Adventist young people who desire to receive an Adventist education to attend
- Financial programs and policies provide the means for a whole-person educational perspective, by means of a funded work-study program
- Service, witness, and spiritual life programs are adequately funded

^{6c} Aspects which might be presented include the following:

- Examples of spaces for worship, for reflection, for physical activity, for collaborative learning, etc.
- Examples of how the physical plant reflects the stewardship of resources (e.g., ecological facilities, recycling efforts)
- Examples of aesthetic elements and décor throughout the campus that contribute to a sense of mission and/or Adventist identity
- Examples of the use of natural settings as educational contexts

^{6d} Examples of student services which would typically be addressed include, among others:

- Residence halls
- Cafeteria
- Recreational facilities
- Health/wellness services
- Student counseling programs (e.g., career, spiritual, therapeutic, substance abuse)
- Placement services
- Student clubs and activities

^{6e} It may be helpful to include a representative sample of materials utilized in advertising and student recruitment, accompanied by an explanation of how these convey the institution's philosophy and core values.

^{6f} Specific policies that could be discussed may include the following:

- Policies regarding intellectual property with an explanation of how these reflect the core values of the institution
- Policies regarding a student's right to privacy with an explanation of how these reflect the biblical view of human beings
- Policies and procedures that promote student self-governance with an explanation of how this concept operates within the Adventist ethos of the institution
- Policies for accessing electronic media, including procedures in the case of an abuse of policies, accompanied by an explanation of how these reflect Adventist identity and the mission of the institution
- Policies that relate to student misconduct with an explanation of how these reflect a redemptive and transformational approach

Area 7: Pastoral and Theological Education

Standard: The institution has pastoral and theological education with a curriculum that is of an equivalent standard to other tertiary institutions offering pastoral and theological education within the Seventh-day Adventist college/university sector, and that meets the mission and objectives of the institution and church, particularly in the preparation of students for denominational service.

Criteria for Review	Supporting Evidence
<p>7.1 The programs of study are congruent with institutional and Church mission and are aligned with IBMTE/BMTE requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curricula and graduation requirements for the various pastoral and theological programs, including all alternative learning modalities • An explanation of how the programs of study are congruent with institutional mission and of the Seventh-day Adventist Church • A table mapping the pastoral and theological curricula to those outcomes and competencies identified as essential by IBMTE/BMTE • Dates on which the various programs were recognized by the IBMTE
<p>7.2 The faculty members in the pastoral and theological programs are qualified to teach in the various disciplines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of all faculty teaching in the pastoral and theological programs, including academic preparation, areas of specialization, professional qualifications, and courses taught • Evidence that all courses are taught by a member of the religion/theology department who has an earned doctoral degree in the discipline or a master's degree and 18 semester (27 quarter) graduate credits in theology/religion.
<p>7.3 The faculty is involved in the spiritual development and the professional formation of pastoral and theology students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the nature and level of faculty involvement in the spiritual development of pastoral and theology students, including those enrolled in alternative learning modalities • Results from evaluations of current students and of recent graduates regarding the quality of the overall spiritual development and pastoral formation program and of the involvement of the theology faculty in the program
<p>7.4 The faculty members are involved in the life of the Church at various levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the breadth of pastoral and theology faculty involvement in the life of the Church at various levels, and an explanation of how this affects their classroom effectiveness • Examples of faculty annual reports

7.5 Pastoral and theological students are involved in evangelistic and nurturing activities connected with their educational experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the involvement of pastoral and theological students in evangelistic and nurturing activities, including those enrolled in alternative learning modalities, with an explanation of how these activities are linked with the academic program • Results from student program evaluations and graduate surveys of involvement in evangelistic and nurturing activities as a part of the academic program
7.6 The Board of Trustees/Council holds the administration accountable to ensure pastoral and theological programs and faculty are focused on and supportive of the message and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church, including current ecclesiastical endorsement of all religion/theology faculty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board/Council approved goals related to pastoral and ministerial graduate success and accepted performance indicators • A description of program review policies and procedures established by the Board /Council and utilized by the administration to ensure that the pastoral and ministerial programs are focused on the message and mission of the Church • Reports of the program reviews • A description of faculty appraisal policies and procedures established by the Board /Council and utilized by the administration to ensure that pastoral and ministerial program faculty are supportive of the message and mission of the Church • Reports of the faculty appraisals • A list of all religion/theology faculty, including ecclesiastical endorsement status for all religion/theology teachers who teach at least half time and explanation for any who are not endorsed or are in “under review” status
7.7 The dean/department chair and the other faculty in the school/department are selected to ensure that they understand the needs of the Church and are fully supportive of its mission and beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies and procedures by which the pastoral and theological faculty and the dean/chair are selected • Compliance of the institutional process with IBMTE requirements
7.8 The institution has a formal system for evaluating faculty and supervisor performance in the pastoral and theological programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the policies and procedures for evaluating pastoral/theological faculty performance, including support of mission • An explanation of how the evaluation system provides for fair treatment of faculty, while ensuring that the institution will transparently uphold Adventist beliefs^{7a} • A description of policies and procedures for selecting, developing, and evaluating internship supervisors • A sample of evaluation instruments and results

7.9 The program includes the evaluation of progression and placement procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures regarding student progression • A description of placement procedures^{7b} • Statistics regarding the placement of graduates • Results from field evaluations of the effective formation of graduates, including assessments of ministerial interns by supervising pastors
7.10 Effective communication is sustained between the department/school and the wider Church constituency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of communication processes between the department/school and the Church constituency, particularly in terms of matters such as program content and the specific needs of the constituency • Results from evaluations by the Church constituency of the effectiveness of these communication processes
7.11 The institution has in place means to assess and improve the effectiveness of the pastoral and theological education programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of the means in place to assess and improve the effectiveness of the pastoral and theological education program, including all alternative learning modalities, in meeting its stated mission • Results of program assessments from recent graduates, employers, and Church leadership • Examples of the use of evaluations for making program improvements
7.12 Plans for development and improvement within this area.	

Explanatory notes:

^{7a} Examples of evaluation system components:

- Student assessments
- Feedback from peers and from leadership
- Measures of graduate satisfaction/success
- Assessment of mentoring pastors
- Faculty plans for improvement

^{7b} While placement refers principally to formal employment by the church for graduates to become a church pastor (or intern), placement may also apply to those graduates who join supporting ministries or become volunteers.



Adventist
Accrediting
Association

ACCREDITATION HANDBOOK

Appendices

2019

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APPENDIX A

Outline of Accreditation Report

Introduction

A summary of the report, including the name of the institution visited, the dates of the visit, the members and affiliation of the visiting committee, the text of the final accreditation recommendation, and the signature page.

Background to Institution and Visit

This section will usually include:

1. A brief historical and geographical background to the institution
2. Institutional profile:
 - A listing of degree programs
 - Enrollment statistics and trends
 - Faculty statistics
 - A listing of other institutional and/or program accreditations
 - A listing of institutional administrators at the time of the visit
3. Circumstances of the visit, including a listing of documents examined
4. Summary recommendation fulfillment

The Areas

This section will focus on an analysis of institutional fulfillment of the Criteria for Review (CFRs) in each Area, to include:

1. Observations and findings
2. Commendations
3. Recommendations, including identification of major recommendations
4. Suggestions

The document will conclude with a statement of appreciation.

Certain portions of this report are discussed in further detail in the following paragraphs.

Responses to the Recommendations from the Prior Site Visit Report

The team will review each recommendation recorded in the report from the prior site visit, the institutional response, and evidences of their fulfillment. They will assess the reasons recommendations have not been implemented or not yet fully implemented.

The report will include a comment on the team's conclusions in evaluating fulfillment of a recommendation. A partially fulfilled or unfulfilled recommendation will typically result in a transfer of the recommendation to the new site visit report, although the wording of the recommendation may be adjusted.

Responses to the *Self-Study*

1. The team will review the documentation provided in response to the *Self-Study* documentation and the degree to which these responses, supplemented by interviews, observation and other institutional documentation, provide evidence of a quality, Seventh-day Adventist institution.
2. Team members will consider areas of excellence as well as areas where documentation or information is lacking or where interviews and observation suggest a need for improvement. Commendations and recommendations should be written accordingly (see Appendix B for suggestions on writing these).
3. Each Criterion for Review (CFR) will be evaluated separately. It is recommended that the team focus on major issues and that the number of recommendations remain at a realistic level for institutional action.

Major Recommendations

Major recommendations will be selected from the full list of recommendations identified by the team. The focus will be on those recommendations that have the most whole institutional significance and hold the greatest threat to the stability and/or Adventist ethos of the institution. These will be asterisked where they are found throughout the report. The number of total major recommendations should normally not exceed ten to twelve.

Accreditation Recommendation

The final accreditation recommendation to the Adventist Accrediting Association will be drafted by the evaluation committee toward the end of the visit based on the observations made and taking into consideration the options available. These options are identified in this document and will be discussed with the team by the chair. (See Appendix C for a visual representation of these options.) The committee will arrive at its final recommendation by either majority vote or consensus agreement.

APPENDIX B

Writing Commendations and Recommendations

Most of the institutional report will consist of commendations and recommendations. All team members will be involved in writing these in their areas of expertise and approving those written by others. Commendations should be given for tasks performed in an above-average or superior manner. Recommendations represent institutional deficiencies in comparison with the Criteria for Review (CFRs).

In drafting commendations and recommendations, members of the evaluation committee should keep the following items in mind:

1. Statements must be based on either the *Self-Study* document or other institutional documents, personal observation, or an interview with a board member, administrator, faculty, staff, or students, and only after the team member has carefully cross-checked and verified each observation or statement.
2. Commendations or recommendations should be addressed to a specific group, department, or unit in the institution—never to individuals by name.
3. Commendations should be given only for achievements or tasks performed in an above-average or superior manner, not for the normal fulfillment of a duty.
4. Recommendations should be concise, specific and measurable (i.e., how will an observer know if a specific recommendation has been fulfilled?) and should focus on outcomes, rather than the process by which outcome is achieved.
5. Recommendations should focus on major issues and should be limited to a number reasonable for the institution to manage in the period before the next full evaluation visit.

Sample commendations and recommendations follow, with an explanation of how these can be used as a pattern for team members.

Commendations

The visiting committee (or team) commends:

1. The administration, for their high level of positive communication with the local church community, which has resulted in an elevated regard for the institution by members of the local churches (*Self-Study*, p. 32; interviews with Board representatives).
2. The administration, faculty, staff and students, for their active involvement in the development of a spiritual master-plan that is already making an appreciable difference to the spiritual programming and ethos of the campus (*Self-Study*, pp. 17, 47; institutional strategic plan; interviews with faculty and staff; student survey).

Notes:

- Writers should state to who the commendation is given. Individual names, however, should not be given—only titles, or groups of individuals.
- Commendations should state clearly what is being commended with as much precision as possible. This should include not only what is being done, and also the effect—in the second sample commendation, the commendation is for “the active development of a spiritual master-plan,” but the next part of the sentence helps explain why that is so important—“that is already making an appreciable difference to the spiritual programming and ethos of the campus.”
- A writer should give the source(s) of information that led to the conclusion. Where there are specific references to paginated documents, page numbers should be identified. However, if

information came from an interview, the name(s) of the individual(s) should not be identified. A minimum of two sources should be provided for each commendation and recommendation.

Recommendations

The visiting committee (or team) recommends:

1. That the administration place on hold its plans to build a new classroom block until the debt on the library construction has been fully paid (interviews with administrators; audited financial statement; *Self-Study*, p. 35).
2. That the Academic Committee enact its plans to develop a process for more structured evaluation of courses and teaching that will involve feedback from peers and supervisors, as well as from students (interviews with administrators and faculty; *Self-Study*, p. 63).

Notes:

- Writers should identify clearly to whom the recommendation is directed—in the above examples, to the administration and to the Academic Committee. The recommendations can be to an individual (mentioned only by title, e.g. President), a committee, or a group of individuals.
- If a recommendation is already in the plans of an institution, this should be identified in what is written—e.g., “That the Academic Committee enact its plans...”
- All recommendations should be doable and measurable. The institution needs to be able to report completion of the recommendation and the next accrediting team needs to confirm that it has been met.
- The sources of recommendations should be referenced in as much detail as possible—e.g. audited financial statement, 2018-19.
- Each team member should consider which of the recommendations will be suggested to their colleagues as major. In the samples given above, the first would likely be considered a major recommendation because it impacts the financial stability of the institution. In general, major recommendations will be those that significantly impact the college/university and are most essential to its continuous quality and to the embodiment of the Seventh-day Adventist ethos.

Suggestions and Other Comments

While most of the accreditation report will be written in the form of commendations and recommendations, there are occasions where the team may decide to add additional textual commentary. This will normally be for one of the three following reasons:

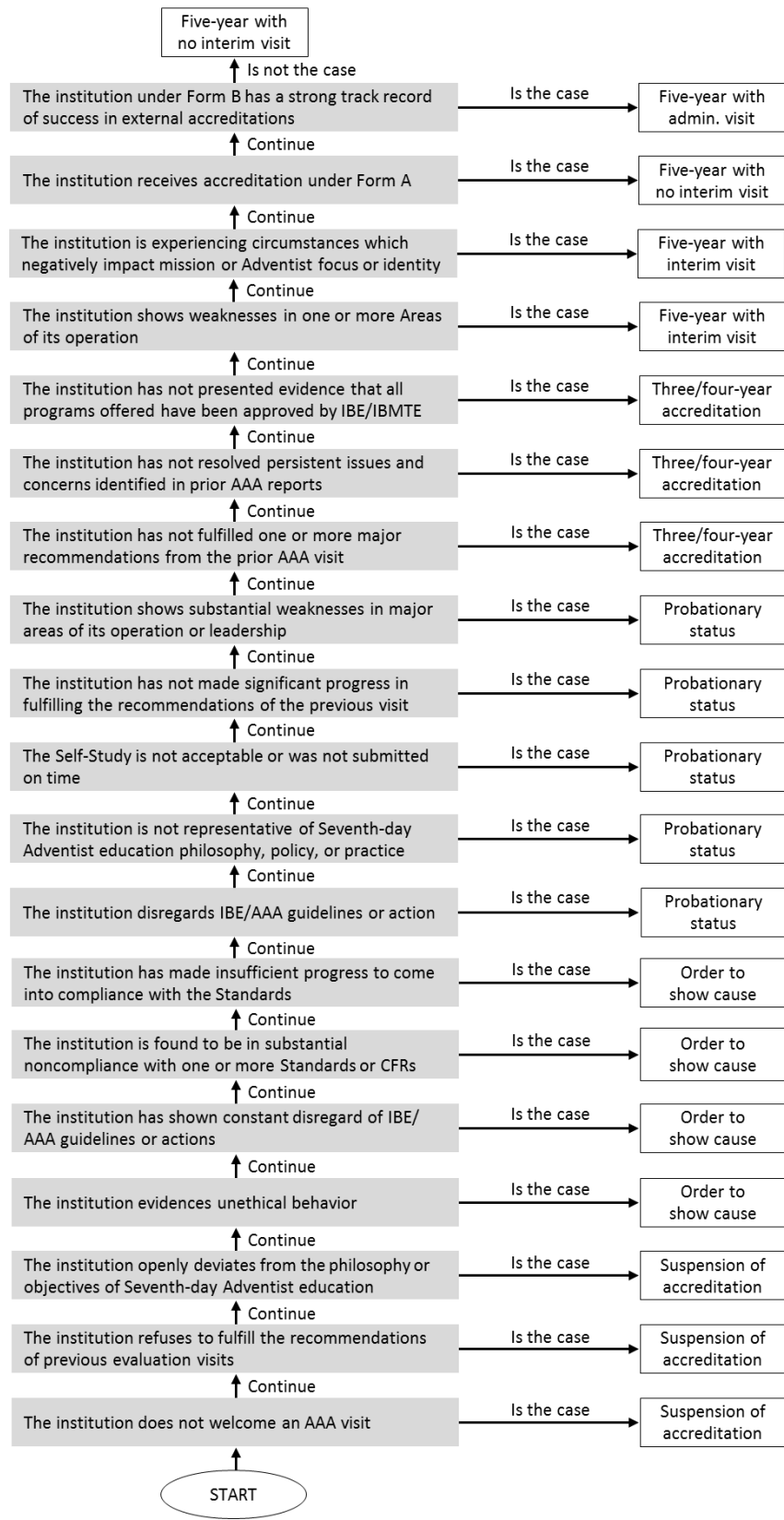
1. The team faces a particularly complex or sensitive situation and considers that the context of a recommendation needs to be carefully explained. This is best done in the section of Observations and Findings, or as a comment immediately prior to or following a key recommendation.
2. The team has serious concerns regarding an aspect of an institution and concludes that “conditions” should be attached to the overall accreditation recommendation. Conditions will normally refer to one or more specific issues that require immediate attention and a time frame will be given by which these should be met.
3. The team considers that there is an important statement to make to an institution that will be best expressed as a “suggestion” rather than a recommendation. These may relate, for example, to a suggested process that reflects best practice. A suggestion should be given at

the end of the commendations and recommendations under the relevant Area, and may best be introduced by following the same pattern, i.e. The visiting team suggests:

The chair of the committee will guide the team in the appropriateness of adding extra sections to the report.

APPENDIX C

Typical Decision Tree for Recommendation Options



APPENDIX D

Criteria for the Review of Urban Campuses

Purpose: To provide guidance for AAA teams reviewing institutions of tertiary education situated in urban contexts or that have extension campuses located in urban settings.

While existing CFRs are generally applicable to colleges and universities irrespective of setting, it seemed helpful to the AAA to contextualize or incorporate certain CFRs in order to provide special and, in some cases, more specific guidance for tertiary institutions in urban settings given the special circumstances of the urban context which can yield significant challenges in implementing the whole-person, redemptive philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education.

Extended Application: These Criteria for Review (CFRs) could potentially be adopted and/or adapted for the review of Adventist educational institutions in urban settings at other levels, such as primary and secondary schools.

Urban Setting Defined: There are certainly various ways to define an urban campus, such as the following:

- Located in an area of high human population density and built environments (National Geographic Society)
- Located in densely developed territory, residential and commercial, of 50,000 or more people (U.S. Census Bureau)

In the United States, the Carnegie Foundation has developed a system that classifies educational institutions as urban, suburban, or rural, updated every five years.

For the purpose of this document, each Division in conjunction with the General Conference Department of Education liaison will determine which of its tertiary campuses will be classified as urban. As guidance, the following parameters may be utilized: A campus of higher education, located physically within a metropolitan setting of dense population and built development, where the majority of students are non-residential and spend limited time on campus except for attending classes.

Criteria for Review

Preferred Evidences

1. The institution fulfills the philosophy of Seventh-day Adventist education, particularly its redemptive purpose and its focus on whole-person development.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 1
Form B, Area 1

- Evidence of plans and initiatives to ensure a clear Adventist identity and ethos throughout the institution
- Evidence of intentionality in evangelistic purpose, immersing students in the values and objectives of Adventist education
- Evidence of policies and procedures that safeguard the Adventist ethos when admitting non-Adventist students

Criteria for Review**Preferred Evidences**

2. The institution effectively nurtures students in their spiritual development.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 2
Form B, Area 2

- Evidence of the provision of chaplains, with at least half-time load in chaplaincy, whose key focus is the salvation and spiritual nurture of students. Ideally there should be a policy in place to hire a chaplain for every certain number of students at the site. If more than one, there should also be both male and female chaplains, with chaplains preferably assigned to specific programs.
- Evidence of the provision of a representative on-site worship facility
- Evidence that the institution offers engaging on-site weekly worship programs (e.g., Friday night, Sabbath morning, and Sabbath afternoon)
- Evidence of the involvement of students in planning and implementing spiritual programming
- Evidence of the implementation of a spiritual development curriculum, including the utilization of small groups
- Evidence of intentional evangelization, resulting in the baptism of students
- Evidence that the institution organizes mission trips and other missionary activities in which students and employees participate
- Evidence of organized volunteer service opportunities to people in need (e.g., refugees, homeless)
- Evidence that the institution intentionally fosters respect for others, exemplifying the love of Christ

3. The programs of study at the institution nurture the faith of students in intentional ways.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 5
Form B, Area 4

- Evidence of the incorporation of institutional values and a biblical worldview throughout each academic program
- Evidence of student training and experiences in witness, in which administrators, faculty, and staff are also involved
- Evidence of the incorporation of service-learning requirements in courses and programs of study, which present an array of service options to students
- Evidence of the engagement of students in the required religion courses

Criteria for Review**Preferred Evidences**

4. The programs of study at the institution effectively prepare students for the workplace.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 5
Form B, Area 4

5. The institution ensures that programs of study are adequately staffed, and that faculty and support staff are both qualified and committed.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 6
Form B, Area 5

- Evidence that the core curriculum incorporates a course focused on the Christian in the workplace (i.e., living a Christ-centered life of witness in the work environment)
- Evidence that the educational program requires students to be involved in apprenticeships or internships, or other significant field experiences, or to hold a program-related full- or part-time job in which they are formally evaluated
- Evidence of an active literature evangelism program, or alternative program, made available to all students, with an emphasis on the development of interpersonal skills for sharing the gospel
- Evidence that no more than half of the credits in each academic program, including the set of upper-division courses, are taught by contract part-time faculty members
- Evidence that the institution has attained or has in place strategies that move progressively toward the goal that all full-time faculty are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in regular standing
- Evidence that a majority of part-time/contract faculty are members of the Adventist church, or that the institution has in place strategies to move progressively toward this goal
- Evidence that the contract for all employees stipulates an agreement with the philosophy of Adventist education and a commitment to respect the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- Evidence that the contract for all teachers stipulates involvement in student-related activities outside of the classroom

Criteria for Review**Preferred Evidences**

6. The institution ensures that student services contribute effectively to whole-person development and are aligned with the Adventist philosophy of education.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 9
Form B, Area 6

7. The institution provides co-curricular activities and experiences that align with Adventist identity and mission.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 9
Form B, Area 6

8. The institution provides initiatives and programs that foster the personal development of students.

Maps to:
Form A, Area 9
Form B, Area 6

9. The institution provides students with opportunities to interact with God's creation.

- Evidence that the food services provided are in harmony with the Adventist philosophy of healthful living, including what is sold through the vending machines
- Evidence that the institution oversees student housing, ideally in a dormitory setting for any students not living with their parents, legal guardians, or spouse, and below a certain age (e.g., 25 years old), or at minimum through establishing and implementing a set of formative criteria for student housing, with a consistently applied approval process
- Evidence of the provision of facilities for recreation and for cultural programs, as well as spaces for student interaction and for student-faculty interaction
- Evidence of the provision of social activities for students, with evidence that administrators, faculty, and staff participate with students in a number of these social activities
- Evidence of a mentoring program for new students
- Evidence of the provision of recreational programs that are congruent with Adventist identity and mission
- Evidence of the provision of cultural programs that are congruent with Adventist identity and mission
- Evidence of an effective health and wellness program, co-curricular or curricular, that transmits the health message of the Adventist church in an attractive manner
- Evidence that the institution offers time management and emotional health seminars and workshops to students
- Evidence that the institution provides personal/career Christian counseling, with the employment of a part-time counselor, or a full-time counselor when enrollment at the site exceeds 500 students
- Evidence of an aesthetic campus environment that incorporates aspects of natural beauty, both inside and outside of the classroom
- Evidence that students and teachers engage in beautification projects, both on- and off-campus, such as adopting a park or developing an urban community garden
- Evidence that students are provided with opportunities to interact with natural settings as part of the required curriculum

Appendix E

Criteria for Review of Research Degrees

The institution's supervision of its research students, and any teaching it undertakes at the master's and doctoral level, is informed by a high level of professional knowledge of current research and advanced scholarly activity in its subjects of study. The awarding of degrees that recognize the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other forms of advanced scholarship, places a particular and substantial responsibility upon an awarding body. The institution's faculty/academic staff should accordingly command the respect and confidence of their academic peers across the higher education sector as being worthy to deliver research degree programs. Institutions wishing to offer research degrees should have in place a strong underpinning culture that actively encourages and supports creative, high quality research and scholarship amongst the organization's academic faculty and staff and its doctoral and other research students.

Adventist institutions of higher learning that offer research degrees are by their very nature an intellectual core for the Church in the region they serve as well as a center of whole person education. Integration of faith, learning, and praxis is a vital component that is rooted in their very reason to exist. An Adventist approach to a discipline must be consistent with the role of Scripture within Adventism while remaining genuinely open to new insights which might modify previous positions. Research provides an opportunity to integrate Adventist faith and learning at the highest level.

As a community of ethical and balanced analytical thinkers, faculty and students are uniquely positioned to supply a competent and able workforce for the church and society. From their uniquely privileged platform of intellectual leadership, they contribute discovery and dissemination of knowledge and, more importantly, respond to concrete problems and challenges that are part of the contemporary scene.

Within this context, the institution fosters and supports research efforts not limited to but deliberately inclusive of the fundamental and distinctive character of Adventist faith and a biblical worldview. Research topics might include development of the whole person (mental, physical, social and spiritual development in educational research), strong family bonds/ties (sociology), non-alcohol and tobacco use, vegetarian diet (public health and science research), Biblical standards as the basis of long-lasting truth and worldview (in areas like evolutionary studies, world history, marriage and family studies, etc.).

Area 1: History, Philosophy, Mission, and Objectives

Educational objectives are clearly recognized throughout the institution and are consistent with stated purposes. The institution has developed indicators for the achievement of its purposes and educational objectives, including for research degrees. The institution has a system of measuring student achievement in terms of milestones, retention, completion, and student learning (research skills, domain mastery, ability to create new knowledge, and advancing Adventist mission). The institution makes public data on student achievement at the institutional and degree level.

Area 2: Spiritual Development, Service, and Witnessing

The institution includes in the campus Spiritual Master Plan a component appropriate to the spiritual formation and needs of research students, including those who are part-time and off-

campus. Formative elements on spirituality (such as composition of a Personal Development Portfolio) are appropriate to the needs of research students.

Research degrees demonstrate evidence of their Adventist character through an intellectual quality in which the biblically-based Adventist worldview is basic to the entire academic endeavor. Transformational reflection on faith and sound theological thinking are an essential and evident part of scholarship. There is measurable evidence of rootedness in Adventist values and beliefs, ranging from theological reflection in doctoral theses/dissertations, projects or capstone reports to proposals to resolve problems and challenges or to enrich the church and society through well-thought and designed programs or projects.

The institution shows evidence that the masters/doctoral research program is a factor in making an institution an intellectual center which serves the church in its region and beyond by addressing issues of how Adventism relates to contemporary issues.

The research demonstrates reflection on how an Adventist worldview impacts on a particular discipline, yet at the same time show unequivocally that Adventism's demand that students not merely be reflectors of others' thoughts translates into research which is genuinely creative and original.

The institution encourages research in all disciplines, including theology, not as an end in itself but as an opportunity to reflect on the implications of Adventist faith and practice in contemporary society. The institution supports opportunities for service to others at the institution (e.g. mentoring undergraduates) and beyond (e.g. short-term work for ADRA which uses the skills being used in doctoral research).

The institution supports students whose research is in areas particularly challenging to classically formulated Adventism (e.g. through inter-disciplinary seminars which explore the relationship between faith and specific disciplines).

The institution's research degree board provide a measurable assessment of the Adventist component in their research degree offerings which may include, a 2-3 unit/credit biblical taught course/seminar relevant to the student's research area such as Bible/Religion and Science, History and Philosophy of Science, Comparative Science/Social Science ethics and the Bible, Biblical Financial ethics/Bible and Finance aimed at integration of faith and learning, a compulsory non-credit seminar on the above, regular research seminars, and/or a chapter/component of research degree that integrates faith with the topic/question/thesis.

The research degrees and faculty/staff who teach them are in compliance with the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) for research degrees in Religion and Theology.

Area 3: Governance, Organization, and Administration

The institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear, consistent with its purposes, and sufficient to support effective decision-making about research degrees and to place priority on sustaining effective academic programs.

Research supervisors and faculty exercise effective academic leadership and act consistently to ensure both academic quality and the appropriate maintenance of research degrees by including at least one person who is active in research on each major research decision-making body.

Planning and budgeting are coherent processes and are informed by appropriately defined and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data, such as consideration of evidence of educational

effectiveness and student learning in research degrees. The institution monitors the effectiveness of the implementation of its plans and revises them as appropriate.

The institution employs quality assurance processes at each level of functioning to ensure accountability. These include new program approval processes, periodic program review, and ongoing data collection and evaluation. These processes involve assessments of effectiveness, tracking of results over time and using the results of these assessments to revise and improve structures, processes, content, and pedagogy.

The bodies and individuals who administer research degrees and their faculty/staff develop the research culture and rigor of academic research degrees and establish:

- a. criteria for evaluating formative, summative, and integrative activities such as theses, dissertations, projects, or other capstone experiences;
- b. learning outcomes and expectations for graduate-level rigor in Area 2 (spiritual development, service and witnessing);
- c. a code of supervisory practice that includes spiritual support for students;
- d. faculty development, financial support for upgrading, and mentoring in research skills and the development of an academic career that includes research;
- e. expectations for research and/or advanced clinical practice for graduate faculty status and appraisal through annual performance reviews and promotion and tenure policies.

Area 4: Finances, Financial Structure, and Industries

Fiscal and physical resources are effectively aligned with the support of research that is sustainable, consistent with the strategic plan, and sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and kind to support research degrees and the scholarship of its members (such as allocations for sabbaticals, research support, attendance at professional meetings, journal subscriptions, visit and exchange, etc.). Funds are budgeted and available to allow timely completion of research projects and degrees as they are commenced.

Area 5: Programs of Study

All degrees awarded by the institution are clearly defined in terms of entry-level requirements and in terms of levels of student achievement necessary for graduation that represent more than simply an accumulation of credits. Research degrees are consistent with the mission, purpose, and character of the institutions; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the several levels of postgraduate and professional degrees offered. Research degree programs are visibly structured to include active involvement with the literature in the field and ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate high-level professional practice and training experiences, including teaching assistantships for those going into academic careers.

The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated levels of attainment, ensures that its expectations for student learning are embedded in the assessment criteria used to evaluate student work, and that these criteria distinguish between expectations for undergraduate and graduate levels.

The institution's academic programs actively involve students in learning, challenge them to achieve high expectations, and provide them with appropriate and ongoing feedback about their performance and how it can be improved.

The institution actively values and promotes scholarship and creative activity, as well as their dissemination at levels and of the kinds appropriate to the institution's mission, purposes, and character and the student's level of development.

Regardless of the mode of program delivery (part-time, off-campus, full-time residential), the institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students and assesses their needs, experiences, and levels of development and satisfaction. This information is used to help shape a learning-centered experience and to actively promote student success in research degrees.

In order to improve program currency and effectiveness, all research degrees offered by the institution are subject to systematic review, including analyses of the achievement of the degree's intended learning objectives and actual outcomes. Where appropriate, evidence from external constituencies such as external examiners, placement, employers, and professional societies is included in such reviews.

Area 6: Faculty and Staff

Recruitment, workload, incentive, and evaluation practices of research supervisors, faculty, and staff are aligned with institutional purposes, educational objectives of research degrees, and research productivity. All of these are supported by formal evidence.

The institution demonstrates that it employs research supervisors and faculty with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution and its values sufficient in number and professional qualifications (including a record of recent scholarly activity) to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, provide spiritual support for their students, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its research degrees wherever and however delivered.

Research supervisors are selected on the basis that they demonstrate substantial relevant knowledge, understanding, and experience of both current research and advanced scholarship in their discipline area and that such knowledge, understanding, and experience directly inform and enhance their supervision and teaching.

The institution demonstrates its research culture by meeting the minimum national benchmarks for research productivity such as:

- percentage of senior researchers (e.g., 20% full professor; 35% associate),
- proportion of full-time research supervisors who are active and recognized contributors to subject associations, learned societies, and relevant professional bodies (e.g., normally around a half as a minimum) and proportion of its academic staff who are research active (e.g., around a third as a minimum who have published within the past three years, acted as external examiners for research degrees, served as validation/review panel members, or contributed to collaborative research projects with other organizations),
- proportion of its academic faculty/staff who are engaged in research or other forms of advanced scholarship (e.g. around a third as a minimum) and who can demonstrate achievements that are recognized by the wider academic community to be of national and/or international standing as indicated by authoritative external peer reviews.

Area 7: Library and Resource Centers, and Technology

The library budget is proportionate to research income and sufficient to support the research culture of the institution and the needs of research students and research faculty.

For on-campus students and students enrolled at a distance, physical and information resources, services, and information technology facilities are sufficient in scope and kind to support and maintain the level and type of research and research training offered.

Area 8: Academic Policies and Records

The institution publishes minimal standards for entry to research degrees. A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and specified grade average are generally required for entry to a research master's degree. Normally a master's degree by research or occasionally a bachelor's degree with first class honors or second class upper division are required for entry to a research MPhil/doctoral degree. Examinations and/or personal recommendations may also be required. The department recommends to the research committee acceptance or rejection of the applicant. Admission does not imply that the student will be awarded a degree.

The institution clearly defines and distinguishes between the different types of credits it offers and between degree and non-degree credit and accurately identifies the type and meaning of the credit awarded in its transcripts.

Degrees:

- MA/MS/MSc: A first graduate degree, representing the equivalent of at least one academic year of full-time post-baccalaureate study, or its equivalent in depth and quality. The distinctions between M.A. and M.S. are similar to those between B.A. and B.S. Some M.A. and M.S. degrees are merely continuations at a higher level of undergraduate work without basic change in character. Others emphasize some research that may lead to doctoral work.
- MBA, MSW, MDiv, etc.: Professional degrees requiring up to two years of full-time study. Extensive undergraduate preparation in the field may reduce the length of study to one year.
- MPhil, PhD, DPhil, ThD: The standard research-oriented degree which indicates that the recipient has done, and is prepared to do, original research in a major discipline. The PhD usually requires three years or more of postgraduate work or an equivalent period of part-time study and consists mainly of a supervised research project and completion of an externally-examined original research thesis or project.
- EdD, PsyD, MD, JD, DMin, DrPH etc.: Degrees with emphasis on professional knowledge. These degrees normally require three or more years of prescribed postgraduate work and are designed to prepare persons for a specific profession. Some undergraduate programs prepare for direct entry into employment (e.g., nursing) and other programs are offered at both undergraduate and graduate levels (e.g. engineering, business management, ministry). Others are primarily or solely graduate in nature (e.g., medicine, dentistry). In the U.S., all professional programs at the doctoral level presuppose a background preparation in liberal or general education.

The institution has in place policies and procedures to monitor satisfactory progress of students through research degrees in a timely manner.

The institution's student learning outcomes and expectations for student attainment are clearly stated at the degree and institutional level and are consistent with its mission and values. These outcomes and expectations are reflected in academic programs and policies, advisement, library and information resources, and the wider learning environment.

The institution collects and analyzes student data disaggregated by demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and campus climate to support student success. The institution regularly identifies characteristics of its students and assesses their preparation, needs, and experiences. These data are used to benchmark against similar institutions and demonstrate equitable access to institutional resources necessary to successful completion of the degree.

The institution satisfies relevant national guidance relating to the award of research degrees in accordance with the research degree management frameworks issued by relevant research councils, funding bodies, and professional/statutory bodies.

Area 9: Student Services

Consistent with its purposes, the institution develops and implements non-academic programs that are integrated with its academic goals and programs and which support student professional and personal development, including those who are part-time or off-campus.

Student support services—including financial aid, registration, advising, career counseling, computer labs, and library and online information services—are designed to meet the needs of research degree students studying in all modes: distance or on-campus, full or part-time.

Area 10: Physical Plant and Facilities

Student housing is designed to meet the study and family needs of full-time, on-campus research degree students.

Research facilities and laboratories are sufficient in number and adequately equipped to support the research degrees, especially in the basic sciences.

Area 11: Public Relations and External Constituencies

Appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, and others defined by the institution, are involved in the assessment of the effectiveness of research degrees.

The institution truthfully represents its academic goals, programs, religious ethos, and services to students and to the larger public; demonstrates that its research degrees can be completed in a timely fashion; and treats students fairly and equitably through established policies and procedures addressing matters such as student conduct, grievances, refunds, and ethical conduct in research.

Area 12: Pastoral and Theological Education

The institution will provide evidence that the pastoral and theological education program that is by research will result in graduates who have the practical skills, the theoretical/theological understanding, and the commitment to the message and mission of the church that are necessary for employment as a pastor, teacher, and/or for graduate pastoral/theological education.

APPENDIX F

Best Practices for Distance Education¹

Institution Context and Commitment

Electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of institutions. Increasingly they are integral to academic organization with growing implications for educational infrastructure.

1. In its philosophy, content, purposes, and organization, the program is consistent with the institution's role and mission to deliver distinctive Adventist education.
 - Provide evidence that: (a) the program is consistent with the mission statement of the school or that the mission statement has been revised; (b) student access to academic resources, faith community, and health/lifestyle resources is adequate; (c) student spiritual guidance and formation is adequate, including opportunities for the development of a personal relationship with their Savior and fellowship with the Adventist church; (d) opportunities for outreach and service are in place and adequate.
2. It is recognized that institutions change over time. The institution is aware of accreditation requirements and complies with them. Each accrediting association has established definitions of what activities constitute a substantive change that will trigger prior review and approval processes. The appropriate accreditation commission should be notified and consulted if an electronically offered program represents a major change. The offering of distributed programs can affect the institution's educational goals, intended student population, curriculum, and modes or venue of instruction and can thus have an impact on both the institution and its accreditation status.
 - Does the program represent a change to the institution's stated mission and objectives?
 - Does the program take the institution beyond the Conference/Union/Division/ accrediting association boundaries?
3. The institution's budgets and policy statements reflect its commitment to the students for whom its electronically offered programs are designed.
 - How are electronically offered curricula included in the institution's overall budget structure? Do they reflect ongoing commitment?
4. What are the institution's policies concerning the establishment, organization, funding, and management of electronically offered curricula? The institution assures adequacy of technical and physical plant facilities, including appropriate staffing and technical assistance, to support its electronically offered programs.
 - Do technical and physical plant facilities accommodate the curricular commitments reviewed below, e.g., instructor and student interaction and appropriateness to the curriculum?
 - Whether facilities are provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, what are the provisions for reliability, privacy, safety, and security?
 - Does the institution's budget plan provide for appropriate updating of the technologies employed?
 - Do the faculty at the host site have the appropriate certification and endorsements to support the programs being offered as well as those envisioned in the near term?

¹ Adapted from a North American Division document by this same title.

- Is the staffing structure at the remote location appropriately qualified (academically and technologically) to provide support to ensure student success?
5. The internal organizational structure which enables the development, coordination, support, and oversight of electronically offered curricula will include the capability to:
- Facilitate the associated instructional and technical support relationships.
 - Provide (or draw upon) the required information technologies and related support services.
 - Develop and implement a marketing plan that considers the technologies available, the factors required to meet institution goals, and the target student population.
 - Provide training and support to participating instructors and students.
 - Assure compliance with copyright law.
 - Contract for products and outsourced services.
 - Assess and assign priorities to potential future projects.
 - Assure that electronically offered programs and courses meet Division standards, both to provide consistent quality and to provide a coherent framework for students who may enroll in both electronically offered and traditional on-campus courses.
 - Maintain appropriate academic oversight.
 - Maintain consistency with the institution's academic planning and oversight functions in order to assure congruence with the institution's mission and allocation of required resources.
 - Provide the structure required for distributed education students to participate as fully as possible in the institution community (including chaplaincy services, worships and spiritual emphasis programs, mission trips, and other extracurricular institution activities.)
 - Assure the integrity of student work and faculty instruction.

Evaluation of the above points may be accomplished by any, all, or combinations of the following procedures and inquiries:

- Is there a clear, well-understood process by which an electronically offered program evolves from conception to administrative authorization to implementation? How is the need for the program determined? How is it assigned a priority among the other potential programs? Has the development of the program incorporated appropriate internal consultation and integration with existing planning efforts?
- Track the history of a representative project from idea through implementation, noting the links among the participants including those responsible for curriculum, those responsible for deciding to offer the program electronically, those responsible for program/course design, those responsible for the technologies applied, those responsible for faculty and student support, those responsible for marketing, those responsible for legal issues, those responsible for budgeting, those responsible for administrative and student services, and those responsible for program evaluation. Does this review reveal a coherent set of relationships?
- In the institution's organizational documentation, is there a clear and integral relationship between those responsible for electronically offered programs and the mainstream academic structure?
- How is the organizational structure reflected in the institution's overall budget?
- How are the integrity, reliability, and security of outsourced services assured?
- Are training and technical support programs considered adequate by those for whom they are intended?
- What are the policies and procedures concerning compliance with copyright law?

- How does curriculum evaluation relate to this organizational and decision-making structure?
6. What are the institution's policies concerning credit transfer? On what basis are decisions made regarding transfer of academic credit?
 - Does the institution have policies to regulate credit transfer and to evaluate non-traditional programs?
 - How does the institution determine the basis of a Carnegie unit (USA)-equivalent (elsewhere)/grades?
 - How does the institution determine equivalency for on-line and face-to-face courses?
 7. The institution strives to assure a consistent and coherent technical framework for students and faculty. When a change in technologies is necessary, it is introduced in a way that minimizes the impact on students and faculty.
 - When student or instructor proceeds from one course or program to another, is it necessary to learn another software program or set of technical procedures?
 - When new software or systems are adopted, what programs/processes are used to acquaint instructors and students with them?
 8. The institution provides students with reasonable technical support for each educational technology hardware, software, and delivery system required.
 - Is support realistically available to students during hours when it is likely to be needed?
 - Is help available for all hardware, software, and delivery systems specified by the institution as required for the program?
 - Does support involve person-to-person contact for the student? By what means is this accomplished, e.g., email, phone, fax?
 - Is there a well-designed FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) service, online resources provided, and/or by phone menu or on-demand fax?
 9. The selection of technologies is based on appropriateness for the students and the curriculum. It is recognized that availability, cost, and other issues are often involved, but program documentation should include specific consideration of the match between technology and curricula.
 - How were the technologies chosen for this institution's curricula?
 - Are the technologies judged to be appropriate (or inappropriate) to the curricula in which they are used?
 - Are the intended students likely to find their technology costs reasonable?
 - What provisions have been made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty?
 - Given the rapid pace of change in modern information technology, what policies or procedures are in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably up-to-date?
 10. The institution seeks to understand the legal and regulatory requirements of the jurisdictions, including denominational, in which it operates, e.g., requirements for service to those with disabilities, copyright law, province/state, national requirements for institutions offering international restrictions such as export of sensitive information or technologies, etc.
 - Do the institution's policies and documentation indicate an awareness of these requirements and demonstrate that it has made an appropriate response to them?

APPENDIX G

Adventist Accrediting Association Conflict of Interest Policy

In carrying out their accreditation responsibilities, members of the AAA Board, staff, and site visit teams seek to ensure that their decisions are based solely on the application of professional judgment to the information resulting from their evaluation procedures. Therefore, they seek to avoid conflict of interest and the appearance of conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as any circumstance in which an individual's capacity to make an impartial and unbiased accreditation decision may be affected or perceived to be affected because of a prior, current, or anticipated institutional affiliation(s), or other significant relationship(s) with an accredited institution or an institution seeking recognition by the Board.

Because of the common objectives embraced by the various organizational units and institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, membership held concurrently on more than one denominational committee or board does not in itself constitute a conflict of interest, provided that all the other requirements of the policy are met. While serving as an officer, trustee, or director of multiple denominational entities is thus acknowledged and accepted, a member serving on the AAA Board is expected to act in the best interests of the Adventist Accrediting Association and its role in denominational structure.²

The following are examples of affiliations and other significant relationships pertaining to visiting team members, AAA Board members, and AAA Board staff that present a conflict or the appearance of a conflict. Such affiliations and significant relationships should be disclosed to the executive secretary for discussion and evaluation. Affiliations with institutions under review that would pose a conflict of interest may include, but are not limited to, any of the following categories during the past five years: employee, former employee, applicant for employment, board member, appointee, paid consultant, current student, graduate, or instructor. Any relationship involving a written agreement and/or compensation may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest and should be included. Other significant relationships that should be reported for their potential in prejudicing decision making include, but are not limited to: having a close relative (such as but not limited to spouse, child, parent or sibling) affiliated with the institution under review, receiving an award from the institution, and/or having a close personal or professional relationship at the institution under review where that relationship might have a material effect on accreditation review.

AAA Board Members: AAA Board members shall make proposals, vote and otherwise conduct themselves in Board meetings and activities in a manner consistent with their best, impartial, and unfettered judgment, and in furtherance of the Board's purposes, without regard for the potential impact of the Board's decisions on their own professional or financial interests or those of their friends, relatives and colleagues. Board members are expected to commit themselves to full disclosure and restraint in any institutional consideration involving a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest.

Visiting Team Members: In selecting visiting teams for a specific institutional review, individuals who have a known conflict of interest should be excluded. If unsure about a conflict of interest, individuals are expected to disclose possible conflicts to the Board staff via the Conflict of Interest Form for discussion and evaluation prior to appointment to a team. It is the policy of the Board that visiting team members not serve as paid consultants with an institution they have visited for one year following the visit. Institutions, in reviewing proposed teams, are encouraged to bring to the

² See General Conference Working Policy E 85 Conflict of Interest and/or Commitment

attention of Board staff any possible conflicts of interest or situation that might be perceived as a conflict of interest.

Board Staff: Board staff are committed to full disclosure and restraint in any institutional consideration involving a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest. Staff members shall recuse themselves from voting on decisions regarding institutions with which they have been employed, served as a director/trustee, or served as a paid consultant during the previous five years. Staff members may not participate in private consulting with any institution accredited by or a candidate for accreditation with the Board for at least one year after serving on the Board. Staff also may not receive honorary degrees or awards from any institution with candidate or accredited status with the Board for at least one year after serving on the Board. Disclosure of any conflict of interest, or situation that might reasonably be perceived as a conflict of interest, must be provided to the executive secretary.

In the case of a conflict involving the executive secretary, notice shall be given to the Board chair. In the case of a conflict involving the Board chair, or for any unclear conflicts or appearance of conflicts involving team members, board staff, or board members, the AAA Board Conflict of Interest subcommittee will be consulted. A record of institutions where there is a conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict will be kept in a separate file by the executive secretary of the Adventist Accrediting Association.

Consultants and other agency representatives: Consultants and others with a formal contractual relationship with the AAA, who, in the course of their work may become involved in Board policy, institutional evaluation, or the accreditation decision of specific institutions, will be required to complete the Conflict of Interest Form and the Form shall be kept on file.

Mitigating Potential or Actual Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts that are deemed to have the potential or are likely to be perceived as having the potential to have a direct and significant effect on a decision must be eliminated, mitigated, or managed. Such strategies for eliminating, mitigating, or managing conflicts can include:

Removal: The best way to handle conflicts of interests is to avoid them entirely. Individuals invited to participate are expected to decline to serve in the evaluation of an institution where they have, or where it might reasonably appear that they have, a conflict of interest. For the purposes of this policy, five years is established as the limit of prior association. Other means of removing a conflict include, but are not limited to, divestiture of significant financial interests; disqualification from participation in all or a portion of the meeting or site visit; and/or severance of relationships that create actual or potential conflicts.

Disclosure: If known in advance, all present and potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed by Board members, staff and potential team members.

- Board members and staff shall complete an annual Conflict of Interest Form. Such disclosures shall be submitted to the executive secretary of the AAA for review by the Board's Conflict of Interest committee. The committee shall resolve or determine the steps required to manage the potential conflict, with appropriate information provided to the Board.
- Potential members of a visiting team shall inform the staff or chair of the visiting team and the head of the institution being visited of any disclosures they may need to make.

If not known in advance, conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest shall be disclosed to the person in charge of the meeting or activity and to the full meeting. The voting members in such

a meeting shall determine whether or not the matter disclosed constitutes an actual or perceived conflict of interest and the manner in which this is to be handled.

Recusal: Those with a conflict of interest are expected to recuse themselves from (i.e., abstain from) decisions where such a conflict exists. The imperative for recusal varies depending upon the circumstance, ranging from abstaining from discussion or voting, to removing oneself from the room or situation to avoid participation in all discussion or deliberation on the issue. All such actions should be recorded in any minutes or records kept. Following full disclosure of the present or potential conflict, the Board may decide that no conflict of interest exists and invite the person in question to participate.

Members of the Board will at a minimum abstain, and in some cases absent themselves from the room when there are deliberations or votes on decisions regarding institutions with which they are affiliated or with which they have participated as a member of the most recent visiting team.

Training: Training on the policy shall be provided to prospective AAA site team members and AAA Board members by means of the Conflict of Interest form.

Policy Application

Questions or concerns regarding the application of this Policy should be addressed to the executive secretary of the AAA or the General Conference Office of General Counsel.

APPENDIX H

Substantive Change Policy, Processes, and Guidelines

Changes to programs offered by a higher education institution accredited by the AAA will normally fall into three categories. The expectation of the IBE/IBMTE and the AAA in each case is as follows:

1. Minor Changes

If an institution wishes to change the focus or direction of a program by adding new courses, while the name and level of qualification of the program remain the same, neither the IBE/IBMTE or the AAA need to be informed of changes.

2. Program Structure Changes

If an institution plans to change the nomenclature of a program, introduce a new program that combines existing courses in a new way, or develop a program that leads to a lower level of qualification than diplomas and degrees already offered by the institution in that discipline, the IBE/IBMTE should be informed of the changes. These will be recorded by the IBE/IBMTE and recommended to the AAA as courses to be identified in the Directory of Accreditation.

Institutions planning to make changes in this category should provide details of the anticipated changes at an early stage in their planning to the GC Department of Education through their relevant division education director and GC liaison. If the GC Department of Education agrees that the changes do fall within this second category, programs can be started immediately while paperwork is being processed through the IBE and the AAA.

3. Major Program Additions

If an institution plans to introduce a program in a new discipline, or a program that leads to a higher level of qualification than is presently offered or in a new modality in that particular discipline, the IBE/IBMTE should receive an application following the outlined IBE/IBMTE procedures. The IBE/IBMTE may choose to send an on-site team to evaluate the proposal. If a college or university is applying for non-church recognition of this same program, the application to the IBE/IBMTE may be sent before or at the same time as the application for approval by the local accrediting/validation body.

In the case of the third category of program changes, the institution may not start offering the program until approval has been given by the AAA on the recommendation of the IBE/IBMTE. If an institution does start a program before receiving the required approval, the AAA will contact the parent organization and ask for both an explanation and that the situation be immediately rectified. If there is no resolution within 90 days of the initial communication from the AAA to the relevant bodies, the AAA will normally immediately place the institution on probation. If the voted terms of probation are then not met, AAA accreditation will be revoked.

If the administration of an institution is uncertain into which category a proposed change will fall, it is their responsibility to check with the AAA before proceeding with their plans.

These guidelines articulate the understandings and expectations held by the AAA for its member institutions in regard to substantive change.

Exemptions from IBE/IBMTE Site Visits

A site visit will be scheduled for proposed academic programs, unless one of the following criteria is met:

1. The institution is (a) accredited by the AAA under Form B, with the rigorous external academic review processes which that designation entails and (b) already offers well-established programs in the given modality within the discipline of the proposed program, at the same academic level (e.g., bachelor's, master's, doctoral) of the new program.
2. The Division request for the approval of new undergraduate degrees has been granted by the IBE or the AAA has granted Systems Review approval for the institution. Professional degrees in theology, education, medicine/healthcare are not automatically exempt from a site visit. (See GCWP FE 20 55.5).

Substantive Change Review Processes and Guidelines

The AAA accredits the entire institution and its programs and services, wherever they are located or however they are delivered. Accreditation, specific to an institution, is based on conditions existing at the time of the most recent evaluation and is not transferable to other institutions or entities.

A substantive change review is required when an accredited institution:

- significantly modifies or expands its scope
- makes a series of significant administrative personnel changes over relatively short periods of time
- considers developing extension programs or off-campus sites more than 25 miles (40 km) from the main campus
- offers more than half of a degree via technology (online, TV, etc.)
- considers changing the nature of its affiliation or ownership, or merges with another institution

The AAA is responsible for evaluating all substantive changes to assess the impact of the change on the institution's compliance and ability to comply with defined standards. If an institution fails to follow the AAA's procedures for notification and approval of substantive changes, its accreditation may be placed in jeopardy. If an institution is unclear as to whether a change is substantive in nature, it should contact the Executive Secretary of the AAA for clarification.

The institution notifies the AAA of changes in accordance with the substantive change policy and seeks approval prior to the initiation of changes.

Extension, Off-Campus, or Technology-Mediated Programs

All extension, off-campus, or technology-mediated programs providing academic credit are integral parts of the institution and are to maintain the same academic standards as regular campus programs. The faculty of the accredited institution is required to exercise central responsibility for the academic programs, quality, and character of these programs. The faculty has the major role in design and implementation of the curriculum.

Each extension, off-campus, or technology-mediated program shall have a core of full-time faculty whose primary employment obligation is to teaching and research at the institution. Off campus programs are to provide library services and hold readily available basic collections at all program sites. Interlibrary loan or contractual use arrangements documented in an MOU may be used to supplement basic holdings but are not to be used as the main source of learning resources.

Institutions with three or more off-campus programs that have been approved by the IBE/AAA may be eligible to seek a Systems Review. The Systems Review is a process that allows institutions the opportunity to demonstrate the capacity to effectively design, deliver, and evaluate a cluster of programs within a particular program modality so that such programs can be implemented over a four-year period without seeking prior approval from the International Board of Education.

Issues to Address in Substantive Change Proposal

- Describe how the institution defines and evaluates its capacity and infrastructure to support extension, off-campus, or technology-mediated programs. Describe how multiple sites have impacted resources and structures needed to sustain these programs.
- Show how extension, off-campus, or technology-mediated (on-line/interactive/TV/etc.) distance education programs are consistent with the Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy, outcomes, and objectives.
- Describe how the institution evaluates the effectiveness of student learning for extension, off-campus, or technology-mediated distance education programs. Reflect on what the institution has learned from delivering these programs over time. Explain how program quality and improvement will be sustained based on this experience.
- Identify the indicators which demonstrate that these programs are achieving their objectives.
- Identify the indicators which demonstrate that these off campus/technology-mediated/extension programs are successful in transmitting the spiritual values of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to those enrolled in the programs.
- Provide an analysis of how faculty are organized and prepared to teach these students. Provide evidence of faculty assessment of student learning in this modality and a summary of faculty development efforts to help instructors teach in this modality.
- Identify the documents which demonstrate that the educational program is taught by faculty with appropriate academic preparation and language proficiencies and whose credentials have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate certification agency/government/church entity.
- Identify the ratio of Adventist to non-Adventist teaching faculty for these programs and explain the rationale/justification for such a ratio in light of the church's educational philosophy.

Additional Questions by the Visiting Team

1. What was/is the primary purpose for establishing of off-campus learning sites for your institution? How has the expansion enhanced your ability to carry out your institutional mission and that of the church? How does the program serve the specific needs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church? How have you assessed or are you assessing the extent to which your objectives are being achieved?
2. How would you describe the learning environment for students at off-campus locations or in the technology-mediated environment? How does this environment maintain a distinctly Seventh-day Adventist flavor? What academic and academic support services are available to students at the location (such as library facilities, personal and academic advising, computer access, residential living space, etc.)?
3. What is the ratio of Adventist to non-Adventist students in these programs? What is the rationale/justification for such a ratio in light of Seventh-day Adventist educational philosophy?
4. Where are the academic records of students at off-campus locations maintained and what process is in place to assure their proper care and security?
5. How has the expansion contributed to the financial viability of the main campus?
6. What have you learned in the process of this expansion that you feel would be helpful to other institutions considering such expansion?
7. What evidence exists to show that the program(s) has/have received all appropriate internal and external approvals where required, including system administration, government bodies, and accrediting associations?
8. Are the physical facilities, human and financial resources adequate to accommodate the students at the off-campus location?

Technology-mediated Programs

Provide an analysis of the sufficiency and quality of technical and physical resources required to deliver technology-mediated programs, including how faculty are supported in the integration and use of technology in their teaching, the appropriateness of the learning environment, and the responsiveness of computer systems and support staff in aiding student achievement.

Doctoral Degrees

In seeking prior approval to grant the doctorate, institutions will need to demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive character of doctoral education. This includes demonstrating that an institution possesses the capacity and expertise to develop a doctoral culture while maintaining institutional capacity and appropriate systems of educational effectiveness at the highest level of graduate education.

Proposals are required to define the nature and significance of the doctoral degree for the institution and to provide a comprehensive analysis of institutional capacity to support student learning at this advanced level. The analysis should be presented in the context of institutional capacity and educational effectiveness of existing degree levels. Proposals should use the standards and criteria for review found in the *Accreditation Handbook* as a framework for analysis. Considering the standards and criteria for review, the AAA expects that institutions will consider the following issues in proposals seeking approval of the doctorate:

- *Doctoral education should be aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives.*

An institution engaged at this level is making a conscious commitment to create an institutional culture that is supportive of research and professional practice. It is appropriate for an institution to ask itself how this culture fits within the existing institutional goals and mission.

- *The objectives of doctoral education have implications for core institutional functions.*

Doctoral programs differ substantially from baccalaureate and master's level programs in the depth and breadth of required study, in the increased demands on student intellectual and creative capacity, and in the goal of developing scholars and practitioners at the highest level. Institutions will need to consider whether or not the program is structured to meet these higher expectations for the degree level by demonstrating how student learning outcomes will be achieved and how support for scholarship and creative activity will be provided for professional development of faculty and students.

- *Doctoral education requires specialized resources.*

The intellectual interaction between doctoral students and faculty is distinctive and central in doctoral education. Institutions will need to consider whether the program has resources of appropriate quality and support in terms of faculty, library and information resources, and organizational support services to meet the requirements of the advanced degree.

- *Doctoral education requires processes for evaluating educational effectiveness.*

Institutions will need to demonstrate that quality assurance systems are aligned with the expectations of a doctoral level education and are fully integrated with the existing academic culture.

Note: Degrees by research only will be evaluated according to Criteria for Review of Research Degrees.

Joint Degree and Cross-Territorial Programs

Institutions should consult with the GC Department of Education liaison regarding any proposed joint degrees or cross-territorial programs. The proposal that is submitted to the IBE and a Memoranda of Understanding detailing the terms must be signed by both partners, reflecting approval by the Board of Trustees of each institution and the respective divisions. Include evidence of any other regional or national authorization as an appendix to the proposal.

Guidelines for Cross-Territorial (Constituency) Programs

Each institution is established to serve a primary (base) constituency. Some of these constituencies may overlap. For example, a division institution may serve a territory that includes one served by a union institution. Acceptable mutual understanding should be the guiding principle in such situations to determine which programs should be offered by each institution as well as where and how.

When a need arises in another territory that necessitates a church organization (conference, union, division or institution) to request for the services of another institution outside its territory to offer certain programs, such a request should take the following into consideration:

- Is such a program already offered by the institution that serves that territory?
- What are the costs involved?
- Will the program and the graduates require and or receive local recognition?
- Can the program be offered collaboratively by the two institutions?
- What are the long-range plans?

If it is a new program (whether it already exists at one of the institutions or not), then the two institutions must include education leadership from the constituencies served by the two institutions in consultation with the GC education department. The discussion will include the usual questions required by the IBE proposal format plus specifically identifying both the need for another program and the cost of running such a program.

In some cases, governments do not recognize programs from outside their territories. The proposal must attach documentation to show approval to operate in that country or demonstrate that efforts have been made to obtain such authorization.

Where possible the two institutions may consider offering the program collaboratively or as a joint degree. This can help develop capacity of a host institution in territory where this program is needed but not yet available. This would, therefore, take into account the long-term plans for the developing institution.

Possible collaborative arrangements may include:

- Affiliation – where a host institution runs the program but under the accreditation of another institution
- Extension - where the base institution offers the program on the campus of the host institution
- Joint degree
- Other – such as the host campus acting as a Distance Learning Center under some agreement