

eNEWSLINE

Management Education News from AACSB International

Accreditation: Revised Eligibility Application Process to Go Into Effect July 2010

Effective July 1, 2010, AACSB will implement its revised Eligibility Application process. This revised process will help AACSB to provide an enhanced level of client service to schools seeking Initial Accreditation through a more timely appointment of an accreditation mentor and staff liaison. The changes result from the PreAccreditation Committee (PAC) and Initial Accreditation Committee's (IAC) review of feedback from mentors, peer review teams, accreditation committees, AACSB staff, and other representatives from the management education community, and reflect AACSB's commitment to continuous improvement in support of schools interested in applying for accreditation.

The changes to the process will go into effect July 1, 2010. However, schools that have already begun the process of applying for Initial Accreditation may choose to submit the current application for review by the PAC at its meeting scheduled for October 1, 2010. As of October 2, 2010, the PAC will no longer accept the current application format.

Revised Eligibility Application Process in Effect July 1, 2010

The revised Eligibility Application has been simplified, and now requires a limited amount of understanding of AACSB terminology and concepts at the beginning stage of the process. Most notably, information regarding faculty qualifications, sufficiency, and assurance of learning is now submitted later in the process.

Instead of a review process occurring three times per year, Eligibility Applications can now be submitted at any time, and will be reviewed on a monthly basis. Once reviewed, AACSB staff will make recommendations regarding the acceptance of the applications to the PAC chair, and will provide him/her with suggestions for a volunteer to work in the role of mentor to the school. Along with the



mentor, an AACSB Accreditation Manager will be assigned to the school. This manager will serve as the school's Accreditation Staff Liaison, and the primary contact person for the school within AACSB for all accreditation-related issues and questions. The timeframe for this portion of the process has been shortened to 30–60 days.

**The role of the mentor is to assist the school with the development of a Standards Alignment Plan. This plan provides additional information related to the eligibility of the school, as well as an action plan for alignment with the standards. (The maximum time for plan development is two years).

Details on the new process are outlined below. This also can be accessed on the AACSB website at: www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/NewApp.

1. The applicant submits the Eligibility Application as an indication of interest to enter the AACSB Accreditation process. With this application, the applicant school responds to eligibility criteria questions, and provides basic information about number of faculty, students, programs, level of programs, and organization structure. Along with the Eligibility Application, the applicant submits a non-refundable application fee. For ease of access, the new Eligibility Application also can be found at: www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/NewApp.
2. AACSB staff reviews the application and makes a recommendation to the PAC chair regarding the acceptance of the application.
3. An AACSB manager is assigned to the school to serve as the Accreditation Staff Liaison. This staff liaison is the contact person for the school within AACSB for all accreditation-related issues and questions.
4. The school receives a decision letter from the chair of the PAC, along with an invoice to be paid in full within one month after receipt of the decision letter. The timeframe for this portion of the process has been shortened from an average of six months to 30–45 days.
5. A volunteer is selected to work with the school as a mentor. The responsibility of the mentor is to assist the school with the development of the Standards Alignment Plan. This plan should provide additional information related to the eligibility of the school, as well as an action plan for alignment with the standards. Two years are allowed for plan development, however schools may submit their Standards Alignment Plan within a shorter period of time.
6. The applicant school must confirm in writing to AACSB that it approves the assigned mentor.
7. The mentor is invited, confirmed, and the applicant is notified. If the proposed mentor does not accept the invitation, another volunteer will be proposed to the school.
8. The school completes, with the assistance from the mentor, the Standards Alignment Plan. This is generally completed in one year or less, but may take a maximum of two years.

9. The PAC reviews the Standards Alignment Plan, which will lead to one of the following outcomes:

- Acceptance of the plan with a recommendation to the IAC to invite the school to develop a Self-Evaluation Report and to apply for Initial Accreditation (the Initial Accreditation Committee must concur).
- Acceptance of the plan with a recommendation to the IAC that the school move into an Implementation Phase of the Accreditation Alignment Plan. The school is asked to submit reports to the IAC to keep the committee informed of the progress towards alignment with the standards (a three-year implementation period is allowed and the Initial Accreditation Committee must concur).
- The school is accepted into the Accreditation Process, but the plan still needs refinement. At this point, the PAC will make a recommendation to the school to revise and resubmit their Alignment Plan prior to moving forward.
- The Accreditation Alignment Plan is not accepted by PAC, as it is determined that the school will not be able to align itself with the accreditation standards within the maximum time allowed under the PreAccreditation Process.

For questions regarding the process changes, please contact Jerry Trapnell (jerryt@aacsb.edu), executive vice president and chief accreditation officer, or Lucienne Mochel (lucienne@aacsb.edu), assistant vice president of accreditation. For general questions regarding accreditation, please contact your accreditation manager directly or email Accreditation at: accreditation@aacsb.edu.