This *Guide to Evaluating Institutions* is designed to be used by institutions preparing their Self Study Report as well as by teams conducting a comprehensive evaluation. The Guide is meant to provoke some thoughtful consideration about whether the institution meets the Accreditation Standards at a deeper level than mere compliance – it is intended to also provide some guidance for a holistic view of an institution and its quality. The common guide is predicated on the belief that both institutional members and outside evaluators use the standards to assess the institution, and that they ought to be using the same tools to conduct that assessment.[1]

---

[1] Guide to Evaluating Institutions Using the 2004 Standards, *draft*, page 2

Excerpt from "Guide to Evaluating Institutions"[2]

Std #	Questions
A.1	1. What methods does the institution use to assure that qualifications for each position are closely matched to specific programmatic needs? 2. What analyses and discussions have led the institution to agree on those needs? 3. Are the institution's personnel sufficiently qualified to guarantee the integrity of programs and services?
A.1.a	4. How does the institution decide on hiring criteria? 5. How are faculty involved in the selection of new faculty? 6. How does the college decide an applicant is well qualified? 7. How does the college know that faculty who are selected have a knowledge of their subject matter? 8. By what methods does the college define and evaluate "effective teaching" in its hiring processes? 9. How is that effectiveness judged? 10. How does the college define and judge scholarship in a candidate, and by what means does it judge a candidate's potential to contribute to the college mission? 11. How are jobs advertised? 12. By what means does the institution verify the qualifications of applicants and newly hired personnel? 13. How does the college check the equivalency of degrees from non-US institutions? 14. What evidence is there that hiring processes yield highly qualified employees? 15. What safeguards are in place to assure that hiring procedures are consistently applied?

---

[2] Ibid., 36-40

A.1.b	16. How does the college decide on appropriate institutional responsibilities for personnel participation? How is participation judged?
	17. How does the college determine the appropriateness of activities to personnel expertise?
	18. What is the connection between personnel evaluations and institutional effectiveness and improvement?
	19. Do evaluation criteria measure the effectiveness of personnel in performing their duties?
A.1.c	20. What are the roles of teachers, tutors, and others in producing student learning outcomes?
	21. What deep thinking have faculty, as individuals and collectively, engaged in about how well students are learning in their courses and programs?
	22. What measures have they, again as individuals and collectively, created or selected to measure that learning?
	23. What discussions have faculty had about how to improve learning? What plans have been made?
	24. What changes have faculty made in their methodologies to improve learning?
	25. What changes in course content or sequencing have resulted from analyses of how well students are mastering course content?
	26. What methods has the institution developed to evaluate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes?
	27. Are these methods yielding meaningful and useful results?
	28. How does the institution use evaluation results to improve student learning outcomes?
	29. How has staff development supported faculty performance in satisfactory development and assessment of student learning outcomes?
A.1.d	30. How does the institution foster ethical behavior in its employees?
	31. Does the institution have a written code of professional ethics for all its personnel?

A.2	32. By what means does the institution determine appropriate staffing levels for each program and service?
	33. How does the institution decide on the organization of administrative and support staffing?
	34. How effectively does the number and organization of the institution's personnel work to support its programs and services?
	35. How does the institution evaluate this effectiveness?
A.3	36. What processes does the institution use to develop and publicize its personnel policies?
	37. How does the institution ensure that it administers its personnel policies consistently?
	38. Do these policies and processes result in fair treatment of personnel?
A.3. a & b	39. What are the institution's provisions for keeping personnel records?
	40. How does the institution provide employees access to their records?
A.4	41. In what ways does the institution foster an appreciation for diversity?
	42. How effective are the institution's policies and practices in promoting understanding of equity and diversity issues?
	43. How does the institution know these policies and practices are effective?
A.4.a	44. How does the college determine what kinds of support its personnel need?
	45. How does the institution design programs and services that provide for the range of personnel at the institution?
	46. What programs and services does the institution have to support its personnel?
	47. How effective are these programs?
A.4.b	48. What is the institution's record on employment equity and diversity?
	49. How does the institution track and analyze its employment equity record?
	50. How does it use this information?
A.4.c	51. What policies and procedures about the treatment of personnel does the institution have in place?
	52. How does the institution ensure that its personnel and students are treated fairly?

A.5. a & b	53. What professional development programs does the institution support?
	54. How does the institution identify teaching and learning needs of its faculty and other personnel?
	55. What processes ensure that professional development opportunities address those needs?
	56. How does the college ensure meaningful evaluation of professional development activities?
	57. What impact do professional development activities have on the improvement of teaching and learning?
	58. How does the institution evaluate that improvement?
A.6	59. By what process does the institution assess the use of its human resources?
	60. How does the institution ensure that human resource decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement?
	61. Specifically, what evidence is there that the institution bases its human resource decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs?
	62. How does the institution determine that human resource needs in program and service areas are met effectively?

Excerpt from "Guide to Evaluating Institutions"[3]

Std #	Questions
B.1	1. Against what criteria and by what processes does the institution evaluate the safety of its facilities? 2. Upon what data has the institution determined the sufficiency of its classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and other facilities? 3. What mechanisms does the college employ to evaluate how effectively facilities meet the needs of programs and services? 4. How well does the institution meet its facilities needs? 5. Does the institution use the same criteria and processes for determining safety and sufficiency of facilities at off-campus sites? 6. To what extent are off-campus sites safe and sufficient? 7. How does the college use the results of facilities evaluations to improve them? 8. Does the college employ similar processes to assure the safety and sufficiency of its equipment? 9. How does the institution support the equipment needs of the distance delivery modes it offers? 10. Are institutional needs for equipment met?
B.1.a	11. How does the institution consider the needs of programs and services when planning its buildings? 12. What processes ensure that program and service needs determine equipment replacement and maintenance? 13. How does the institution evaluate effectiveness of facilities and equipment in meeting the needs of programs and services? 14. How effectively does the institution use its physical resources?
B.1.b	15. How does the institution assure access to its facilities? 16. How does the institution ensure that it maintains sufficient control over off-site facilities to ensure their quality?
B.2	17. By what process does the institution assess the use of its facilities? How often does evaluation occur? 18. How does the college use the results of the evaluation to improve facilities or equipment?

---

[3] Ibid., 41-42

B.2.a	19. What process does the institution follow to make capital plans? 20. How are long-range capital projects linked to institutional planning? 21. What elements comprise the definition of "total cost of ownership" the institution uses when making decisions about facilities and equipment? 22. How do planning processes ensure that capital projects support college goals? 23. How effectively is long-range capital planning helping to college achieve improvement goals?
B.2.b	24. How does the institution ensure that facilities decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement? 25. What evidence is there that the institution bases its physical resource decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs? 26. How does the institution prioritize needs when making decisions about equipment purchases? 27. How does the institution determine that physical resource needs in program and service areas are met effectively? 28. How effectively are those needs met?

Excerpt from "Guide to Evaluating Institutions"[4]

Std #	Questions
C.1	1. How does the institution make sure that its various types of technology needs are identified? 2. If the college is not supported by technology, how did the college make that decision? 3. How does how the institution evaluate the effectiveness of its technology in meeting its range of needs? 4. How effectively are those needs met?
C.1.a	5. How does the institution make decisions about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software? 6. How well does technology accommodate the college's curricular commitments for distance learning programs and courses? 7. Whether technology is provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, are there provisions for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security?
C.1.b	8. How does the institution assess the need for information technology training for students and personnel? 9. What technology training does the institution provide to students and personnel? 10. How does the institution ensure that the training and technical support it provides for faculty and staff are appropriate and effective? 11. How effective is the training provided?
C.1.c	12. How has the institution provided for the management, maintenance, and operation of its technological infrastructure and equipment? 13. Does the college provide appropriate system reliability and emergency backup?
C.1.d	14. How does the institution make decisions about use and distribution of its technology resources? 15. What provisions has the institution made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty? 16. What policies or procedures does the institution have in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably up-to-date? 17. Does the institution give sufficient consideration to equipment selected for distance programs? 18. How effectively is technology distributed and used?

---

[4] Ibid., 43-44

C.2	19. How does the institution ensure that facilities decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement? 20. What evidence is there that the institution bases its technology decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs? 21. How does the institution determine that technology needs in program and service areas are met effectively? 22. How does the institution prioritize needs when making decisions about technology purchases? 23. How effectively are those needs met?

Excerpt from "Guide to Evaluating Institutions"[5]

Std #	Questions
D	1. What is the institution's overall budget? 2. Does it have sufficient revenues to support educational improvements? 3. Does the resource allocation process provide a means for setting priorities for funding institutional improvements?
D.1.a	4. Does the institution review its mission and goals as part of the annual fiscal planning process? 5. Does the institution identify goals for achievement in any given budget cycle? 6. Does the institution establish priorities among competing needs so that it can predict future funding? 7. Do institutional plans exist, and are they linked clearly to financial plans, both short term and long range? 8. Does the financial planning process rely primarily on institutional plans for content and timelines? 9. Can the institution provide evidence that past fiscal expenditures have supported achievement of institutional plans? 10. Does the Board or other institutional leadership receive information about fiscal planning that demonstrates its links to institutional planning?
D.1.b	11. Do individuals involved in institutional planning receive accurate information about available funds, including the annual budget showing ongoing and anticipated fiscal commitments? 12. Does the institution establish funding priorities in some fashion that helps the institution achieve its goals in reasonable fashion? 13. Are items focused on student learning given appropriate priority? 14. What other documents describing funding priorities are used by institutional planners?
D.1.c	15. What evidence of long term fiscal planning and priorities exits? 16. Has the institution plans for payments of long term liabilities and obligations, including debt, health benefits, insurance costs, building maintenance costs, etc? 17. Is this information used in short term or annual budget and other fiscal planning?
D.1.d	18. Where or how are the processes for financial planning and budget recorded and made known to college constituents?

---

[5] Ibid., 45-48

D.2.a	19. Are funds allocated, as shown in the budget, in a manner that will realistically achieve the institution's stated goals for student learning? 20. What do the audit statements say about financial management? 21. Does the institution provide timely corrections to audit exceptions and management advice?
D.2.b	22. What information about budget, about fiscal conditions, about financial planning and about audit results is provided throughout the college? 23. Is this information sufficient in content and timing to support institutional and financial planning and financial management?
D.2.c	24. What is the ending balance of unrestricted funds for the institution's immediate past three years? 25. Is this amount sufficient to maintain a reserve of 5% (the minimum needed for emergencies)? 26. Does the institution have any other access to cash should the need arise? 27. How does the institution receive its revenues? 28. Does this receipt pose cash flow difficulties for the college? 29. If so, how does the college address cash flow difficulties (COPS? Loans?) 30. Has the institution sufficient insurance to cover its needs? 31. Is the institution self-funded in any insurance categories? 32. If so, does it have sufficient reserves to handle financial emergencies?
D.2.d	33. What are the institution's procedures for reviewing fiscal management? 34. Are those regularly implemented? 35. What evidence about fiscal management is provided by external audits and financial program reviews? 36. Has the institution received any audit findings or negative reviews in recent years?
D.2.e	37. Are the institution's special funds audited or reviewed by funding agencies regularly? 38. Do the audits demonstrate the integrity of financial management practices?
D.2.f	39. What contractual agreements exist, and are they consistent with institutional mission and goals? 40. Does the institution have appropriate control over these contracts? 41. Can it change or terminate contracts that don't meet its required standards of quality?
D.2.g	42. Does the institution have an annual external audit to provide feedback on its processes? 43. Does the institution review the effectiveness of its past fiscal planning as part of planning for current and future fiscal needs? 44. Does the institution have a fiscal review process?

D.3	45. What processes does the institution use to assess its use of financial resources? 46. How does the institution ensure that it assesses its use of financial resources systematically and effectively? 47. How does the institution use results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement?

Standard III: Resources

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

A.   Human Resources

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.

    a. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly activities, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.[4]

    b. The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.

    c. Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.

    d.   The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all of its personnel.

2.   The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.

3.   The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

    a.   The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

    b.   The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

4.   The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.

    a.   The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

    b.   The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission.

    c.   The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.

5.   The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.

    a.   The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.

    b.   With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

6.   Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

B. Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.

   a. The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.

   b. The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.

2. To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.

   a. Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.

   b. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

C. Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.

    a. Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

    b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

    c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.

    d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

D. **Financial Resources**

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.

    a. Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.
    b. Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.
    c. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.
    d. The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget

2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.

    a. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

    b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

    c. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

    d. The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

e. All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

f. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.[5]

g. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.