



**PHILIPPINE ACCREDITING ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

HANDBOOK ON ACCREDITATION



Table of Contents

Preface

I ACCREDITATION: AN OVERVIEW

- 2 What is Accreditation?
- 3 Why is Accreditation Important?
- 4 Who Benefits from Accreditation?
- 5 What are the Features of Accreditation?
- 6 What is the Difference Between Program and Institutional Accreditation?
- 7 On What Does the Success of Accreditation Depend

II PAASCU: AN OVERVIEW

- 8 What is PAASCU?
- 9 What is the History of PAASCU?
- 10 How is PAASCU Organized?

III THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND LEVELS

- 11 When Can a School Apply for PAASCU Accreditation?
How Long Does the Accreditation Process Take?
- 12 What are The Steps in the PAASCU Accreditation Process?
- 14 What are Multiple Re-surveys?
Who Compose the Survey/Peer Review Team?
- 15 How are Accreditors Selected and Trained?
What Do We Mean By “Avoiding Conflict of Interest”?
- 16 What Recommendations May Be Given by the Visiting Team After a Visit?
- 17 Who Decides on the Accreditation Status of an Institution or Program?
What Happens to a School or Program After Receiving Full Accreditation Status?
- 18 What are Consultancy Visits?
What Does Submission of a Progress Report Mean?
What are Interim Visits?
- 19 What Does it Mean When Accreditation is Deferred?
How Long is the Extension Period Given to an Institution Who Fails To Schedule a Resurvey Visit within the Prescribed Time?
What Happens To The Accreditation Status of an Institution which Fails to Schedule a Resurvey Visit?
Is there an Appeal Process?
- 20 The Accreditation Process: The Actual Visit
What Steps Should the School Take in Preparing for a Survey Visit?
- 35 What Happens During the Survey Visit?

PREFACE

The Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) has prepared this Handbook on Accreditation for all levels, namely: Elementary, Secondary, Basic Education, Tertiary, Graduate and Medical Education for the following purposes:

- to provide educational institutions, survey team chairs, survey team members and other readers valuable information on accreditation, the role of PAASCU in accreditation, the accreditation process and other pertinent information related to accreditation.
- to guide:
 - applicant institutions through the initial and critical stages of accreditation (i.e. self-evaluation, preparation of self-survey report and survey visit).
 - educational institutions eligible for formal survey and for re-survey through the accreditation process to follow.
 - survey teams in the evaluation of the visit and subsequent accreditation processes.

This Handbook is presented using a question and answer (Frequently Asked Questions [FAQs]) format for easy reading.

I

ACCREDITATION: AN OVERVIEW

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

In brief, accreditation is a concept, a process and a status:

As a concept, accreditation:

- is a means of self-regulation which focuses on evaluation and the continuing improvement of educational quality.
- provides the structure for public accountability and a way of ensuring that educational institutions will continuously seek ways to upgrade and enhance the quality of education and training they provide.

As a process, accreditation:

- is a voluntary process based on the principles of academic self-governance.
- is also a quality assurance and collegial process under which an institution's and/or program's quality, services and operations are examined through self-evaluation and external review by one's peers.

In terms of status, accreditation:

- provides public notification that an institution or program meets commonly accepted standards of quality or excellence set forth by the accrediting organization granting the accreditation.
- increases opportunities for public and private funding for the institution, faculty members and students.
- enhances the institution's credibility and reputation.

WHY IS ACCREDITATION IMPORTANT?

Accreditation is important because it:

- provides an educational institution the opportunity for critical self-analysis leading to improvement in quality, services and operations.
- provides public certification that an institution or program has attained standards above those prescribed by government agencies and stimulates that institution or program to work towards ensuring quality education and services at all times.
- fosters educational excellence through the development of principles and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness.

WHO BENEFITS FROM ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation reflects the quality by which an educational institution or program conducts its business. It speaks to a sense of public trust, as well as professional quality. Therefore, accreditation provides benefits to the various members of the educational community as follows:

For the student: Accreditation:

- provides assurance that the institution or program in which the student is enrolled or is considering enrolling:
- is characterized by quality education;
- is engaged in continuous review and improvement of its quality;
- meets nationally endorsed, established and accepted standards in the profession; and
- is accountable for achieving what it sets out to do.
- facilitates the transfer of course credits of students to a new school, college or university.
- provides a promising professional future since most employers prefer job applicants who have received their education from a school, college or university with the appropriate accreditation status.

For the faculty member: Accreditation provides:

- a formal process for ongoing evaluation and improvement of program and faculty development outcomes.
- a process by which faculty, students and administration can work together in advancing the educational institution's vision, mission and core values.

For the institution: Accreditation:

- provides the stimulus for self-study and self-improvement provided by the accreditation process.
- Enables institutions/programs to receive privileges that free them from various government regulations/supervision (i.e. deregulated status, autonomous status)

- maintains or adds to the prestige of the institution as an educational leader in the programs it offers
- determines an institution's eligibility for participation in government/ state financial aid programs, grants and the like
- shows to the world that the institution's vision-mission, academic curricula, instructional standards, community standing, among others, are of the highest quality and have gained the respect of its peers in the field of education
- allows for the acceptance and transfer of students' course credit to other colleges and universities

For the general public: Accreditation gives the assurance that:

- accredited institutions are evaluated extensively and conform to general expectation of performance and quality.
- the educational institution's operations and the quality of the programs and services it offers are relevant, reflect high standards of excellence and are offered with integrity.

In the Philippines, the benefits of accreditation for the duration of accredited status for institutions classified by levels shall be, among others, administrative and academic deregulation and the grant of subsidies and other financial incentives subject to approval of fund appropriations as part of the national budget process.

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF ACCREDITATION?

The features of accreditation are its:

- prevailing sense of volunteerism
- strong tradition of self-regulation
- reliance on evaluation/assessment techniques
- primary concern with quality and excellence
- openness to outside examination/external scrutiny by experienced educational evaluators (accreditors) familiar with accreditation requirements

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION?

The two (2) basic types of educational accreditation are: a) specialized or programmatic) and (b) institutional*.

Specialized or programmatic accreditation applies to academic programs, departments, institutes or schools that are parts of an institution. The accredited unit may be as large as a college or school within a university or as small as a curriculum or academic program/course within a discipline. The accredited status of one department or specific program/course does not extend to other programs within the same department or departments in the institution. Institutional accreditation refers to the accreditation of the school, college or institution as a whole. It affirms that the school, college or institution operates with a high level of quality in all its aspects and shows that each of its parts (i.e. program of studies, faculty competencies, instructional standards, operational systems, financial and human resources, facilities, among others) contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives of the institution. This type of accreditation is comprehensive, indicates that the institution has achieved quality standards in all areas and is held in high regard in the world of education.

PAASCU accreditation of an elementary school (Grade School), a secondary school (High School) or Basic Education Department falls under program accreditation.

* Realizing the importance of institutional accreditation the accrediting agencies have agreed that higher educational institutions can be granted “institutional accreditation” based on its core program offerings, namely, Arts and Sciences, Education and Business.

Since institutional accreditation is anchored on program accreditation, it looks at the following distinct factors: long tradition of excellence, strong linkages/ consortia, research tradition and impact of community outreach programs. Each area has specific indicators with corresponding points assigned to these indicators.

ON WHAT DOES THE SUCCESS OF ACCREDITATION DEPEND

The success of accreditation depends on the following:

- the belief that the accreditation of institutions or programs should be conducted by peer reviewers whose expertise and integrity are essential to pass professional judgment on the institution's/program's effectiveness through the quality of education and services.
- the assumption that all information disseminated by an institution seeking accreditation is truthful, accurate and complete and that it ensures a “culture of integrity” in all its operations.
- the commitment of the institution to quality enhancement as seen in its continuing programs of improvement and reflected in their fulfillment of its vision-mission and goals.
- the focus on student learning and its effectiveness in supporting and enhancing student learning.

II

PAASCU:

AN OVERVIEW

WHAT IS PAASCU?

The Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities or what is more popularly known as PAASCU is a private, voluntary, non-profit and non-stock corporation registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

PAASCU conducts both program and institutional accreditation of programs and institutions which meet accepted standards of quality education, services and operations.

PAASCU is one of the accrediting agencies recognized by the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) of the Philippines and one of the three (3) accrediting agencies that is federated with the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP). FAAP is authorized by the CHED to certify the levels of accredited programs for the purpose of granting progressive deregulation, autonomy and other benefits.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF PAASCU?

The history of PAASCU has spanned five (5) decades starting in the early fifties when initial efforts to introduce accreditation in the Philippines began with the involvement of both the private and public sectors. Numerous obstacles impeded any meaningful development in this arena necessitating the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) to step in to prevent the accreditation movement from completely dying out. The CEAP empowered an accreditation committee to establish a voluntary accrediting association for CEAP member schools. The Committee's tasks were to promote the value of accreditation as a process of self-improvement and to develop an appreciation for quality growth by means of self-evaluation. The Committee further formulated a set of evaluative criteria and prepared self-survey forms which the schools could use to evaluate themselves.

By November 1957, eleven colleges, which has undergone self-evaluation using the survey forms were visited by accrediting teams and judged worthy of accreditation of their tertiary programs.

Receiving accreditation served as the inspiration for these colleges to band together to form a permanent accrediting association distinct from the CEAP. Thus, on December 2, 1957, the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) was born with the eleven (11) colleges as its charter members.

There was no stopping the valuable work PAASCU started in the field of educational accreditation in the country. In 1965, it began the accreditation of secondary schools with the accreditation of elementary schools following in 1971. Accreditation of graduate education, basic education and medical education followed suit in 1988, 2001 and 2003 respectively.

With official recognition bestowed on it by the then Ministry of Education and Culture (now DepEd) in 1967, PAASCU enjoys the distinction of being the first private accrediting association in the Philippines. Through its Executive Director, it maintains close liaison with major accreditation groups, government agencies and professional organizations both here and abroad and has been called upon on different occasions and by numerous local and international groups to share its resources. PAASCU continues to play an active and major role in the introduction of the accreditation process in other countries as well as in the training of their future accreditors.

HOW IS PAASCU ORGANIZED?

PAASCU is governed by a 15-person Board of Directors elected at large by members during the annual PAASCU general assembly. It has seven (7) Commissions with five (5) to eight (8) members each to perform its mandate. The seven (7) commissions are as follows:

- Commission on Graduate Education
- Commission on Medical Education
- Commission on Tertiary Education
- Commission on Basic Education
- Commission on Secondary Education
- Commission on Elementary Education
- Commission on Engineering Education

The Commissions plan and initiate projects for each of the levels, revise survey instruments and train team chairs and accreditors. Moreover, they review the reports on the schools surveyed/visited before the reports are submitted to the PAASCU Board.

Overseeing the day-to-day operations of PAASCU is its Executive Director who is assisted by a core of competent staff. The Executive Director liaises with various member schools, different accrediting and government agencies as well as local and international organizations. The PAASCU Office takes care of the logistics of the survey visits, puts together the team of accreditors, prepares reports/forms and implements the projects of the different commissions.

Assisting PAASCU in its accreditation work are more than a thousand carefully selected and well-trained accreditors from all over the country. Said accreditors visit the schools in accreditation teams of six (6) to eight (8) members per team and perform over a hundred surveys annually. In the spirit of volunteerism, the accreditors are not remunerated for their work as chairs or members of a survey team.

III

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND LEVELS

WHEN CAN A SCHOOL APPLY FOR PAASCU ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation is a voluntary process. As such, schools or institutions need to apply for PAASCU accreditation when they believe they are ready to do so based on their compliance with PAASCU accreditation criteria and standards. Newly opened schools or institutions cannot apply for accreditation. Only those who have (at least) graduated 3 batches students from a program or programs they offer can do so.

HOW LONG DOES THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS TAKE?

The accreditation process begins as soon as the institution applies for PAASCU accreditation. The length of the process will depend on the school's or institution's capacity/capability to prepare itself for accreditation. Institutions/ Programs intending to apply for initial accreditation will have to see to it that they accomplish the PAASCU forms through a comprehensive institutional self-evaluation and show evidence that they have complied with PAASCU standards/criteria. Only after PAASCU determines the institution's/program's readiness for initial accreditation will it send a Preliminary Survey Team to assess the institution/program. The institutional self-evaluation, the preparation of the

required documents, among others, may take from six (6) months to one (1) to two (2) years, depending on how fast the institution can prepare itself for the Preliminary Visit.

From the moment the institution receives “Candidate Status” it will have to comply with the time period granted it (2 years in candidate status prior to applying for a Formal Survey). The same will follow for the succeeding accreditation levels where specific time periods to stay within the level are indicated (see APPENDIX II for the Flow Chart Levels I-IV).

WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE PAASCU ACCREDITATION PROCESS?

Accreditation is a process of external quality review with the end in view of scrutinizing schools, colleges, universities and higher education programs for quality assurance and quality improvement. But what exactly is the process used and how does this process work?

An institution or program seeking accreditation status from PAASCU must complete six (6) major steps in the accreditation process. These steps are as follows:

1. The Institutional Self-Survey

This first step of the process is a thorough, rigorous and comprehensive self-assessment of the institution’s educational resources and effectiveness made by in-house members of the school. Such an institutional survey or self-evaluation is a major enterprise that takes at least six (6) months to complete. With the use of the self-survey forms, members of area committees appointed by administration conduct a fair and objective assessment of how well the institution has achieved its philosophy and objectives for the purpose of self-improvement.

The self-study also documents how the institution or program meets the standards of PAASCU. The results of the institution’s self-assessment are thereafter presented to PAASCU in the Self-Survey Report which records and describes the salient features that surfaced from said self-assessment. This Self-Survey Report together with certain specified institutional materials such as the college catalog and manuals, completed data forms, among others, serve as basis for evaluation by an on-site team of peer evaluators, who are administrators and faculty from other accredited colleges and universities.

It must be noted that compliance with PAASCU criteria, standards and requirements is essential for gaining and maintaining accreditation with PAASCU. The requirements establish a level of development required of an institution or program seeking initial or continued accreditation.

2. The Consultancy Visit (prior to Preliminary Visit)

A school applying for a Preliminary Survey is not placed on the visit-ready list until PAASCU has sent a consultant to review the school's application and institutional self-study survey report. The consultant's task is to assist the applicant school in properly accomplishing the survey forms and in determining whether or not the school has complied with PAASCU requirements and standards. The consultant also assists the school in identifying the documents that should be prepared and exhibited for the Visiting Team. Based on the consultant's assessment, he or she then informs PAASCU of the earliest time the school can be visited by the survey team for a Preliminary Survey.

3. The Pre-Survey (Preliminary) Visit

In this step, a group of five (5) to eight (8) academics specially trained as accreditors and with the expertise in the program or programs to be evaluated visits the school. Typically lasting two (2) days and following PAASCU procedures, the on-site evaluation seeks to assess the school in light of the self survey based on the standards for accreditation. This Pre-Survey Team takes a general look at the school situation, validates the Self-Survey through interviews with school members and examination of school documents/exhibits on-site, studies the recommendations presented in the Self-Survey Report, cites what it finds to be the best features of the different areas and makes recommendations of its own where necessary. Once a school or program is judged ready for a Formal Survey Visit, it is granted "Candidate" status for a two (2)-year period.

4. The Formal Survey Visit

The Formal Survey Visit is conducted by a Team of from six (6) to eight (8) accreditors not earlier than six (6) months after the Pre-Survey (Preliminary) Visit. The Visit usually lasts for two (2) days and follows the same process of interviewing school members and examining school documents/exhibits. The accreditors, however, now cite the action taken by the school on the recommendations given by the Preliminary Survey Team. As in the Pre-Survey Visit, the team also identifies the areas' best features and makes its own recommendations where necessary. A school or program granted formal accreditation is given Level I accredited status for a period of three (3) years.

5. Initial Accreditation Status Granted

Upon favorable evaluation and recommendation by the Formal Survey Team, the PAASCU Board of Directors grants initial accreditation for a period of three (3) years. Accreditation indicates overall excellence in the delivery of programs and services and that the program or institution has no major deficiencies that compromise its educational effectiveness. With this initial accreditation, the institution becomes a full member of PAASCU.

6. Full Accreditation Status Granted

After the three (3)-year period, the institution/program undertakes another institutional self-evaluation and is visited by a Re-Survey Team. A favorable re-evaluation after the initial 3-year accreditation period merits for the institution/program full accreditation for a period of five (5) years. Full accreditation indicates optimal compliance with PAASCU criteria/standards and demonstrates the institution's/program's overall excellence in the delivery of programs and services. The institution or program is also granted Level II re-accredited status at this time.

WHAT ARE MULTIPLE RE-SURVEYS?

Multiple Re-Survey Visits are made when accreditation of various programs of an institution are held simultaneously. In such cases, the Team can be rather large. Normally, a group of accreditors are assigned to assess common areas (Administration, Physical Plant, Student Services, etc.) of the programs. Separate groups of accreditors are then assigned to assess compliance with standards and/or requirements of areas specific to the programs being visited. For example, a school may undergo a multiple visit for the following programs: Liberal Arts/Sciences, Engineering and Nursing. There will be common areas for these three (3) programs such as those mentioned above. However, each program will have its own requirements/standards for faculty and instruction, library, curriculum and laboratories.

WHO COMPOSE THE SURVEY/PEER REVIEW TEAM?

The survey or peer review team is composed of trained evaluators or accreditors drawn from PAASCU member educational institutions. These are administrators, faculty members and professional staff who have been accepted by PAASCU as accreditors and who volunteer their services as such.

Prior to the survey visit, PAASCU puts together a survey team (from six [6] to eight [8] members) and assigns a survey staff chair to head the team. The other members of the team are matched with the areas assigned to them based on their expertise in their assigned areas. In some instances, the survey chair or member or both may be assigned more than one (1) area to evaluate. The function of the team is to assess the institution/program in light of the self survey against the standards for accreditation.

In some instances, an “apprentice” accreditor, one who has been previously trained but has not been exposed to actual on-site visits, is paired with an experienced accreditor in order for the trainee to appreciate the actual site visit and put into practice learnings gained from the training.

HOW ARE ACCREDITORS SELECTED AND TRAINED?

Accreditors are normally selected from the PAASCU member institutions. PAASCU invites member institutions to endorse from their own ranks individuals with the potential to be trained for accreditation work. PAASCU can also suggest to the institution who among its members may qualify to become an accreditor.

Before participating as peer reviewers or accreditors, the individuals take part in a training program that grounds them in best practices in education, the accreditation standards and process. Typically, the training simulates an actual accreditation visit. The following areas are covered during the training:

- expectations of the peer reviewer or accreditor
- appreciation of accreditation standards and best practices in education
- process of gathering and reporting evidence
- avoiding conflict of interest

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “AVOIDING CONFLICT OF INTEREST”?

Team members are expected to conduct themselves with utmost decency and the highest standards of ethical behavior when undertaking a survey visit. They should be careful to avoid any conflict of interest that could positively or negatively influence their decisions. Thus, any appearance of a present or potential conflict of interest should be relayed to PAASCU. These would include among others, the following:

- being a graduate, former employee or consultant of the institution
- having immediate relatives or close working colleagues at the institution
- having an inability to set aside positive or negative biases about an institution

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS MAY BE GIVEN BY THE VISITING TEAM AFTER A VISIT?

The table below lists the recommendations a Visiting Team may make to the respective Commissions after a fair and objective assessment of the school or program is made.

Step in PAASCU Accreditation Possible Decision

Preliminary Survey Visit

- a. Eligible for Formal Survey after six (6) months to one (1) year
- b. Eligible for Formal Survey after one (1) year
- c. Consultancy Visit after one (1) year for the following areas
(areas are identified)
- d. Consultancy Visit after one (1) year to determine readiness for a Formal Survey
- e. Second Preliminary Visit

Formal Survey Visit

- a. Initial accreditation for three (3) years
- b. Accreditation not granted (reason/s for denial must be given)

Re-Survey Visit

- a. Re-accreditation for five (5) years*
- b. Re-accreditation for five (5) years with written progress report on the _____ year for the following area/s: _____
- c. Re-accreditation for five (5) years with interim visit on the _____ year for the following area/s: _____
- d. Re-accreditation for five (5) years with interim visit on the _____ year
- e. Re-accreditation deferred

*For charter member schools, a maximum seven (7) year period may be given for subsequent re-surveys.

WHO DECIDES ON THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF AN INSTITUTION OR PROGRAM?

After the Survey Team Visit, the Survey Team Chair prepares a report of the visit and submits this report together with the Team's Area Reports to the PAASCU Office. The Executive Director then convenes a Commission meeting where the report is reviewed by the appropriate Commissions before presentation for Board Action.

The final accreditation decision is made by the PAASCU Board of Directors. The school is then informed of the Board action by the PAASCU Office and the necessary documentation and recommendations sent to the Federation of Accrediting Agencies of the Philippines (FAAP) for matters needing FAAP action. Any Commission member who has an interest in an institution must not include her/himself in the deliberation of that institution and must abstain from voting on the Commission's recommendation for said institution.

WHAT HAPPENS TO A SCHOOL OR PROGRAM AFTER RECEIVING FULL ACCREDITATION STATUS?

Accreditation is a "continuing" process. No school, however excellent it may be, is beyond further improvement. Visiting teams make recommendations for further improvement, fulfillment of which is then assessed by the next visiting team. Thus, schools after being granted full accreditation status, should expect to undertake periodic re-surveys after certain periods of time based on the recommendation of the last PAASCU accreditation survey team. The re-surveys allow schools to fulfill their commitment to educational quality and thus (the assurance that if they do so, they can) retain their re-accreditation status.

An institution or program with a "clean" Re-Survey Visit, meaning no progress report or interim visit is required within the five (5)-year accreditation period, may then apply to PAASCU for Level III status by submitting evidence or reports of fulfillment of the requirements. An institution/program granted Level III accredited status will need to undergo another re-survey visit with "clean accreditation" granted to it prior to it being eligible to apply for Level IV accredited status. Said institution should provide adequate documentation in support of its application for Level IV accredited status.

WHAT ARE CONSULTANCY VISITS?

There are two (2) kinds of Consultancy Visits undertaken by PAASCU. The first is when an institution requests assistance from PAASCU in its preparations for the Survey Visit. In this instance, PAASCU normally sends at least one of its accreditors as consultant to address the accreditation concerns/needs of the requesting school.

The second type is when a Visiting Team undertaking a Preliminary Survey recommends a “Consultancy Visit” because it observes deficiencies in one or more areas of the institution/program. In this instance, a smaller team is sent by PAASCU to subsequently look at the actions taken by the institution in addressing the area deficiencies so that appropriate recommendations may be made by the Visiting Team vis-à-vis the readiness of the institution/program for a Formal Survey. If the Visiting Team who conducts the Consultancy Visit assesses that the institution/program still failed to substantially comply with PAASCU criteria/standards on the deficient area/s identified, the Team can recommend another Preliminary Survey. In this instance, the applicant institution will have to repeat the process of an institutional self-study and comply with PAASCU procedures for institutions/programs applying for a Preliminary Survey.

WHAT DOES SUBMISSION OF A PROGRESS REPORT MEAN?

There may be certain instances when a recommendation is made by PAASCU for an institution/program undergoing a re-accreditation survey to submit a Progress Report at a determined time set by PAASCU within the five (5)-year re-accredited period (e.g. on the second year after the visit). The progress report is a monitoring device to ensure that the school continues to comply with the approved standards.

WHAT ARE INTERIM VISITS?

An institution undergoing a re-accreditation survey visit may receive a PAASCU decision requiring it to subject itself to an Interim Visit at a determined time set by PAASCU (e.g. on the second or third year within the 5-year re-accredited period). An Interim Visit is recommended when the said team observes major deficiencies in an area or areas indicating that the institution/program failed to substantially comply with PAASCU accreditation criteria/standards. An Interim Visit also signifies that the major deficiencies have compromised the educational effectiveness of the institution/program.

When an Interim Visit is made, a group of accreditors (smaller in number) is sent by PAASCU to determine whether deficiencies in the identified areas have been remedied/resolved and whether the school/program is intent on committing itself to educational quality and continuous self-improvement. It is understood, however, that even if the institution/program goes through an Interim Visit, it retains its re-accredited status. Only institutions/programs with re-accredited status may be recommended for an Interim Visit.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN ACCREDITATION IS DEFERRED?

The deferment of accreditation holds true only for institutions/programs which have re-accredited status. When an institution/program's re-accreditation is deferred, it implies that the institution/program has failed to fully comply with accreditation standards. The institution should work on its deficiencies and strive to regain its accredited status within a period of one year. Otherwise, its accredited status will expire.

HOW LONG IS THE EXTENSION PERIOD GIVEN TO AN INSTITUTION WHO FAILS TO SCHEDULE A RESURVEY VISIT WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED TIME?

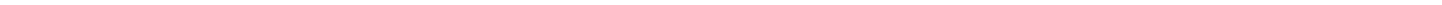
Before the end of its expiry date, an accredited program on any level (Levels I, II, III and IV) should be visited by a Resurvey Team. Should the institution or program fail to undergo a Resurvey Visit within the prescribed time, it is given a grace period of six (6) months to one (1) year within which time the visit should take place. The grace period is only a one-time extension.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE ACCREDITATION STATUS OF AN INSTITUTION WHICH FAILS TO SCHEDULE A RESURVEY VISIT?

If the institution/program does not schedule a Resurvey Visit within the prescribed time, its accredited status will lapse.

IS THERE AN APPEAL PROCESS?

Yes. Institutions which desire to appeal the Board's decision on their accreditation status can write a letter of appeal to the PAASCU President requesting a review of the PAASCU Board's decision. A committee is created to review the decision and the committee will report its findings to the Board for action.



THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS: THE ACTUAL VISIT

As earlier mentioned the actual survey visit may either be a preliminary visit, a formal visit or a resurvey of the various programs. In all the visits, a survey team is formed to evaluate the institution based on the institutional self-survey report and other documents submitted for the use of the survey team. It has to be borne in mind that accreditation requirements are always higher than the minimum requirements set by the government. Thus, PAASCU has its own set of standards for accreditation.

WHAT STEPS SHOULD THE SCHOOL TAKE IN PREPARING FOR A SURVEY VISIT?

The following steps are taken to prepare for the survey visit:

A. Official Notification

■ For a Preliminary Survey Report, the School President or Director/ress officially notifies PAASCU through its Executive Director of its intent to undergo the accreditation process. Since this is the first attempt of the school, as mentioned earlier, it will be considered to be on candidate status.

■ After the notification, the institution secures the survey forms or the principal instrument for the institutional self-survey.

■ For a formal survey or a resurvey, the school is reminded by PAASCU that it is due for a visit. The school responds and gives some tentative dates for the scheduled visit.

■ PAASCU then officially replies and confirms the date of the actual visit.

B. Designation of the Self-Survey Executive

■ A self-survey executive is assigned. Normally this is the Principal (for the Basic Education) or the Dean of College (if there is any) or any designated official assigned by the Head of the institution to oversee the whole accreditation process.

C. Revisiting the Philosophy, Goals and Objectives of the Institution and the Objectives of the Programs under Survey

■ At the institutional level, a multi-sectoral group which includes members of the faculty is created, meets and reviews the institution's philosophy, purposes and objectives to ensure they remain relevant and applicable to the needs of the academic community. If needed, the goals may be revised to comply with the



needs of the institution and the times. It is important to emphasize that the agreed upon philosophy, goals and objectives should filter down to the entire institution and should be incorporated into the various academic endeavors like the objectives of the programs being offered, the syllabi of the various courses, the co-curricular activities and even activities designed for community involvement.

■ The same holds true for the objectives and goals of the programs that will be surveyed. In this case, it would be best for all faculty members of the department, both full-time and part-time to sit down together and undertake the review process as a body so that everyone in the faculty understands and accepts the philosophy and goals that the department collectively agreed on. In this way, it will be easy for them to integrate said philosophy, goals and objectives into their classroom activities.

D. Formation of Committees for the Areas

■ The institution then starts forming committees for each area earlier mentioned (i.e. College/University Community Involvement, Faculty, Instruction, etc.). In forming the area committees, it is best to involve representatives from the various sectors (administration, faculty, students and staff).

■ An area chair for each committee is assigned who is tasked to keep records and minutes of meetings scheduled.

■ In examining each area, two (2) groups of different individuals are formed to analyze the criteria for each sub-section of the area and evaluate the area sub-sections based on the analysis made. These two (2) groups are:

■ The Analysis Group

■ This multi-sectoral group reviews the survey form paying particular attention to the Analysis Section of the form. Said Analysis Section consists of the provisions, conditions and characteristics found in good schools. The symbols to be used in this section vary from:

- E provision or condition is made extensively
- S provision or condition is made to a moderate extent
- L provision or condition is very limited
- M provision or condition is missing but needed
- O provision or condition is not desirable or does not apply

■ The Evaluation Group

■ Another multi-sectoral group is also formed to take care of the Evaluation Section of the survey form. This group should be different from the Analysis group. The purpose of this group is to thoroughly study and verify the assessment done by the Analysis group.

■ The Evaluation group makes a judgment on what the analysis group has written and gives the rating that is based on their assessment of claims made in the written documents prepared by the Analysis group. The following ratings will be used:

- 5 Excellent: the provisions or conditions are extensive and functioning excellently
- 4 Very Good:
 - a. the provisions or conditions are extensive and functioning well
 - b. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning excellently
- 3 - Good: the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive
- 2 - Fair:
 - a. the provisions or conditions are moderately extensive but are functioning poorly, or
 - b. the provisions or conditions are limited in extent but are functioning well
- 1 - Poor: the provisions or conditions are limited in extent and are functioning poorly
- M - Missing: the provisions or conditions are missing but needed
- O - Does not apply: the provisions or conditions are missing but do not apply or are not desirable

■ The survey form has a section for “Comments”. This is where further explanation is given by the institution to enable the team members to better understand conditions prevailing in each area and/or the operations of the institution. The explanations found in the “Comments” section provide the members of the Analysis and Evaluation groups a better view of the institution/program under survey. This way they can be more thorough and objective in their ratings of the areas. If ratings of M or O in the analysis section are given by the self-survey committee members, this is the place to explain why such ratings were given by them.

■ During the preparation of the self-survey report, the Survey Executive may from time to time call for status reports to determine how the reports are progressing. These may be done by calling individual groups to report and at times for the groups to come together and listen to the reports of each area.

■ The Committee on Exhibits

■ While the Analysis and Evaluation processes are going on, the groups determine what exhibits are needed for the visit. The documents/records to be prepared for each area are done either by the two (2) groups or another committee, namely, the “Committee on Exhibits”. This Committee is formed specifically to prepare exhibits needed for the various areas.

E. Identifying the Best Features for the Various Areas

■ After the self-survey area reports are done, the various committees start formulating the “Best Features” of their assigned areas. These are the strong points that the committee members feel make the institution unique and different from the other institutions in this particular area.

It has to be borne in mind that Best Features are those aspects that are really outstanding and not simply features that are expected of any school.

F. Determining Recommendations Per Area

■ After determining what the “Best Features” of the institution are, the team is now ready to look into what it considers the weaknesses in each area. The ratings of the Evaluation group as well as the statements found in the “Comments” after each section will help determine what these areas for improvement are. Thus, the self-survey recommendations will be an assurance that the institution has objectively looked at the institution with the view of instituting and implementing changes that would really help it in achieving its goal of quality education.

G. Rating the Areas and Computing for the Statistical Summary:

■ For Preliminary Surveys, the team does not give ratings but simply identifies the areas’ Best Features and Recommendations. These are then used as bases for determining the institution’s readiness for a formal survey as attested to by a designated PAASCU Consultant and/or a Formal Survey Team.

■ For Formal Surveys and Resurveys, after all the recommendations are given for each area, the Area Chair is now ready to compute and give the rating for the area. All these ratings are then summarized and transferred in the Statistical Summary Form. It has to be emphasized that the raters should be objective with the ratings they give to the areas.

■ The ratings arrived at are the result of the Analysis and Evaluation of the group on the Area assigned to them. It has to be borne in mind that ratings in the Evaluation should be consistent with the Analysis given earlier in the process. As such, if in the Analysis, the ratings are mostly Satisfactory, it would be inconsistent to give Evaluation ratings of “5”. Giving a rating of Excellent in most of the Evaluation sections gives the impression that the school does not need to improve on the area under study.

For a Formal Survey and a Resurvey the following steps are followed:

■ All ratings under the Evaluation Section are transferred to the Statistical Summary Form which is found in Form A given to the institution when it applies for accreditation.

■ Evaluation ratings are totalled and the average rating for each sub-section is computed.

■ The average rating of each sub-section is multiplied by the corresponding weight values given.

■ The sum of the average of each sub-section is divided by the total number of weight values to get the general average for the Section

■ The sum of the weighted averages divided by the sum of the weight values gives the General Average of the entire survey.

■ Graphic Summary is done to illustrate the average statistical ratings. This is done by appropriately shading the bars in each graphic chart.

H. Finalizing the Institutional Self-Survey Report

■ As mentioned earlier, periodic meetings of all Area Chairs make it easier to consolidate the various Area Reports into the Final Institutional Self-Survey. If this was not earlier done, the Survey Executive convenes all Area Chairs and asks them to give their respective Area Reports. While listening to the Area Reports, comments and further corrections, changes and/or additions may be integrated into the Final Report. If there are any conflicts, these are resolved so that the final Area Reports can now be submitted to the Survey Executive who finalizes the institutional self-survey report.

- The Final Report should include the following:
- Nine (9) section reports and the corresponding appendices
- An Executive Summary that includes data on the following:
 - Recap of start and terminal dates of the self-survey
 - Schedule followed in writing the report
 - A brief history of the Institution, its philosophy, vision-mission, goals and objectives
 - Previous PAASCU Team Recommendations and Action Taken on the Recommendations (only if the institution undergoes a Formal or Resurvey Visit)
- Accomplished survey forms, which include the Best Features and Recommendations for each area
- Important appendices and list of documents/records to be exhibited in the PAASCU Headquarters (NOTE: All pertinent documents that cannot be attached as appendices should be presented in the PAASCU Headquarters where they can be reviewed/examined by the visiting team.) Submission of the Institutional Self-Survey Report and other Documents to PAASCU
- The following documents should be submitted:
- Institutional Self-Survey Report along with other requirements (to be submitted at least one [1] month prior to the scheduled team visit)
- Checklist of required forms, exhibits and supporting documents for institutions/programs undergoing Preliminary Survey, Formal Survey or Resurvey to include:
 - Two (2) compiled sets of the Self-Survey Report
 - Separate Area Reports:
 - Section I - Purposes and Objectives
 - Section I-a - College/University Community Involvement
 - Section II - Faculty
 - Section III - Instruction
 - Section IV - Library
 - Section V - Laboratories
 - Section VI - Physical Plant
 - Section VII - Student Services
 - Section VIII - Administration

- Class schedules indicating names of subjects, faculty handling the subjects, class hours and room numbers
- Total enrolment of the entire elementary, secondary, basic education, tertiary or graduate school levels indicating enrolment over the last five (5) years; if graduate school and tertiary programs are under survey, enrolment per program is needed
- Eight (8) copies of the following:
 - Student Handbook
 - Faculty Manual
 - Organizational Chart
 - School Paper
- Two (2) copies of the Administrative Manual
- Others:
 - Personnel or Academic Non-Teaching Manual
 - Latest Budget Performance Report to be given to the Chair of Administration Area
 - Two (2) copies of the Research Manual, if available

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE SURVEY VISIT?

A. What Preparations Are Needed Prior to the Two-Day Visit?

- The Team Line-up
- The Accreditation Visit is normally scheduled for two (2) days. As mentioned earlier, PAASCU officially confirms the dates of the visit. About a month before the actual visit, the institution is also informed of the team line-up that includes the Staff Chair and other Area Chairs. PAASCU carefully selects a team of experts to be part of the team. The Staff Chairs are selected from very experienced and seasoned accreditors who have undergone the PAAASCU training for Chairs. They are given the full report and other pertinent documents. Upon their request, the school may be asked to supply other documents the members of the team feel are needed for the survey.
- The selection of the area assignments (the areas assigned to) for the team members takes into account the areas of specialization of the individual members of the team. Area Chairs may come from different schools all over the country. As mentioned earlier, all accreditors are volunteers and do not get any compensation. What the school normally spends for would be their accommodation and their transportation if they come from out-of-town.

■ The members of the Survey Team are normally given the documents needed for their specific areas at least a month prior to the visit. Each Area Chair carefully studies the documents given to him/her. Like the Staff Chair, the Area Chairs may also request for documents they feel are needed prior to the visit for them to get more information on the areas assigned to them. These requests are coursed through the PAASCU Office. At no instance should an accreditor directly contact the school to request for additional materials.

B. What Activities Take Place During the Actual Visit?

■ Arrival of the Accrediting Team

On the first day of the visit, the team members are met by the Executives of the institution, normally by the President, the Deans or Principals and other key officials. Those who come in by air or sea are met by representatives of the school and brought to the designated PAASCU Headquarters located inside the institution being surveyed. Once everyone is inside, no one except the members of the Team can enter the Headquarters.

■ Team Orientation

Normally the Survey Team Chair schedules the Orientation at the beginning of the two-day visit. In some cases, especially if the accreditation is out-of-town and all the members of the team are already present, the Team Chair may schedule the Orientation on the eve of the two-day visit, sometimes after dinner. If the designated PAASCU Headquarters is already ready by then, some members may start examining the exhibits prepared for the visit.

In most cases, the Orientation begins on the first day of the visit at around 8:00 AM as soon as all accreditors are in. It is an unwritten rule in PAASCU that Team members must always arrive on time.

During the Orientation, the following are also done:

■ The Staff Chair formally introduces the members of the Survey Team to one another and gives their respective area assignments. The Staff Chair normally gives a short history of the school being surveyed, the accreditation record of the program/s under survey and other pertinent information that s/he believes is needed by the team members.(i.e., enrolment data, number of faculty members in the programs under survey, thrust of the institution, etc.).

■ The Staff Chair then directs the attention of the team members to the Orientation Kit that is prepared by the institution. Contained in this Orientation Kit are normally the accreditors' identification tags, list of key administrators and their time availability for interviews, the class schedules and room assignments, a location map identifying where classrooms, offices, laboratories, etc. are to

be found and the schedule of meals/snacks. Also given at this juncture are class observation schedules assigned to each accreditor. The purpose of the class observation is to assist the Area Chair on Instruction vis-à-vis the faculty members' quality and standards of teaching.

■ The Staff Chair thereafter sets the tone for the work that is to follow and defines the working procedures and policies to be observed during the course of the visit. Important reminders, schedules, team meetings, among others are discussed during this Orientation.

■ Some guidelines/ reminders normally given to the accreditors:

- The primary role of the accreditors is to verify the contents of the self-survey reports, check the standards/norms the school has set for itself in the context of its vision-mission.
- Team members should approach the visit with an open mind and are not to compare the school with their own schools or other schools they have visited. As such they are not to make comments, give advice or criticize the way things are done in the institution. The school is to be judged based on its own merits and not on how better or worse it is than another institution.
- Members of the team must work as one by striving to be helpful to other team members. The team members should note and share any information that may contribute to the overall evaluation of the institution.
- Multiple interviews are encouraged to save time. The normal procedure for interviews is for a team member to fill up the request form for an interview and once confirmed the schedule is posted on the board inside the PAASCU Headquarters. Other team members may either join the interview or request the accreditors who are with confirmed interviews to ask some questions pertaining to their assigned areas
- Team members are also told if a Progress Report or a Mini Wrap-up Session will take place on the first day and what time the wrap-up session will be. Normally, the Staff Chair schedules the Progress Report around 5:00 PM or before supper when all the Team members are back at the Headquarters. The Final Wrap-Up time is also scheduled for the second day. Most of the time, this starts either at 2:00 or 3:00 PM.
- Questions that the Team Members may have are also verified in the Orientation meeting. After this the Team members go about their tasks of observing classes, interviewing and reviewing documents that are in the Headquarters. Missing documents may be requested through the Liaison Officer designated by the institution.

- Also scheduled during the Orientation are the schedules of dialogues of the team with the Faculty and the Students that will take place on the morning of the second day. The faculty members of the programs under survey, whether full-time or part-time are expected to attend the dialogue. Students are selected by the PAASCU Executive Director or her representative from the list provided by the institution. It is expected that the students represent a cross section of the programs under survey. In some instances, the team members may also meet the academic coordinators/heads (for the elementary, secondary or basic education levels) or department/program chairs (for the tertiary level) separately from the faculty. Student leaders may also be met as a separate group.
- Confidentiality must always be maintained. Except for participating in deliberations within the team meetings or in other discussions with team members, the chair and/or other team members are not to discuss findings derived before, during and after the visit including the team's decision. The rationale for this vow of confidentiality is to avoid creating any form of anxiety on the part of the members of the institution and so as not to raise false hopes as it is only the PAASCU Board which makes the decision on the accreditation status of the institution/program under survey.
- As much as possible, team members must not take out exhibit materials out of the PAASCU Headquarters. If there is need to do so because the accreditor/s need to further review certain documents, permission should be sought from the school officials and/or the PAASCU representative.

■ The Verification Process

The accreditors normally verify all questions through classroom observations, the interviews with key officials, area inspection, review of documents/exhibits in the Headquarters as well as the dialogues scheduled with the Faculty, the Students and staff. For surveys of the elementary level, parents are interviewed.

Normally the institution designates a Liaison Officer who facilitates securing additional data/documents needed by the accreditors and requests for interviews and addressing problems that may arise in the course of the visit. In most instances, students or staff are assigned at the entrance of the Accreditation Headquarters to assist/guide the accreditors to the various offices, laboratories, classrooms they have to go to.

Verification of data is done through:

■ Classroom Observation

- Classroom observations are pre-scheduled by the PAASCU Secretariat to ensure that a cross section of the programs under survey is visited.

- Normally the team targets about sixty per cent (60%) of the faculty of the programs under survey to be observed.
- As a rule the accreditor is given a copy of the syllabus of the class being observed, which is placed on top of the chair reserved for him/her. The syllabus is briefly reviewed to ascertain its completeness, recency of bibliographical entries, topics assigned for discussion, etc.
- Using the PAASCU form for classroom/laboratory observation, the faculty is observed for delivery of instruction, the subject content, the interaction happening inside the classroom, the teaching strategy being utilized, etc.
- Once the accreditor gets a feel of the instructional process, classroom conditions, etc., an observation score is computed and some comments on the teacher's methodology and personality are inputted in the classroom/laboratory observation form.

The forms for regular classroom and laboratory observations are different. At the end of the visit, the PAASCU representative computes the average of all instructional observation sheets and the average score is then given to the Area Chair for Instruction. The average score will help said Area Chair in her/his final evaluation of the Instruction area.

■ Interviews

Contained in the Orientation Kit is the list of administrators and key personnel the team may want to interview. The interviews (individually or in groups) of key officials by the accreditors are another venue to verify the contents of the self-survey report, especially in terms of what the institution or program has cited as its strengths or best features and also its recognized weaknesses in the form of the self-survey recommendations per area.

- As much as possible, all the key administrators must be interviewed as they have prepared for the visit. Accreditors should go to the interviews prepared with their questions related to their area assignments so as not to waste time.
- Common group interviews are done with the Deans (during multiple surveys), the Department Chairs, Chairs of the Self-Survey Area Reports, student leaders, etc.
- Team members should limit their interviews to administrators only. As much as possible, these interviews should involve a cross section of the total academic community to get the pulse and true picture of the institution.

- Accreditors should avoid making any recommendations, judgments, giving advice and/or making comments for or against the school as these may give undue anxiety or false hopes to the interviewees regarding how the visit is progressing.
- In some cases, informal interviews may happen. This is when an accreditor simply “walks into” some offices such as faculty rooms, or simply talks informally with some faculty members and/or students along the corridors. Although this may be done, this is normally an exception rather than the rule.

Dialogue with the Students

The students who will be part of the dialogue are normally randomly chosen by the PAASCU representative from the list submitted to PAASCU by the school. The dialogue may commence with a prayer. Thereafter, the Staff Chair explains briefly the reasons for their presence and the purpose of the PAASCU visit. The Staff Chair then introduces the members of the Accrediting Team and the areas they represent. In some instances, the Staff Chair may also request the accreditors to introduce themselves and the areas they are chairing. After the brief introduction, the Staff Chair normally requests the Area Chair for Student Services to moderate the dialogue.

- This dialogue should be taken as the opportunity to give the students a chance to voice out their feelings about matters that specifically concern them especially as these relate to their academic programs and services they expect from the school.

Dialogue with the Faculty

Normally, the dialogue with the faculty immediately follows the dialogue with the students. Like the students, the faculty members who are present in the dialogue should represent a cross-section of the faculty members of the programs under survey. In cases of multiple surveys and very large faculty groups, the team may decide to divide the faculty according to their specific programs.

- Both full-time and part-time faculty should be represented in the dialogue.

Progress Report

As mentioned earlier, the Staff Chair may schedule a Progress Report normally at the end of the first day. The purpose of the progress report is to exchange notes and get a general idea about how the visit is progressing. This is also the time to share observations and validate some findings and/or request the other accreditors to verify some doubts/problem areas they may have come across.

■ For a Preliminary Survey

- In a Preliminary Survey, the Progress Report will provide the occasion to share observations, clarify questions, ask other Area Chairs for help in the Area assigned to each accreditor. It will also be a chance to determine how the entire group feels about the direction of the visit.
- If there are already some best features, noted for the different Survey Areas, these can be shared in the meeting and if the others have objections, the group can discuss and come to an objective and common agreement/conclusion.
- If there are already recommendations for some areas, these can likewise be shared with the group. All the findings at this point are tentative and can still be changed after the dialogues with the students and the faculty scheduled the next day.

■ For a Formal Survey and a Resurvey

- As in a Preliminary Survey, the Progress Report is also scheduled in the afternoon of the first day with the accreditors exchanging ideas, observations, clarifying issues, etc.
- The major difference in these sessions is that each Area Chair has a starting point, since another PAASCU team has previously visited the school with the team members giving their respective area recommendations. Thus, the first step is to try to see if the recommendations of the previous team have been acted upon as shown in the Self-Survey report of the school.

The Self Survey Report would have some Follow-Up Action on the previous team's recommendations. It is now the visiting Team's responsibility to verify whether the "Action Taken" on each recommendation as viewed by the school tallies with what has been observed during the visit.

The Team will likewise briefly enumerate/discuss the Best Features of each area and the recommendations, if there are any, at this point in time. Again all these are tentative and may be changed based on further class observations, interviews, dialogue with students and faculty and other documents that may come in the course of the second day.

■ Preparation for the Final Wrap-Up

The Final Wrap-Up is held in the afternoon of the second day normally at 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon. Prior to this, the members of the team review their notes on their observations and findings. Depending on the type of survey being conducted, the following are expected from the Area Chairs:

■ For a Preliminary Visit

The Area Chair starts listing what s/he thinks are the Best Features of the institution/program being surveyed as well as his/her area recommendations.

■ For the Formal Survey and Resurvey Visits

The Area Chairs start preparation by reviewing and answering the recommendations of the previous team based on their observations and findings. The Follow-Up Action may be one of the following: IMPLEMENTED, PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED, REITERATED OR NOT REITERATED, or NOT IMPLEMENTED, NOT REITERATED.

- Follow-Up Actions that are “Partially Implemented” or “Not Implemented” need explanations so that the next team will be guided accordingly. Reiterations may follow these kinds of evaluations.

■ The Wrap-Up or the Final Evaluation Session

- The Final Wrap-Up starts promptly at the designated time (normally 2:00 or 3:00 PM of the second day). The Team Chair presides over the Final Wrap-Up. This is followed by a reminder to the group to remain focused on the presentation of their area’s Follow-Up Action taken, Best Features and Recommendations and to stick to the task at hand and to avoid “storytelling”. The Area Chairs are thereafter requested to present their area reports orally. After each report the other team members can comment and make suggestions about the Area based on their own observations and findings
- For a Preliminary Survey the Area Chairs cite only the Best Features and Recommendations for their respective areas. No area ratings are given. After all the Area Chairs have given their reports, the final decision is made on the visit.
- For Formal Surveys and Resurveys, the Area Chairs start with reading out the recommendations of the previous team. They then give the Follow-Up Actions for each recommendation based on their observations and findings followed by the Best Features and the Recommendations. Area ratings are then given.
- After all the Area Chairs have finished giving their reports, a decision has to be made on the outcome of the visit.

■ Arriving at the Final Decision

The decision about the visit varies depending on whether the visit is a Preliminary Visit, a Formal Visit or a Re-Survey. As mentioned earlier, the options are as follows:

■ For a Preliminary Survey

The possible decisions of the team may vary according to the findings. They may decide:

- That the institution is eligible for a Formal Survey after six (6) months to one (1) year provided that they have substantially implemented the recommendations given.
- That the institution is eligible for a Formal Survey after one (1) year provided that the institution has substantially implemented the recommendations given.
- That the institution undergoes a Consultancy Visit after one (1) year for the following areas: (areas are identified)
- That the institution undergoes a Consultancy Visit after one year to determine readiness for a Formal Survey (answer only recommendations, most likely in all areas).
- Second Preliminary Visit (A new survey altogether)

■ For a Formal Survey Visit

Since a Formal Survey Visit indicates that the institution/program has gone through the initial screening process for Accreditation, this visit is therefore the first step towards being granted Accreditation or going to Level I. The decision of the team therefore may either be:

- That initial accreditation for three years be granted
- That accreditation not be granted (reasons are cited)

■ Resurvey

After the institution has been granted initial accreditation for three (3) years, it is now eligible for accreditation for five (5) years.

The decisions for a resurvey visit may be:

- Re-accreditation for five (5) years, which means clean accreditation.
- Re-accreditation for five (5) years with a written progress report on the ____ year for the following areas : (State the areas)_____
- Re-accreditation for five (5) years with an interim visit on the ____ year for the following areas: (State the areas) _____

- Re-accreditation is deferred

The Final Decision is arrived at after a Formal Vote is taken on whether or not to recommend the grant of accreditation. For the Formal Survey and Resurveys, the ratings of the Self- Survey and the Team's Ratings are compared. The Team arrives at their numerical rating which should be consistent with the Final Decision.

Prior to the formal end of the survey visit, the Staff Chair reminds the Team once more about:

- Vow of Confidentiality about the visit.
- The team's recommendation is not final as it will have to pass the screening of the respective Commissions who will then endorse the final recommendation to the Board

C. What Happens After the Visit?

After the visit, the Chair's responsibility is to prepare the Chair's Report. Said Report is the summation of the events that took place during the visit. It normally consists of:

- An Introduction that gives a brief background about the school and the type of visit the school underwent.
- The schedule of activities the team undertook/went through. This consist of the class observations, visit to the facilities, the review of documents, the interviews, the dialogues with the faculty and the students.
- A brief summary of the most important strengths and weaknesses of the institution gleaned from the Area Reports of the team members. The detailed Area Reports are attached to the Chair's Report.
- The Team's observations regarding the self-survey report, the preparation of the exhibits in the Headquarters, adequacy and completeness of the data needed during the Survey.
- The recommendation of the Team together with the area ratings and computation arrived at for the Institutional Average. The Staff Chair sees to it that the Best Features and Recommendations given by the Team are consistent with the numerical ratings arrived at for the Institutional Average*.

* It is only in the Preliminary Survey reports where the team members do not give area ratings and the Institutional Average is not computed.

The Chair's Report normally ends with a note of appreciation to the institution for the reception, cooperation and openness the Team received during the visit. Said report together with the area reports must be submitted by the Chair to the PAASCU Office within one (1) month from the date of the visit.

6/13/12

