



PEER EVALUATORS

Independent Experts & Specialists Reviewing the Work of Other Independent Experts & Specialists



THE CORE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

ACICS recruits evaluators to conduct on-site reviews at institutions throughout the U.S. and abroad. In continuous operation since 1912, ACICS is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as an authority on institutional quality. ACICS awards grants of accreditation to private post-secondary institutions offering certificates and diplomas, associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees in programs designed to prepare students for professional, technical, or occupational careers, including programs offered via online education.

ACICS evaluators play a critical role in the deliberate, thorough accreditation of institutions, ensuring quality, institutional enhancement, and adherence to ethical business and educational practices. ACICS evaluators are recognized for their dedication and willingness to give back to higher education by serving on evaluation teams and reviewing member institutions fairly, without bias, and according to established standards. Evaluators are either classified as member, those affiliated with an ACICS accredited institution, or public, those not affiliated with an ACICS-accredited institution. Evaluators are vetted according to ACICS qualifications. They may become active members upon successful completion of ACICS training.

Based on qualifications, evaluators are assigned one of the following roles:

- ❖ Program Specialist
- ❖ Student Relations
- ❖ Distance Education
- ❖ Chair
- ❖ Educational Activities

THE VISIT PROCESS

The Invitation

The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) works with colleges and schools to confirm visit dates; once the date is established, evaluators are enlisted to serve on specific accreditation site reviews and to play specific roles.

The Team

The on-site evaluator team consists of an ACICS accreditation coordinator and one or more evaluators, determined by the type of visit, student population, credential level, programs offered, and school location. An average visit requires at least two days of review.

Evaluator Responsibilities

Schools are reviewed in accordance with ACICS published criteria, culminating in an accreditation team visit report. Evaluators are responsible for certain sections of the report, which addresses an institution's operations and integrity, and consists of sections related to ACICS criteria.

Evaluator responsibilities while onsite include:

- ❖ Interview faculty, staff, students, and employers;
- ❖ Observe instructors, program equipment, and facilities; and
- ❖ Document reviews of student and faculty files, institutional effectiveness plans, and data for the Campus Annual Report (CAR).

The Report

Evaluators are expected to have the ability to conduct a thorough review and contribute to a well-written, documented report, which is a primary outcome of a successful accreditation visit. The evaluators' expertise and contribution to the report is critical to:

- ❖ Ensuring the school understands how to respond to any areas of non-compliance;
- ❖ Determining if the school has provided sufficient documentation for an intermediate review by veteran evaluators; and
- ❖ The Council's ability to take the appropriate accreditation action.





BECOME AN ACICS EVALUATOR

Qualifications

Applicants must be qualified according to ACICS standards and receive training on ACICS accreditation standards and visit procedures. Evaluators must demonstrate at least five years' experience and education in a specialty field, or in one of the areas of expertise described below:

- ❖ Student Relations (SR): Requires experience calculating satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and familiarity with the Campus Accountability Report (CAR);
- ❖ Educational Activities (ED): Requires at least five years' experience at an administrative level and experience reviewing credentials of faculty assigned to teach general education courses; and
- ❖ Distance Education (DE): Requires experience in the management, instruction, and curriculum development of distance education programs.

Evaluators must have experience in at least two areas of operation, including instruction, admissions, financial aid, placement, and administration. Also, evaluators must agree to adhere to the ACICS Canons of Ethical Behavior and sign the Independent Contractor Agreement.

Evaluators must submit the following documentation:

- ❖ A professional resume supporting their stated specialty field or expertise;
- ❖ A signed Independent Contractor Agreement; and
- ❖ A signed W-9 form in order for ACICS to file a 1099 and remit honorarium payments.

Registration

Individuals may register as an evaluator at www.ACICS.org.

Training

Applicants must successfully complete the required Evaluator Training, consisting of three pre-recorded Webinar modules and one live two-hour Webinar. Evaluator applicants should follow the steps outlined at www.ACICS.org > Evaluators > Becoming an Evaluator > Step 5.

Vetting

ACICS will begin vetting candidates after registration is completed and all required documents are submitted. When the applicant completes training, the applicant becomes an active evaluator and is eligible to participate on an evaluation team.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are evaluators compensated for their service?

ACICS recognizes the value of volunteer service and shows its appreciation by granting an honorarium. Evaluators are also reimbursed for approved visit travel expenses as outlined in the Evaluator Travel Manual.

Do I have to become an evaluator to listen to the training modules available on ACICS.org?

No. ACICS encourages any individual seeking further understanding of the evaluator process to review the materials in modules 1-3. The modules are free and available to the public.

For more information, please visit www.acics.org/evaluators.aspx