



NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

THE EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF A NEW PROGRAM OR CAMPUS

“Journey to Excellence
in
International Education”

School Improvement through Accreditation

*Based on the 8th Edition of the
NEASC Guide to School Evaluation & Accreditation*

*Compatible with the 8th Edition
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NEASC EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION OF A NEW PROGRAM OR NEW CAMPUS

PART I

PRINCIPLES/POLICY AND PRACTICAL STEPS

PRINCIPLES/POLICY

1. NEASC recognizes the fact that international communities go through major, sometimes rapid, changes. Thus, member schools may decide to add a new program (e.g. Early Childhood Centre, IB Diploma Program) or grade levels/year groups, or build/open a new campus at another location.
2. The NEASC accreditation process allows schools to seek accreditation for a new program, additional grade levels/year groups or new campus outside the school's regular accreditation cycle.
3. In order to preserve the integrity of the accreditation process NEASC
 - a. Will not review individual grades or a program which affects a single grade only *outside the regular accreditation cycle*;
 - b. Will review a new program in its entirety only after students have completed the final year of the program;
 - c. Encourage schools to integrate the accreditation of a new program into their regular decennial accreditation cycle in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and expense.
4. Since the school is already accredited, the process of reviewing a new program or a new campus will focus on
 - a. Understanding the rationale which led to the decision to add a new program or a new campus;
 - b. Evaluating the extent to which the new program or new campus has implications for the school's Guiding Statements;
 - c. Assessing the degree to which the new program or new campus aligns with the NEASC Standards for Accreditation.
5. NEASC requires that an on-site visit take place to evaluate a new program or new campus for which a school seeks accreditation. Normally each agency will send one Visitor, though one person may be nominated to represent both agencies if the circumstances warrant such an arrangement. More than two Visitors may be required if a wide range of specialist subjects or courses is being offered.
6. Once accreditation of a new program or new campus has been granted, subsequent procedures will automatically become synchronized with the accreditation processes applicable to the rest of the school, even if the next regularly scheduled milestone occurs in the near future.

7. If the new program (or the addition of a new campus) is such that the entire school is likely to be radically changed, NEASC reserves the right to require the entire school to undergo a complete evaluation, beginning with a Preparatory Visit (this would only occur in exceptional cases and after in-depth discussions between the school and NEASC).

PRACTICAL STEPS

The practical steps involved in the accreditation of a new program or campus are routinely as follows:

1. A school seeking accreditation of a new program and/or a new campus writes to the Director of CIE at NEASC (cie@neasc.org) to request the initiation of the process.
2. Provided the application fulfills the requirements outlined in the Principles/Policy section of this document, the accrediting agencies will supply the school with this booklet, requesting that Parts II and III be completed and returned to NEASC at the school's earliest convenience.
3. NEASC will select the Visitor(s) and organize visit dates with the school. On-site visits will normally last a maximum of three days, and the conditions will be analogous to those applicable to any other special accreditation visit. The Visitor(s) will submit a report directly to NEASC.
4. NEASC will consider the information submitted by the school and the Visitor's Report.

There are four possible decisions:

- a. that accreditation of the new program and/or campus be awarded
- b. that accreditation of the new program and/or campus be awarded with specific qualifications
- c. that accreditation of the new program and/or campus be postponed (deferred) for some specified reason(s)
- d. that accreditation of the new program and/or campus be withheld.

The school may appeal a decision to withhold accreditation.

PART II

SCHOOL INFORMATION

The Head of the School is responsible for submitting the information required and supporting documents to NEASC. The work involved in completing Part II will be based on the NEASC Standards for Accreditation, but will focus on the extent to which the addition of the new program or a new campus has resulted in significant changes. Each section therefore contains *key questions*, the answers to which often determine how much documentation or analysis is required on the part of the school.

The Section headings in Part Two correspond to those in the *NEASC The Main Guide "Journey to Excellence in International Education" 8th Edition*. The Standards for Accreditation can be found under Step Two of Sections A to G in that instrument, and Heads and other staff members are expected to study them carefully when responding to the *key questions*.

While the Head of School has overall responsibility for the completion of Parts II and III, it is expected that other members of the school community will collaborate in the process and, in particular, the member(s) of the school's Administration/Senior Management Team most directly involved in supervising the new program or campus.

The completed documentation should be submitted to NEASC and directly to the appointed Visitor(s) electronically at least one month before the scheduled Visit.

INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE REQUEST FOR ACCREDITATION OF A NEW PROGRAM AND/OR CAMPUS

School Name: _____

School Head: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

Application for: New Program New Campus Both

Brief description of new program and/or new campus:

Brief rationale for introducing new program and/or creating a new campus:

Please include copy of published materials describing the new program and/or campus

LIST OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN COMPILING THIS INFORMATION:

Name (please type)	Position	Section(s)

SECTION A: SCHOOL GUIDING STATEMENTS

Key Questions

1. Did the implementation of a new program and/or the creation of a new campus result in changes to the school's Guiding Statements - Mission, Vision, and Objectives?

- Yes (proceed to 1a) No (proceed to 2.)

1a. What changes were made? Who made/approved the changes? Why and when were the changes made?

2. Did the school's admissions policy change as a result of the new program and/or creation of a new campus?

- Yes (proceed to 2a) No (proceed to Section B)

2a. In what ways did the policy change? Why was the change made?

Supporting Documents/Evidence (if you answered "Yes" to either 1 or 2)

- a) Copy of the current School Guiding Statements (with changes clearly marked)
- b) Copy of the admissions policy applicable to the additional grades.

SECTION B: TEACHING & LEARNING (Omit if the application pertains to a new campus only rather than the introduction of a new program)

Key Questions

1. What is the design of the curriculum offered in the new program and how is it documented in a clear and comprehensive form? How is articulation with existing programs ensured?

2. Have approaches to teaching and to learning changed as a result of the implementation of the additional grades program?

Yes (explain below) No (proceed to 3.)

3. How have teaching/learning resources been enhanced to support the new program?

4. Have the principles, policies and practices for assessment of students' learning and performance changed as a result of introducing the new program?

Yes (explain below) No (proceed to Section C)

Supporting Documents

- a) All curriculum documentation relevant to the new program.
- b) Copies of all principles, policies and practices pertaining to the assessment of students' learning and performance *if different from what is used in already established grades/programs.*

SECTION C: GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

Key Questions

1. Have there been changes in the governance and/or leadership structure as a result of the new program and/or new campus?

Yes (explain below)

No (proceed to 2.)

2. How is the new program and/or new campus financed and how will long-term financial viability be ensured?

Supporting Documents

- a) Copy of an organizational chart showing lines of authority and responsibility if the governance/leadership structure has changed as a result of the new program and/or new campus.
- b) Copy of the school's operational budget highlighting the impact of the new program and/or new campus.

SECTION D: FACULTY & STAFF SUPPORT (Omit if the application pertains to a new campus only)

Key Questions

1. What general changes have occurred in the number and/or qualifications of instructional and support staff in order to ensure the effectiveness of the new program (including provision for specialist staff)?

2. What professional development has been provided or is planned to support students' learning within the new program?

3. Are the faculty and staff involved in the new program subject to the same contractual policies as personnel involved in the rest of the school?

Yes

No (explain below)

Supporting Documents

- a) List of additional faculty/staff, if any, hired to operate the new program, showing names, qualifications, current role and past experience.
- b) Copies of any contracts, policies etc. for faculty/staff involved in new program *if they differ from those applicable to all other employees.*

SECTION E: ACCESS TO TEACHING & LEARNING (Omit if the application pertains to a new campus only rather than the introduction of a new program)

Key Questions

1. How are students admitted to the new program to ensure that they are able to benefit from the program?

2. Were any new procedures for identifying and addressing the needs of students with language support needs, learning disabilities or exceptionally high ability introduced as a result of the establishment of the new program?

- Yes (explain below) No (proceed to 3.)

3. Have there been changes in the provision of
- a. Guidance & Counselling services? Yes (explain below) No
- b. Testing/Assessment programs? Yes (explain below) No

Supporting Documents

- a) Copy of the admissions policy pertaining to the new program *if it differs from the existing admissions policy.*
- b) Copies of policies for identifying and addressing special student needs in the new program *if they differ from those in use in already existing programs/grades.*
- c) If applicable, summary of the results of external examinations/tests/assessments taken by students in the new program since its introduction.

SECTION F: SCHOOL CULTURE & PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING

Key Questions

1. Have expectations for staff/student relationships and for students' behavior changed as a result of the new program and/or new campus?

Yes (explain below)

No (proceed to 2.)

2. What changes, if any, have been introduced into the extra-curricular program, including links with the local and wider community, to accommodate the needs and interests of students in the new program and/or on the new campus?

3. If the school has a boarding program, what new or special features have been introduced to satisfy the needs of resident students in the new program and/or on the new campus?

Supporting Documents

Copies of all policies and procedures which may have changed in the areas of:

- Staff/student relationships and students' behavior
- Extra-curricular programs
- Boarding
- Student well-being.

SECTION G: OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS

Key Questions

1. What changes have been made (write “none” if no changes were made)

a) in the school’s insurance cover?

b) to the school grounds, buildings, technical installations, furnishings or equipment?

c) in the health and safety programs, provisions, and services?

d) in auxiliary services (e.g. catering, transport, security, maintenance, etc.)?

Supporting Documents

Copies of

- a) new/changed insurance policies
- b) simplified floor plans of new or modified school facilities
- c) licenses and certificates issued by competent authorities for any new or modified facilities.

PART III

CONCLUSION

The Head of School, in collaboration with the other members of staff involved in completing Part II, should write a **reflective** conclusion concerning the new program and/or new campus, responding to three questions:

1. What does the school consider to be the most significant benefits of the new program and/or new campus for the school as a whole?

2. What does the school regard as the most significant challenges resulting from the introduction of the new program and/or creation of a new campus?

3. What actions will the school undertake as a matter of priority during the next one to two school years in order to address the challenges identified above?

***Please submit Parts II & III of this document (together with the required documentation) to
The New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC).***

APPENDIX 1

THE MULTI-CAMPUS ISSUE (one school or more than one school?)

Approach

Although the 8th Edition NEASC protocol does not define what constitutes a school, the following questions may be used as guidelines to determine whether a school with multiple (or a new) campus(es) should be considered a single entity or not. Making a judgement about whether an entity of multiple campuses should be considered as one school or more is not merely a matter of answering these questions affirmatively. It is a rounded professional judgement made by the accreditation agency. However, the more affirmative answers there are, the more likely the school may be considered as a single entity, i.e. one school. “No” answers need to be explored further in an effort to understand the rationale for differences between campuses.

Questions

1. Is there one over-arching set of Guiding Statements that influences the ethos of all campuses and is put into practice at all sites? (Section A)
2. Are the opinion surveys carried out with stakeholders giving broadly similar messages (if the data are able to be disaggregated by campus)? (Part One)
3. Are the policies guiding teaching and learning common across campuses, and the standards and expectations of teaching and learning consistent? (Section B)
4. Are similar curriculum programs on offer at the various sites? If not, is there a clear rationale for the differences, and are the guiding statements (mission/aims/values) common across sites? (Section B)
5. Is there one Governing Body which really makes policy for all sites? (Section C)
6. Are all sites covered by one legal and/or ownership framework? (Section C)
7. Is each campus funded by the same formula or budgetary process, even if fee levels differ and separate cost centers exist for separate campuses? (Section C)
8. Is there one CEO/Administrator/Educational Leader who has oversight and accountability for all sites? (Section C)
9. Are Human Resources policies and practices consistent across campuses? (Section D)
10. Is a similar profile of staff employed at all sites under similar contractual conditions? (Section D)
11. Are similar or shared professional development programs available to staff on all sites? (Section D)
12. Are staff remunerated equally, like-for-like according to their responsibility and level of accountability, irrespective of the campus on which they operate? If not, are discrepancies justifiable and is there any plan to equalize remuneration rates, if appropriate? (Section D)
13. Are students' admissions policies similar on all sites? (Section E)
14. Are all sites serving a similar set of stakeholders, demographically and culturally? If not, are the differences justifiable? (Section E)
15. Are similar or shared student support services (SEN, ELS, guidance and counselling, health care, etc.) available on all sites? (Section E)
16. Are the school cultures similar? If not, are differences justifiable and rationalized?(Section F)
17. Do all sites have a similar quality and atmosphere of student and community life (personal and group relationships, student and parent consultation and information exchange processes)? (Section F)
18. In general, do governors, administrators, staff, students and parents on all sites feel part of one institution and act accordingly? (Section F)
19. Are operational systems applied consistently across campuses, for example health, safety and security procedures and standards? (Section G)
20. Are resources (food, security services, transport, cleaning, physical plant, IT provision, library/media centre) of similar quality on all sites – and, if not, is there a plan to bring them into line? (Section G)