### TEAC’s accreditation process at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Program faculty actions</th>
<th>TEAC actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Application</td>
<td>Program faculty prepares and submits eligibility application and fee</td>
<td>TEAC staff consults with the institution and program faculty; TEAC accepts or rejects application (on eligibility requirements) and accepts or returns fee accordingly ∞</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Formative evaluation</td>
<td>1. Program faculty attends TEAC workshop on writing the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal (optional) 2. Program faculty submits drafts of the Brief* with checklist</td>
<td>1. TEA staff reviews draft Brief* or sections for coverage, clarity, and auditability and returns drafts for revisions and resubmission as needed 2. If appropriate, TEAC solicits outside reviews on technical matters, claims, and rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal</td>
<td>1. Program faculty responds to TEAC staff and reviewers’ comments ∞ 2. Program submits final Brief with checklist</td>
<td>1. TEAC declares Brief auditable and instructs program to submit final version of Brief 2. TEAC accepts Brief for audit and submits it to the Accreditation Panel chair for instructions to auditors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Call for comment</td>
<td></td>
<td>TEAC places program on TEAC Web site’s call-for-comment page and circulates call-for-comment letter to program faculty and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Audit</td>
<td>1. Program faculty submits data for audit as requested 2. Program faculty receives and hosts auditors during visit (2–4 days) 3. Program faculty responds to audit report (2 weeks) ∞</td>
<td>1. TEAC schedules audit ∞ 2. Panel chair formulates questions and instructions for auditors; auditors verify submitted data 3. Auditors complete visit to campus 4. Auditors prepare audit report and send to program faculty, TEAC, and Accreditation Panel chair 5. TEAC staff responds to program faculty’s comments about the draft audit report ∞ Final audit report prepared and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Staff analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. TEAC completes staff analysis and sends to program and panel ∞ 2. TEAC sends Brief, audit report, staff analysis, and faculty response to panel members; panel members complete worksheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Accreditation Panel</td>
<td>1. Program head attends meeting (optional) 2. Program faculty responds (within 2 weeks) ∞</td>
<td>1. Panel meets and formulates accreditation report; TEAC sends report to program faculty; TEAC staff responds as needed ∞ 2. Call for comment announced via e-mail and Web site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Accreditation Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. TEAC sends Brief, reviewers’ comments, audit report, accreditation report and staff analysis, and panel recommendation to Accreditation Committee for decision 2. Accreditation Committee meets; TEAC sends Accreditation Committee’s decision to program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Acceptance or appeal</td>
<td>Program faculty accepts or appeals TEAC’s action within 30 days ∞</td>
<td>If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report. If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEAC initiates its appeal process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Annual report</td>
<td>Program faculty submits annual report and dues to TEAC ∞</td>
<td>TEAC reviews annual reports for as many years as required by program’s status with TEAC ∞</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:**  ⇔ and  ↔ signify program faculty/TEAC staff interaction; ∞ signifies the process continues until there is consensus among the parties.  

*TEAC uses “Brief” to refer to both the Inquiry Brief and the Inquiry Brief Proposal.*
Guide to Accreditation

July 2005
Price guide
TEAC members: two copies free to members
  Additional copies:
    1–6 copies, $35 each
    7–10 copies, $30 each
    11 or more copies, $25 each

Non-members:
  $45.50 per copy

Bulk order for classroom or instructional use only:
  Call (302) 831-6072 for member and non-member prices; proof of course or instructional event required.
Using TEAC’s guide to accreditation

TEAC’s Guide to Accreditation is primarily for the faculty, staff, and administrators of TEAC member programs. It is designed for use in preparing for both initial and continuing accreditation.

Content

Program personnel should understand and accept all the components of the TEAC accreditation process before entering into it. We encourage everyone in the program who is responsible for some or all parts of the program’s accreditation (including annual reports) to read and use this guide.

Our goal in writing the guide was to make each step of the process clear and to make the accreditation process itself transparent. For example, throughout, we explain the rationale behind the process as well as each step. We also include details about formative evaluation, the audit, and the accreditation decision.

Format

We know that program personnel will focus on particular sections of the guide as they enter different stages of the accreditation process, and we have designed a format that makes selective use easy. With those writing the Brief in mind, we have also included forms that can be downloaded from the TEAC Web site (www.teac.org) and used in the Brief, along with one-page outlines and checklists that program members can use as handy reference while assembling the Brief and preparing for the audit.

Other users

Because this guide spells out in detail what is expected from the members and how all the steps in the process fit together, TEAC auditors and members of the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee should also find this volume useful.
## Table of contents

### Part One: About TEAC Accreditation
- About TEAC .................................................................................................................. 1
- TEAC’s goal and accreditation principles ........................................................................ 2
- TEAC’s philosophy of accreditation ................................................................................. 3
- Overview of TEAC’s accreditation process .................................................................... 5
- What is a program? ........................................................................................................... 7
- TEAC’s relationship to states, other accreditors, and professional associations ............ 8
- Practical matters ............................................................................................................. 11

### Part Two: TEAC’s Standards and Principles
- TEAC’s accreditation goal, principles, and standards .................................................... 13
- TEAC principles and standards for teacher education programs .................................... 14
- TEAC’s accreditation goals, principles, and standards for educational leadership programs .................................................. 22

### Part Three: The Inquiry Brief and Inquiry Brief Proposal (overview)
- Overview ....................................................................................................................... 27
- Content of the Inquiry Brief and Inquiry Brief Proposal ................................................. 28
  - Inquiry Brief .............................................................................................................. 28
  - Inquiry Brief Proposal ............................................................................................. 29
- Required elements of the Brief ...................................................................................... 30
- Format .......................................................................................................................... 32
- TEAC’s evaluation of the Brief ...................................................................................... 33
- Guidelines for producing the Brief ............................................................................... 35

### Part Four: The Inquiry Brief (details)
- Section 1. Program overview ....................................................................................... 37
- Section 2. Claims and rationale .................................................................................... 38
- Section 3. Method of assessment .................................................................................. 45
- Section 4. Results .......................................................................................................... 50
- Section 5. Discussion and plan ..................................................................................... 51
- Section 6. References .................................................................................................... 52
- Section 7. Appendices ................................................................................................... 53
  - Appendix A. Internal audit of quality control system ................................................ 54
  - Appendix B. Capacity standards .............................................................................. 61
  - Appendix C. Qualifications of the program faculty ................................................... 64
  - Appendix D. Program requirements ......................................................................... 64
  - Appendix E. Inventory of evidence ............................................................................ 65

### Part Five: The Inquiry Brief Proposal (details)
- The Inquiry Brief Proposal ............................................................................................ 69
- The Inquiry Brief Proposal and TEAC’s accreditation standards and principles ............ 70
- Details of the content of the Inquiry Brief Proposal ..................................................... 71
  - Section 1. Program overview .................................................................................... 71
  - Section 2. Claims and rationale for the assessments ................................................ 71
  - Section 3. Method of assessment .............................................................................. 71
  - Section 4. Results ...................................................................................................... 71
  - Section 5. Discussion and plan .................................................................................. 72
  - Section 6. References ................................................................................................ 72
  - Section 7. Appendices ............................................................................................... 72
    - Appendix A. Internal audit of quality control system ............................................. 72
    - Appendix B. Capacity standards ........................................................................... 72
    - Appendix C. Qualifications of the program faculty ............................................... 72
    - Appendix D. Program requirements ..................................................................... 72
    - Appendix E. Inventory: disclosure of available measures used or declined ........... 72
PART ONE:
ABOUT TEAC ACCREDITATION

About TEAC ......................................................... 1
TEAC’s quality principles and standards ......................... 2
TEAC’s philosophy of accreditation ................................. 3
Overview of the accreditation process .............................. 5
What is a program? .................................................. 7
TEAC’s relationship with states, other accreditors, and professional associations .............................. 8
Practical matters ..................................................... 11
About TEAC

The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), founded in 1997, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators—those who will teach and lead in schools, pre-K through grade 12. TEAC’s goal is to support the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified professional educators.

TEAC’s primary work is accrediting undergraduate and graduate professional education programs in order to assure the public about the quality of college and university programs.

The education program, not the college, school, department or other administrative unit of the institution, receives TEAC accreditation.

TEAC’s entire accreditation process is built around the program’s case that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. TEAC requires the program to have evidence to support its case, and the accreditation process verifies and evaluates the evidence.

TEAC’s membership represents education programs within a broad range of higher education institutions, from small liberal arts colleges to large research universities, and includes professional organizations.

Institutions that wish to pursue accreditation for their programs hold regular membership in TEAC. Affiliate membership is granted to institutions that support the TEAC agenda but do not wish to pursue accreditation for any of their programs, and it is granted similarly to agencies, organizations, or individuals.

TEAC conducts meetings and workshops for its members to share information about innovation in program design and effectiveness. TEAC is an advocate for improvements in professional education programs based on research and confirmed scholarship.

Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and by the U.S. Department of Education, TEAC is also a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditation, the American Council on Education, Association of Teacher Educators, and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.

Dues and member fees support TEAC’s work. Since its founding, TEAC has also received funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, the John M. Olin Foundation, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, an anonymous donor, The Atlantic Philanthropies, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

TEAC has offices at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC, and in Newark, Delaware, on the campus of the University of Delaware.

Additional information about TEAC’s accreditation activities and events is available on TEAC’s Web site (www.teac.org).

Eligibility Requirements

Candidates for initial or continuing accreditation meet the following requirements:

- The program is committed to TEAC’s goal and quality principles
- The program faculty understands that TEAC may disclose the member’s accreditation status
- The program faculty will provide any information that TEAC may require
- The institution giving the program has regional accreditation or its equivalent
- The program’s graduates are eligible for the state’s professional teaching license
TEAC’s goal and accreditation principles

TEAC’s goal is to support the preparation of competent, caring, qualified professional educators. Using TEAC’s quality principles and standards for capacity, a teacher education faculty makes the case that its program has succeeded in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators.

Quality Principle I: Evidence of student learning

Quality Principle I represents the core outcome of the TEAC accreditation system, student learning. TEAC accreditation is based on the evidence that the program faculty provides in support of its claims about students’ learning and understanding of the professional education curriculum, especially their subject matter knowledge and teaching skill.

Quality Principle II: Valid assessment of student learning

TEAC’s Quality Principle II represents the core value of the TEAC accreditation system, valid assessment of student learning. TEAC expects program faculty to provide (1) a rationale justifying that the assessment techniques it uses are reasonable and credible and (2) evidence documenting the reliability and validity of the assessments.

Quality Principle III: Institutional learning

Quality Principle III represents the core activity of the TEAC accreditation system, institutional learning. TEAC expects that a faculty’s decisions about its programs are based on evidence, and that the program has a quality control system that (1) yields reliable evidence about the program’s practices and results, and (2) influences policies and decision making.

Standards of Capacity for Program Quality

TEAC defines a quality program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies the three quality principles. However, TEAC also requires the faculty to provide independent evidence that the program also has the capacity—curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies—to support student learning and program quality.

TEAC’s standard of quality: The quality of the case

A program meets the TEAC standard of quality when the evidence cited in the program’s self-study document, the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal, is consistent with the claims made about student learning and when there is little or no credible evidence that is inconsistent with the claims. TEAC uses a system of heuristics to arrive at its accreditation decision and judgment about whether the program’s evidence of student learning and other matters is trustworthy and sufficient.

To establish that a program meets TEAC’s principles and standards, TEAC first determines whether or not the cited evidence of student learning is accurate and trustworthy. This is accomplished through the academic audit. TEAC’s Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee then determine whether or not the evidence is sufficient to support the program faculty’s claims for student learning.

The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it are the two key factors in the TEAC accreditation decision.
TEAC’s philosophy of accreditation

Four principles guide TEAC’s accreditation process:

1. Improvement is a continuous process in which each step helps define the next one and moves it forward.

2. The accreditation process must be inquiry driven, starting from the faculty’s questions about the program’s mission and results.

3. The accreditation process includes evidence from academic audits that examine the trustworthiness of the evidence that student learning meets high expectations and that the program follows processes that produce quality.

4. The process is intended to be frugal, not burdening the program and institution with unnecessary activities or costs in paperwork, personnel, time, and money.

Throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and program faculty maintain open and frequent communication on all relevant matters.

Process principle one:
Continuous improvement to advance quality

The three TEAC quality principles—student learning, assessment of student learning, and institutional learning—constitute a dynamic cycle in which the program formulates goals for student achievement, allocates needed resources, assesses student performance, and uses the evidence from the assessment to improve program quality.

TEAC’s quality principles are complemented with an accreditation process that incorporates practices of continuous improvement. TEAC’s approach to accreditation relies on the following ideas from the continuous improvement literature:

- Create constancy of purpose for improvement
- Balance constancy of purpose and continual improvement, short- and long-term results, and knowledge and action
- Link program improvement to student learning
- Improve every system in the program to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, research, service activities, and outcomes
- Eliminate misleading and superficial numerical quotas and indicators

TEAC does not assume a single model or template for education programs. Rather, TEAC’s approach reflects an understanding that continuous improvement is a process that leads to many different paths to excellence in professional teacher education.

Process principle two:
Inquiry-driven accreditation

Institutions of higher education justifiably take pride in their record of thoughtful and scholarly approaches to their work. TEAC believes that accreditation of professional teacher education programs should be grounded in exactly the same kind of scholarly inquiry.

The questions driving the inquiry should be interesting and important to the education program faculty. The questions should take into account the relationship between teaching and student learning, both important indicators of quality. The questions should not simply be designed to comply with the external demands of accrediting bodies and state agencies. The questions should reflect the unique mission of the program and the goal of preparing competent, caring, qualified professional educators.
Process principle three: Audits to ensure quality

An audit provides an external verification of the program’s internal quality assurance mechanisms and the evidence they produce.

An academic audit is an investigative review of the way a program is producing student learning, assessing the outcomes of instruction, making improvements in the program, and gaining institutional support for the program.

An academic audit does not evaluate quality itself: instead, it verifies the processes that are intended to produce quality. TEAC’s approach to the audit emphasizes both the quality processes and the evidence of student learning and accomplishment.

TEAC’s approach requires the program faculty to live up to its publicly proclaimed high expectations for the program and its improvement. This is accomplished when the institution and program demonstrate accountability to the public for those high expectations by displaying solid evidence of student learning.

Process principle four: Frugality

The accreditation process is weakened when a program faculty takes steps solely for the purpose of satisfying a requirement. The TEAC accreditation process is designed to be efficient and use the minimum resources necessary to reach timely decisions. For example:

- The process should be a part of the normal quality control system the program employs.

- The document that the program produces to provide evidence of its quality, the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal, is the length of a research monograph, about 50 pages. It is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accrediting reports, and institutional research and other publications. It focuses on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program’s performance.
Overview of TEAC’s accreditation process

Although TEAC’s accreditation process assures the public of the quality of teacher education programs, TEAC’s unique approach to accreditation also helps programs improve and be confident about their quality.

TEAC accreditation is based on the understanding that programs can follow many different paths in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. TEAC’s accreditation process therefore starts with the questions a faculty asks about its program’s quality. TEAC’s academic audit verifies the accuracy of the evidence that student learning meets high expectations and that the program is following processes that produce quality. TEAC accredits the program on the basis of this evidence. The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it are the two key factors in the TEAC accreditation decision.

To be accredited, an eligible program submits a research monograph, called an Inquiry Brief, in which the faculty and administrators present the following evidence in support of their claim that their program satisfies TEAC’s three quality principles and standard for capacity to offer a quality program:

- Evidence of their students’ learning
- Evidence that their assessment of student learning is valid
- Evidence that the program’s continuous improvement and quality control are based on information about student learning
- Evidence of the program’s capacity for quality

In the Inquiry Brief, the program faculty members document their evidence about what their graduates have learned, the validity of their assessment of that learning, and the basis on which the program faculty makes its decisions to improve its program. The Inquiry Brief is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accreditation and state review reports, and institutional research and publications. It contains only information and analysis pertinent to the case that the program prepares competent, caring, and qualified professionals.

Faculty members representing new programs or programs that are in the process of collecting evidence for their claims about student learning may submit an Inquiry Brief Proposal, in which they propose how they will show, in a subsequent Inquiry Brief, that their graduates are competent, qualified, and caring. They provide evidence that their proposed assessments are valid, that their quality control system functions, and that the program meets TEAC’s standards for capacity to offer quality.

Through an academic audit, TEAC verifies the evidence presented in the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal. The audit takes place on campus, over two to three days. A team of two to four trained auditors verifies both the evidence presented in the Brief and corroborating evidence. A panel then evaluates whether or not the evidence supports the program’s claim that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified educators. Finally, a committee of TEAC’s board of directors reviews the entire case and makes the accreditation decision.

Throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and program faculty maintain open and frequent communication.

For easy reference, see “the TEAC accreditation process at a glance,” inside front cover and Appendix 1 of this guide.
## TEAC’s accreditation categories and terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation category</th>
<th>Term*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong> **</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is pursuing initial accreditation after having met the membership eligibility requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is awarded accreditation by TEAC for the first time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Ten years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is awarded reaccreditation by TEAC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preaccreditation</strong></td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Awarded on a one-time basis) Program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal is approved by the Accreditation Panel and Committee; or program’s Inquiry Brief is promising but found to be inconclusive by the Accreditation Panel and Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New program accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Awarded on a one-time basis) New or revised program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal indicates initial accreditation is likely in the future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provisional accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Inquiry Brief meets most but not all of TEAC’s quality principles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denied accreditation</strong></td>
<td>Reverts to candidate status***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal does not meet TEAC standards or quality principles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time before a new Inquiry Brief must be submitted. Term is conditional upon submission of an acceptable annual report and no adverse actions due to complaints or substantive changes.

**Candidate status is renewable only if the program continues to meet eligibility requirements and has begun the process of submitting a Brief.

***Provided eligibility requirements are met. If not, the program has no accreditation status with TEAC.
What is a program?

TEAC accredits programs that prepare professional educators who will teach and lead in the nation’s schools, grades preK–12. Further, TEAC accredits only those education programs for which there is evidence that the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.

The Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal is about a single program, but, in the TEAC system, a single program may include several license areas, options, and levels if they share a common logic, structure, quality control system, and similar and comparable categories of evidence. Thus, if an institution has two or more education programs, some or all of them might be submitted for accreditation within a Brief as a single program. In cases where the state requires that all education programs be accredited, the faculty should use the criteria below to determine whether to bundle some or all of the institution’s programs as a single program for accreditation or treat them separately in the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal. Faculty should consider the following factors in their decision:

- **Program structure.** Those programs that have essentially the same requirements, rationale, logic, and faculty can be presented in a single Brief.

- **Quality control system.** Programs that share the same quality control system can usually be presented in a single Brief.

- **Evidence.** If the program faculty can aggregate the evidence for the outcome of these programs honestly, then the programs can be presented in a single Brief.

Even if the programs are registered with the state separately or lead to different professional licenses, they can nevertheless be bundled as a single program for TEAC accreditation if they satisfy the conditions above. They would be treated as a single program, but one that has multiple options, areas, levels, and license outcomes.

If the institution’s education programs are dissimilar in their underlying logic or in the nature of the evidence for the TEAC quality principles, the institution must submit separate Briefs for each distinct program.

TEAC will review for accreditation only those professional education programs for which the institution has evidence to support its claims. It is possible, therefore, that some of the institution’s teacher education programs would have TEAC accreditation and others would not. Those that do not would simply remain unaccredited, and the institution would have to accept the consequences of their status. Programs that cannot provide convincing evidence should not benefit undeservedly from their association with programs that have solid evidence and have earned accreditation.

Note that TEAC’s protocol agreements with most states require that the institution submit all its education programs for accreditation review. (See below, “TEAC’s relationship with states, other accreditors, and professional associations.”)
States

The purposes of reviews for state program approval review and accreditation differ: the former assures the eligibility of the program’s graduates for the state’s license in the profession; the latter assures the quality of the program. However, in practice the reviews themselves are sufficiently similar that states and accreditors can fruitfully cooperate in the process.

TEAC enters into agreements with states to coordinate TEAC program accreditation and state program review. For the state, the benefit of these agreements is that they allow TEAC to share with the state valuable information that would otherwise be unavailable to the state. For the program, the benefit is a marked reduction in cost and effort. For the TEAC, the benefit is that accreditation is more attractive to programs when it can be integrated with the state’s program approval process.

Coordination has other benefits. Most states have developed curriculum and performance-based standards for teacher education. Naturally, the states wish to see that the programs seeking TEAC accreditation meet those standards. For its part, TEAC requires that the claims a program faculty makes in its Brief must be consistent with the claims it makes elsewhere (for example, the program faculty cannot make one set of claims for the purpose of TEAC accreditation and another set for state program approval). Thus, TEAC expects consistency between the program’s claims about Quality Principle I (student learning) and the claims that the program makes to the state and others: in these instances, the program’s claims about Quality Principle I must incorporate the state’s standards within TEAC’s requirement that the program provide evidence that its graduates have learned their teaching subject matters, pedagogy, and caring teaching skills, along with the cross-cutting themes of learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology.

TEAC’s agreements and review protocols with states take several forms, but most base accreditation and the state program approval on a single document: the Brief. Agreements typically have the following features, contingent on local needs and contexts:

- **Mandated accreditation.** A few states simply require that all professional education programs in the state be accredited by a nationally recognized accreditor, such as TEAC or NCATE; in some cases, a state accreditation agency is another option. The programs in these states have no option other than meeting the accreditor’s standards. In some states, TEAC and the state have added to the accreditation process requirements that are of particular interest to the state. (TEAC’s agreement with one state, for example, requires TEAC to verify that there is evidence of mutual benefit to both the program and the public school that hosts the clinical portions of the program; TEAC otherwise has no requirements of this sort.) Although TEAC also has no requirement that the all of the institution’s education programs present themselves for accreditation (see “What is a Program?” above), most states with which TEAC has an agreement require that all of the institution’s education programs meet accreditation standards.

- **Reliance on TEAC for program approval.** All states require program approval if the graduates are to receive a professional license. While only a few states actually require that programs be accredited, most are supportive of accreditation and freely encourage teacher education programs in the state to undertake the self-examination required by accreditation. Nearly all of the states find that the standards adopted by NCATE and TEAC align with their own views of program quality. Some states have chosen to rely on TEAC accreditation for the program re-
view function, and their agreements with TEAC reflect that fact. TEAC’s agreements with these states are usually similar to those with states that mandate accreditation, with the exception that accreditation is voluntary.

• **TEAC as consultant to the state’s program approval process.** In another kind of agreement, the state fully retains its authority and independence in making the program approval decision, but uses the contents of the program’s Brief and TEAC’s audit report, staff analysis, or accreditation report to corroborate and arrive at its own program approval decision. In these cases, TEAC’s accreditation process assists the state in its own program approval work and simplifies that work as the documentation prepared for TEAC also serves the state’s program review needs.

• **Cooperation on joint site visits.** Yet another form of agreement between TEAC and a state involves a simple understanding that to ease the burden on the program, the state and TEAC will make every effort to both schedule the TEAC audit and program review visit at the same time and use common documentation.

---

**Other accreditors**

To be eligible for TEAC accreditation, the institution that offers the education program must itself have regional accreditation or the equivalent.

Some professional education programs, whether housed in the school or college of education or another unit of the institution, are accredited by other specialized discipline- or profession-based accreditors (for example, music education, library science, and counseling). TEAC accepts the accreditation of professional education programs by other nationally recognized accreditors (that is, accreditors recognized by the U. S. Department of Education, USDE, or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, CHEA).

This policy is of particular value to those institutions that, under state regulation, must have all the institution’s professional education programs accredited.

The policy is based on the fact that TEAC’s accreditation is rooted in valid evidence that the program’s graduates have learned what was expected of them. TEAC and all other accreditors recognized by USDE and CHEA have standards about student learning and must give weight to evidence of student learning in their accreditation decisions. It is on this basis that TEAC accepts the decisions of others as equivalent to its own for the purposes of fulfilling state requirements for initial accreditation. An official notice and documentation that the program was accredited will suffice for TEAC’s purposes in meeting its obligations to the states.

The TEAC policy applies, however, only to the initial Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal that a program submits to TEAC; the initial Brief will not need to address programs already accredited by another agency recognized by USDE or CHEA. For continuing accreditation, TEAC will accept the accreditation of other nationally recognized accreditors as meeting TEAC’s capacity standards (element 4.0); but, for the purpose of satisfying its quality principles and obligations to the states, TEAC will require additional evidence of student learning from these other accredited programs. The protocols for this shared evidence will be negotiated with the other accreditors over the next few years and can be expected to take one of the following two forms:

• If valid evidence of student learning is already part of the self-study examination and the self-study report submitted to the other accreditor, TEAC will accept the evidence in the report, verify it during the audit visit, and evaluate it as TEAC would any other body of evidence. No other submission to TEAC would be needed.

• If, for some reason, evidence of student learning is not part of the self-study requirements for the other accreditor, then the program would have to provide evidence of student learning to TEAC separately for verification and evaluation.

The purpose of the policy is to make as much use as possible of the work the program has done for other specialized or profession-based accreditors. In this way, TEAC can meet its obligations to institutions.
that have elected TEAC for the purposes of satisfying a state’s mandate that all programs that prepare professionals for work in schools be accredited, and the program does not have to duplicate its efforts.

Professional organizations

Most of the national associations and societies that support the professional activities of teachers have developed their own standards for teacher preparation in their fields. Although there are some important divergences, generally, these standards and those of the states and accreditors align.

At the current time, TEAC relies, at its discretion, on professional societies, organizations, and unrecognized accreditors for assistance in the specification of the contents of TEAC’s *Quality Principle I*, especially for those professional educators whose roles are not covered by TEAC’s principles for teacher and school leaders. Programs seeking TEAC accreditation are free to adopt these standards and use them in TEAC accreditation.

In practice, that means that in presenting its case for meeting *Quality Principle I*, the program faculty must incorporate these standards in the evidence that the program’s graduates have learned their subject matter, pedagogy, and caring teaching skills along with the cross-cutting themes of learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology.
Our program meets TEAC’s eligibility criteria. How do we join?
Complete a membership application form (available from the director of membership services or on the Web at http://www.teac.org/frms/applicationform.asp). A completed application includes the application form, documentation of the institution’s regional accreditation, evidence that the program’s graduates are eligible for state licensure, a copy of the institution’s current catalog, and a check to cover the membership fee.

How much does it cost to be a member of TEAC?
At the present time, annual membership dues for the institution are $2,000. For the year in which a program’s Brief is audited, the institution pays an audit fee of $1,000 per Brief (see above in this section, “What is a program?”). In addition, the institution is responsible for all costs related to each audit and audit team (two to four people, over two to four days): lodging, food, travel, and fees ($1,500 per auditor). Affiliate members pay $500 annually; they are not eligible for accreditation.

Members receive invoices for their dues by June 15. Payment is due by July 1.

How long does it take to complete TEAC accreditation?
The time it takes a program faculty to prepare an Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal varies, depending on local circumstances such as program structure, available documentation, state context, and the institution’s commitment to the process. The amount of time it takes to complete a research article or monograph is a good guide for the time needed to write a Brief.

Once the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal is accepted for audit, the process to the accreditation decision takes eight to ten months (see inside front cover for details of the accreditation process and TEAC’s audit schedule, below).

Who should write the Brief and how long should it be?
The program faculty should produce the Brief. All faculty members of the programs represented in the Brief should contribute to the process, and they are required to approve the final Brief before it is submitted to TEAC for audit. The Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal should run about 50 pages.

Does TEAC give any guidance to program faculty as they prepare the Brief?
TEAC’s members participate in a formative evaluation process by submitting drafts of the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal. TEAC staff works with the Brief’s authors until the Brief is accepted for audit. TEAC also offers workshops on developing the Brief (TEAC members receive regular announcements of upcoming workshops; the information is also available on TEAC’s Web site, www.teac.org.)

We have written our Brief. When will TEAC conduct the audit?
During the formative evaluation, TEAC staff review drafts of the Brief. When TEAC finds the Brief complete, it is then ready for audit, or auditable, and the program submits a final version of the Brief. Only after an Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal is declared auditable will TEAC schedule an audit of the program.

Because TEAC audits programs only while courses are in full session, with most students and faculty on campus, there are two audit periods during each academic year: from September 15 to December 15; and from January 15 to April 15. The table on the following page presents the schedule of actions from the time a Brief is de-
clared auditable through the decision about the program’s accreditation.

**Once accredited, what is our obligation to TEAC?**

Accredited TEAC members must keep their annual dues current, submit annual reports, and stay in compliance with TEAC’s eligibility requirements, quality principles, and standards of capacity.

Annual reports are due on the anniversary of the accreditation decision.

---

**What kind of information can we find on TEAC’s Web site, www.teac.org?**

TEAC’s Web site provides information on membership (how to join and participate), upcoming workshops and meetings, full details on TEAC’s accreditation process, links to TEAC member institutions and their accredited program status, forms for use in the *Brief*, and access to TEAC literature and related articles.

---

### TEAC audit schedule 2005–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry Brief declared auditable no later than</th>
<th>Audit period From to</th>
<th>Reports and responses completed by</th>
<th>Panel meeting*</th>
<th>Committee meeting*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*The exact dates for the panel and committee meetings will be scheduled at the close of each audit period.*
PART TWO:
TEAC’S STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES

TEAC’s accreditation goal, principles, and standards ..................13
Quality principles and standards for teacher education programs ....14
Quality principles and standards for educational leadership programs .................................................22
PART TWO: TEAC’S STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES
The common purpose of teacher education programs and other programs for those professionals who work in schools is to prepare competent, caring, and qualified educators. The faculty members seeking TEAC accreditation of their program are required to affirm this straightforward goal as the goal of their program.

The TEAC quality principles and standards for capacity, described in detail below, are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its professional education program has succeeded in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators.

The first part of this section describes TEAC’s principles and standards for teacher education programs. The second part explains TEAC’s principles for educational leadership programs. Educational leadership programs must also address the standards of capacity for quality (4.0) described under teacher education programs.

For easy reference, see the outline of TEAC’s principles and standards, inside back cover.

---

TEAC principles and standards for teacher education programs

Eligibility requirements
To be eligible for TEAC candidate status for initial and continuing accreditation a program must document the following:

0.1 The program is committed to TEAC’s goal and quality principles
0.2 The program faculty understands that TEAC may disclose the member’s accreditation status
0.3 The program faculty will provide any information that TEAC may require
0.4 The institution giving the program has regional accreditation or its equivalent
0.5 The program’s graduates are eligible for the state’s professional teaching license

1.0 Quality Principle I: Evidence of student learning
The core of TEAC accreditation is the quality of the evidence the program faculty members provide in support of their claims about their students’ learning and understanding of the teacher education curriculum.

Overall, TEAC requires evidence that the candidates can teach effectively and do what else is expected of them as professional educators.

Whatever the particular topics of the curriculum that faculty members claim their students master, TEAC requires that the program faculty members address the following general components of their program in ways that also indicate that the faculty has an accurate and balanced understanding of the academic disciplines that are connected to the program under accreditation review.

1.1 Subject matter knowledge
Candidates for the degree must learn and understand the subject matters they hope to teach. TEAC requires evidence that the program’s candidates acquire and understand these subject matters.

1.2 Pedagogical knowledge
The primary obligation of the teacher is representing the subject matter in ways that his or her students can readily learn and understand. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the program’s degree learn how to convert their knowledge of a subject matter into compelling lessons that meet the needs of a wide range of students.

1.3 Caring teaching skill
Above all, teachers are expected to act on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that would lead to appropriate levels of achievement for all their pupils.

Caring is a particular kind of relationship between the teacher and the student that is defined by the teacher’s unconditional acceptance of the student, the teacher’s intention to address the student’s educational needs, the teacher’s competence to meet those needs, and the student’s recognition that the teacher cares.²

Although it recognizes that the available measures of caring are not as well developed as the measures of student learning, TEAC requires evidence that the program’s graduates are caring.

Cross-cutting dimensions of Quality Principle I
TEAC calls special attention to the liberal arts and general education dimensions of the teacher education curriculum. Because these dimensions cut across

and are essential parts of each component of \textit{Quality Principle I}, the program faculty must also address and provide evidence about them, as they would for any other aspects of their case for their graduates’ subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skill.

The skills and content of a liberal arts education (e.g., technology, learning to learn, multicultural perspectives) are essential parts of the teacher’s subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching skill. Graduates who understand their teaching subject also know and understand

- the technological dimensions of their subject;
- the qualifications that limit generalization owing to different cultural perspectives;
- how to fill in the gaps in their knowledge and apply what they have learned in college to new situations;
- how their subject matter fits with the rest of knowledge, its purpose, value, and limitations.

Teachers are expected to be well-informed persons even though they may never directly teach much of the information they acquire. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates know and understand subject matters that they may never be called upon to teach, but which are still associated with and expected of educated persons and professional educators in particular.

These include the oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking, and the qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills that are embedded in subject matter, pedagogy, and teaching performance. They also include knowledge of other perspectives and cultures and some of the modern technological tools of scholarship.

\textbf{Learning how to learn.} The liberal arts include a set of intellectual skills, tools, and ideas that enable students to learn on their own. In particular, the program faculty must teach the candidates how to address those parts of their disciplines that could not be taught in the program, but which, as teachers, the candidates will nevertheless be expected to know and use at some later time.

For example, the whole of the subject matter and pedagogy cannot be covered in the teacher education curriculum. Moreover, some of what is covered may not be true or useful later, and some of what will be needed later would not have been known at the time of the degree program.

TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learn how to learn important information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new contexts, and that they acquire the dispositions and skills that will support lifelong learning in their fields.

\textbf{Multicultural perspectives and understanding.} Included in the liberal arts is the knowledge of other cultural perspectives, practices, and traditions. TEAC requires evidence that candidates for the degree understand the implications of confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives for educational practice. For all persons, but especially for prospective teachers, the program must yield an accurate and sound

\begin{center}
\textbf{Cross-cutting themes: two examples}
\end{center}

1. The case that the program’s graduates know their subject matter in mathematics would also include evidence that they know how to solve mathematics problems they were not directly taught, that they know how to learn new areas of mathematics, that they understand the contributions of other cultures to the discipline of mathematics, and that they can use calculators and computers appropriately when they apply their mathematics to problems.

2. The case that the program’s graduates know pedagogy (e.g., how to teach reading) would include evidence that the graduates know how to learn and use new or alternative methods of teaching reading, know how to improve their teaching of reading, know how to make accommodations in their teaching for students of differing backgrounds, and know how to employ, when it is appropriate, technologically based instructional programs in reading.
understanding of the educational significance of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.\(^3\)

**Technology.** Increasingly, the tools of a liberal arts education include technology. Programs should give special attention to ensuring that the technologies that enhance the teacher’s work and the pupil’s learning are firmly integrated into their teacher education curriculum.\(^4\) TEAC requires evidence that the program’s graduates acquire the basic productivity tools of the profession.

**Comment on cross-cutting themes**
Teachers can be said to have acquired teaching skill at the level TEAC envisions (1) if they employ the teaching technologies that are available because they understand them; (2) if they reach all the pupils in their class through their knowledge of individual and cultural differences; and (3) if they continue to develop professionally because they understand how to learn on their own and how to apply what they have learned to novel situations in their classrooms.

They can be said to have acquired teaching skill at a sufficient level if they have ways to distinguish the essential content from the peripheral, ethical teaching practices from the unethical ones, knowledge from opinion, obligations from academic freedom, and the unique responsibilities of teaching in a democratic society from teaching in a non-democratic one.

---

### 2.0 Quality Principle II: Valid assessment of student learning

TEAC expects program faculty to provide (1) a rationale justifying its claims that the assessment techniques it uses are reasonable and credible, and (2) evidence documenting the reliability and validity of the assessments.

**Rationale**

TEAC requires the program faculty to provide this rationale because the reliability and validity of nearly all the currently available methods for assessing students’ caring and learning are flawed and compromised in one way or another.

Because no single measure can be trusted to accurately reveal student learning, the program faculty will also need to employ multiple measures and assessment methods to achieve a dependable finding about what the candidates have learned.

However, the program faculty members assess what their students have learned from the teacher education program, TEAC requires the program to provide evidence that the inferences made from the assessment system meet the appropriate and accepted research standards for reliability and validity.\(^5\)

This requirement means that the faculty will need to (1) address and rule out competing and rival inferences for the evidence of student learning; and (2) establish a point at which the evidence for their inference is sufficient, clear and consistent, and below which the evidence for their inference is insufficient, flawed, or inconsistent.

**Evidence of validity**

Because the evidence currently available to support claims of student learning is largely suggestive and not particularly compelling, to satisfy TEAC’s Quality Principle II, the program faculty needs to have an ongoing investigation of the means by which it provides evidence for each component of Quality Principle I.

The program faculty’s investigation must focus on two aspects of its assessment of student learning: (1) the links with the program’s design, the program’s

---

\(^3\) For example, the range of literary genre is extended profitably beyond fiction, poetry, and drama to include journals, diaries, and letters when the literary work of women is seriously considered. The discipline of psychology turns out to be very different from what is presented in the standard introductory textbook when it is qualified by the contributions of black psychologists, as Robert Guthrie observed. [Guthrie, R. (1976). *Even the rat was white.* New York: Harper & Row].

\(^4\) Grade book computer programs, databases, spreadsheets, word processors, electronic mail, bulletin boards and networked conferences, Internet access, interactive videodiscs, and instructional software are now part of the modern teacher’s repertoire.

goal, and the faculty’s claims made in support of the program goal; and (2) the elimination of confounding factors associated with the evidence from which the faculty draws the inferences.

2.1 Rationale for the links
TEAC requires that the faculty members have a rationale for their assessments that makes reasonable and credible the links between the assessments and (1) the program goal, (2) the program faculty’s claims about student learning, and (3) the program’s features.

For example, the faculty members who claim that their program prepares reflective practitioners would need to make a case that their ways of assessing reflective practice are reasonable and logical. They would need to show how their assessments are related conceptually to teacher competence and to some program requirements, and that the inferences they hope to make from their assessments could be expected to be valid.

2.2 Evidence of valid assessment
To satisfy Quality Principle II, the faculty must satisfy itself and TEAC that its rationale and the inferences from its assessments are also credible empirically. TEAC requires empirical evidence about the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the assessment method, or methods, the faculty employs.

To continue the example above, before the faculty members could conclude that their graduates are reflective practitioners, they would also need a way to be sure that they had ruled out some plausible alternative inferences based on the evidence from their assessments: for example, the inference that their graduates were simply following some template or formula; had guessed; had memorized or parroted their reflective responses; had copied their reflections from some source; or had fabricated the evidence of reflection.

3.0 Quality Principle III: Institutional learning
TEAC expects that a faculty’s decisions about its programs are based on evidence, and that the program has a quality control system that (1) yields reliable evidence about the program’s practices and results and (2) influences policies and decision making.

Quality Principle III addresses the ongoing research and inquiry needed to meet the other two quality principles. TEAC’s Quality Principle III presupposes a system of faculty inquiry, review, and quality control is in place: the faculty has a means to secure the evidence and informed opinion it needs to initiate or improve program quality.

Quality Principle III also encourages the program faculty to become skilled at creating knowledge for the improvement of teaching and learning and to modify the program and practices to reflect this new knowledge.

TEAC expects that the faculty will systematically and continuously improve the quality of its professional education programs and provide evidence about the following two issues in the faculty’s ongoing processes of inquiry and program improvement.

3.1 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
From time to time, a program faculty will decide to modify its curricula, assessment systems, pedagogical approaches, faculty composition, and so forth. TEAC requires evidence that the information derived from faculty’s research and inquiry into Quality Principle I and Quality Principle II has a role in improving the program, and will continue to have such a role in the future.

The program faculty’s research into Quality Principles I and II entails, for example, the investigation of any local factors that are associated with, and implicated in, student learning and its assessment.

To satisfy Quality Principle III, the program faculty must be committed to consistently improving its capacity to offer quality professional education programs. Wherever possible, the program faculty should base the steps it takes to improve the program...
on evidence derived from its inquiry into the effects various factors have on the assessment of student learning.

3.2 Influential quality control system
The faculty must have a quality control system in place to examine and evaluate the components of the program’s capacity for quality, including, its curriculum, students, faculty expertise, program and course requirements, and facilities.

TEAC requires evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program’s faculty, that the quality control system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the program’s continual improvement, and that it yields evidence that supports Quality Principles I and II.

Many factors may affect the quality of a program and influence the assessments of the academic accomplishments of the program’s students. TEAC requires that the faculty undertake ongoing inquiry and research into the likely factors associated with the students’ accomplishments.

TEAC expects that, over time, this inquiry will lead to a better understanding of the local factors and components of program quality that are important and would justify their continued nurture and investment.

This inquiry and the efforts to control quality should also lead to an awareness of some factors that can be treated with indifference because they have only marginal effects on program quality.

Although any number of factors and components of the program may affect program quality, TEAC requires the program faculty to address directly seven factors (4.1–4.7), each of which seems to have a plausible association with student learning and program quality.

TEAC’s seven standards for capacity are based upon the U.S. Department of Education’s requirement that any accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary as a reliable gatekeeper for federal funding have standards for seven dimensions of program capacity: curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

Although TEAC encourages programs to investigate and provide evidence of other local factors that affect capacity for quality, TEAC requires programs to provide plans to investigate, over time, and through their quality control systems, plausible links between student learning and the seven federal components of program quality.

Ultimately, the evidence for an adequate quality control system comes from the program faculty’s ongoing investigation of any plausible links between capacity and student learning. In other words, the program faculty’s quality control system should have agents that continually investigate and ask, What about each component could be expected to facilitate student accomplishment and learning, and what evidence can we rely on to support and justify that expectation?

The faculty can make the case that the program has a sufficient capacity for quality in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence; however, TEAC requires that the faculty cover the following basic points in making its case.

4.0 Standards of Capacity for Program Quality
TEAC defines a quality program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies the three TEAC quality principles. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty to provide evidence that it has the capacity—curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies—to support student learning and program quality. This evidence should be independent of student learning and based on some traditional input features of capacity.

Quality control
The faculty must show that it monitors systematically the quality of the program and that the faculty is disposed to act to continuously improve program quality. This is just another way of saying that the faculty adheres to Quality Principle III. The faculty
maintains a system of quality control and inquiry, verified by periodic internal audits, that (1) monitors the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, publications; and (2) is sensitive and responds to student comment and complaint.

**Evidence of commitment**
The faculty must also provide evidence that the institution is committed to the program. Commitment is most conveniently seen in the evidence of parity of the program within the institution. The program must at least have the *normative* capacity of the institution’s academic programs with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, publications, and features it shares with the institution’s other programs.

**Unique capacity**
The faculty must also address whatever unique capacity is needed for program quality in professional education.

Teacher education programs, for example, have unique features, such as student teaching and clinical courses. The institution and program must provide resources, administrative direction, and facilities for these unique and distinctive features.

The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program. The program does this by providing evidence in the ways described below.

**4.1 Curriculum**
TEAC’s *Quality Principle I* sets out the required components of the curriculum (1.1–1.3). In addition, TEAC has three standards for the professional curriculum’s capacity for quality:

4.1.1 Reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit-hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I*. An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).

4.1.2 Meets the state’s program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.

4.1.3 Does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution’s overall standards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

**4.2 Faculty**
TEAC requires evidence of oversight and coordination of the curriculum of the professional teacher education program. The entity responsible for the program may be an administrative department, school, program, center, institute, or faculty group. It may be as large as the entire college or university or as small as a committee of faculty and staff who have direct authority and responsibility for those aspects of the program that pertain to TEAC’s quality principles. Because of the variety of structures among institutions, TEAC uses the term *faculty* to represent this entity.

TEAC’s standard for the quality of the program faculty is the presence of the following attributes in the faculty:

4.2.1 The program faculty members must approve the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and accept the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators as the goal for their program.

4.2.2 The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must demonstrate the faculty’s accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.

4.2.3 The program faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, contributions to the field, and professional experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors stated above.
4.2.4 The program faculty’s qualifications must be equal to or better than those of the faculty across the institution as a whole: e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity (see also 4.4.4).

4.3 Facilities, equipment, and supplies
The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program as follows.

4.3.1 The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in student learning as required by Quality Principle I.

4.3.2 The program must have an adequate quality control system to monitor and improve the suitability and appropriateness of program facilities, supplies, and equipment.

4.3.3 The facilities, equipment, and supplies that the institution allocates to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall institutional resources and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program. The program students, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies.

4.4 Fiscal and administrative
The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators, as indicated by the following:

4.4.1 The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, and the institution must be financially viable.

4.4.2 The program must demonstrate an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. The program faculty’s workload obligations must be commensurate with those the institution as a whole expects in hiring, promotion, tenure, and other employment contracts.

4.4.3 The program must have a sufficient quality monitoring and control system to ensure that the program has adequate financial and administrative resources.

4.4.4 The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in student learning as required by Quality Principle I.

4.5 Student support services
The program must make available to students regular and sufficient services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

4.5.1 Services available to students in the program must be sufficient to support their success in learning (Quality Principle I) and successful completion of the program.

4.5.2 The program must monitor the quality of the student support services to ensure that they contribute to student success in learning (Quality Principle I).

4.5.3 Support services available to students in the program must, at a minimum, be equal to the level of student support services provided by the institution as a whole.

4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising
The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog, or other appropriate documents distrib-

6 In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that students have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.
uted to students, information that fairly and accurately describes the program, policies, and procedures directly affecting admitted students in the program; charges and refund policies; grading policies; and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

As part of its audit, TEAC examines the program catalog, Web pages, or other descriptive publications (including those that contain the program’s academic calendar, a list of faculty teaching in the program, and a description of the program’s history and guiding philosophy) to ensure that they are both accurate and consistent with the claims made in the Brief.

4.6.1 Admissions and mentoring policies must encourage the recruitment and retention of diverse students with demonstrated potential as professional educators, and must respond to the nation’s need for qualified individuals to serve in high-demand areas and locations.

4.6.2 The program or institution must distribute an academic calendar to students. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods.

4.6.3 Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, claims made about the program that appear in the institution’s catalog, mission statements, and other promotional literature.

4.6.4 The program must have a fair, equitable, and published grading policy. (This policy may also be the institution’s grading policy.)

4.7 Student feedback
The quality of a program depends upon its ability to meet the needs of its students. One effective way to determine if those needs are met is to encourage students to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of student feedback about the program and responds to student views and complaints.

4.7.1 The institution is required to keep a file of student feedback and complaints about the program’s quality, and the program’s response. The program must provide TEAC with access to those records, including resolution of student grievances.

4.7.2 Complaints from students about the program’s quality must be proportionally no greater or more significant than complaints made by students in the institution’s other programs.

State standards
When appropriate because of TEAC’s protocol agreement with a state, an eighth component to the TEAC capacity standards (4.8) is added, with sub-components (4.8.1, etc.) in accordance to the state’s particular requirements.

Nonspecific concerns
If the Brief contains inaccuracies that are not clearly related to any feature of the TEAC accreditation framework, but which nevertheless speak to the overall reliability and trustworthiness of the Brief, the auditors will list them as nonspecific concerns about the accuracy of the Brief, and the tasks that probe these concerns will be counted in the overall audit opinion.
Faculty members seeking TEAC accreditation for their programs in educational leadership must affirm that their goal is to prepare "competent, caring, and qualified" leaders for the schools. It is the program that is accredited by TEAC, not an administrative unit of the institution.

Along with the standards for capacity (4.0) described above, TEAC’s three quality principles for educational leadership are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its goal was achieved.

1.0 Quality Principle I

Evidence of candidate learning

The core of TEAC accreditation is the quality of the evidence that the program faculty members provide in support of their claims about their students’ learning and understanding of the professional education curriculum.

TEAC requires that the educational leadership faculty members address the following components of their program in ways that also indicate that they have an accurate and balanced understanding of the academic disciplines that are connected to the program:

1.1 Professional knowledge

While no one doubts that teachers must understand the subject matters they hope to teach, there is less agreement about what specific disciplines educational leaders must study. There is universal consensus, however, that whatever particular topics are studied, they should be sufficient to ensure that districts and schools are led in an ethical manner and succeed in their primary mission of having all students acquire an education that meets national and state curriculum and instructional standards.

Programs in educational leadership are at the graduate level and include an amalgam of the consensus literature in the following subjects: organizational theory and development; human resource management; school finance and law; instructional supervision; educational policy and politics; and data analysis and interpretation.

The program faculty must provide evidence that its candidates understand these subjects and that the program equips its graduates with sufficient knowledge so that they would be able to undertake a number of important tasks in the schools they hope to lead. The graduates must be prepared to create or develop (1) an ethical and productive school culture; (2) an effective instructional program, comprehensive professional staff development plans; (3) a safe and efficient learning environment; (4) a profitable collaboration with families and other community members; (5) the capacity to serve diverse community interests and needs; and (6) the ability to mobilize the community’s resources in support of the school’s goals.

1.2 Strategic decision making

The primary obligation of school leaders is to maintain and enhance an organization that meets the educational needs of the full range of the school’s students and to create an environment in which the district’s and school’s curriculum can be readily learned and understood by all the school’s students. To this end, TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learn how to (1) make decisions fairly and collaboratively, and do so informed by the relevant research and evidence; (2) formulate strategy to achieve the school’s goals; and (3) articulate and communicate an educational
vision that is consistent with the school’s mission and the nation’s democratic ideals.

1.3 Caring leadership skills
Above all, educational leaders are expected to lead by acting on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for all the school’s pupils.

*Caring* is a particular kind of relationship between the leader and the staff and students that is defined by the leader’s unconditional acceptance of the staff and students, the leader’s intention to address the staff’s and student’s professional and educational needs, the leader’s competence to meet those needs, and also by the students’ and staff’s recognition that the leader cares.8

Although it recognizes that the available measures of caring are not as well developed as other measures of candidate performance, TEAC requires evidence that the program’s graduates are caring.

Cross-cutting themes
The liberal arts are often neglected in educational leadership programs, but because they cut across the program, the faculty must also provide evidence about them, as they would for any other aspects of their case for professional knowledge, strategic decision-making, and caring leadership skill.

Educational leaders are expected to be well-informed persons, and the program should provide evidence that the candidates know and understand subject matters that are expected of educated persons. These include the oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking, and the qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills that foster independent learning. They also include knowledge of other perspectives and cultures and the modern technological tools of scholarship and administration.

*Learning how to learn.* There is a set of intellectual skills, tools, and ideas that enable leaders to learn on their own. The program’s graduates must know how to acquire those other parts of the field that could not be taught in the program, but which the graduates will nevertheless be expected to know and use at some later time.

The whole of the professional knowledge base cannot be covered in the curriculum, some of what is covered may not be true or useful later, and some of what will be needed later would not have been known at the time of the degree program. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learned how to learn important information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new contexts, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills for lifelong learning in their field.

*Multicultural perspectives and understanding.* The liberal arts include knowledge of other cultural perspectives, practices, and traditions. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the degree (or certificate program) understand the implications of confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives for educational practice.9

*Technology.* Increasingly, the tools of a liberal arts education include technology, and candidates should know the technologies that enhance the work of leaders and staff and the students’ learning.10 TEAC requires evidence that graduates have acquired the basic productivity tools of the profession.

Technology, learning to learn, multicultural perspectives are essential parts of the leader’s professional knowledge and skill. It makes little sense to claim that candidates understand how to organize the school’s schedule, for example, if they do not also know and understand (1) the technological dimensions of scheduling; (2) the implications of the scheduling options for different cultural groups; (3) how to fill in the gaps in their knowledge of scheduling and apply what they

---


9 For example, the range of literary genre is extended profitably beyond fiction, poetry, and drama to include journals, diaries, and letters when the literary work of women is seriously considered. The discipline of psychology turns out to be very different from what is presented in the standard introductory textbook when it is qualified by the contributions of black psychologists, as Robert Guthrie observed. [Guthrie, R. (1976). *Even the rat was white.* New York: Harper & Row].

10 Grade book computer programs, databases, spreadsheets, word processors, electronic mail, bulletin boards and networked conferences, Internet access, interactive videocodics, and instructional software are now part of the modern teacher’s repertoire.
have learned in their program to new situations; and (4) how the schedule fits with the rest of the school’s purpose, values, mission, and so forth.

The case that the program’s graduates have sufficient professional knowledge, for example, of assessment, would include evidence that they know how to (1) solve assessment problems they were not directly taught (e.g., NCLB disaggregation); (2) learn new areas of assessment (e.g., value-added assessment); (3) evaluate the implications of other cultural practices on assessment (e.g., cheating or face-saving); and (4) use computer programs appropriately in implementing school-wide assessments.

Leaders cannot be said to have acquired leadership skill at the level TEAC envisions if, when they communicate with their faculty, for example, they (1) fail to employ the teaching technologies that are available because they do not understand them; (2) fail to make their point to all the staff because of their lack of knowledge of individual and cultural differences; (3) are unconvincing because they fail to develop professionally on their own or do not know how to apply what they have learned to novel situations.

And they cannot be said to have acquired leadership skill at a sufficient level if they do not know how to distinguish essential educational issues from the peripheral, ethical administrative practices from the unethical ones, knowledge from opinion, administrative prerogative from effective delegation, and the unique leadership responsibilities of schooling in a democratic society from schooling in a non-democratic one.

---

2.0 Quality Principle II

Valid assessment of leader learning

TEAC expects program faculty to provide a rationale that shows that the assessment techniques it uses are reasonable and credible. However the program faculty members assess what their candidates have learned, TEAC requires the program to provide evidence that the inferences made from the assessment system meet the accepted research standards for reliability and validity.

This means that faculty members must rule out competing and rival inferences for their evidence of candidate learning, and establish a point at which the evidence for their inference is sufficient, clear, and consistent, and below which the evidence for their inference is insufficient or inconsistent. To do this, the faculty needs to undertake inquiry on the following two aspects of the assessment of candidate learning.

2.1 Rationale for the links

TEAC requires that the faculty members have a rationale for its assessments that shows that the links between assessments and (1) the program goal, (2) the faculty claims made about candidate learning, and (3) the program’s features\(^\text{11}\) are reasonable and credible.

The faculty members who claim, for example, that their program prepares instructional leaders would need to make a case that their ways of assessing instructional leadership are reasonable and logical; they would need to explain how their assessments are related conceptually to the program requirements and to their claims about what the candidates know, and why the inferences they make about the graduates are credible.

Before the faculty members conclude that their assessments show that the graduates learn how to be instructional leaders, they would need to rule out that their graduates had merely memorized or parroted their instructional leadership responses; endorsed administrative practices that thwarted pupil learning; or failed to anticipate the unintended negative consequences of an otherwise acceptable administrative decision.

2.2 Evidence of valid assessment

The faculty must satisfy itself and TEAC that its rationale and the inferences from its assessments are also empirically credible and supported with local evidence about the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the assessment method the faculty employed.

\(^{11}\) One of these features must be an internship in a school setting during which the candidate has the opportunity to apply the knowledge and to practice and develop the skills assigned to Quality Principle I to a convincing level of proficiency.
3.0 Quality Principle III

Institutional learning

TEAC expects that a faculty’s decisions about its programs are based on evidence, and that the program has a quality control system that (1) yields reliable evidence about the program’s practices and results, and (2) influences policies and decision making.

Quality Principle III is about the system of inquiry, review, and quality control by which the faculty secures the evidence and informed opinion needed to initiate or improve program quality. TEAC expects that the faculty will systematically and continuously improve the quality of its educational leadership program and provide evidence about the following.

3.1 Program decisions and planning based on evidence

TEAC requires evidence that the information derived from faculty’s quality control monitoring and inquiry has a role in the improvement of the program. Quality control entails an investigation of any local factors that are associated with, and implicated in, candidate learning and assessment of that learning.

3.2 Influential quality control system

The faculty’s quality control system must examine and evaluate the components of the program’s capacity for quality, including its curriculum, candidates, faculty expertise, program and course requirements, and facilities. TEAC requires evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program’s faculty, that the system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the program’s continual improvement, and that it yields evidence that supports the first and second quality principles.

Although any number of factors and components of the program may affect program quality, TEAC does require the program faculty to address at least seven components, most of which seem to have a plausible association with candidate learning and program quality. These seven dimensions are based upon the U.S. Department of Education’s requirement that any accreditor recognized by the Secretary as a reliable gatekeeper for federal funding must have standards for seven dimensions of program capacity: curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

4.0 Standards of Capacity for Program Quality

TEAC defines a quality program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies the three quality principles. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty to provide evidence that it has the capacity—curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies—to support student learning and program quality. This evidence should be independent of student learning and based on some traditional input features of capacity. (See the full description of the standards for capacity above, under teacher education.)

The program faculty can make the case that it has sufficient capacity for quality in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence; however, TEAC requires that the faculty cover the following basic three points in making its case.

Quality control

The faculty must show that it monitors systematically the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, candidate support services, publications, and that the system is sensitive and responds to candidate comment and complaint. This is just another way of saying that the faculty adheres to Quality Principle III.

Evidence of commitment

The faculty must also show evidence that the institution is committed to the program. Commitment is most conveniently seen in the evidence of parity of the program with the institution. The program must at least have the normative capacity of the institution’s academic programs with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, candidate support services, publications, and features it shares with the institution’s other programs.
Unique capacity
The faculty must also monitor whatever unique capacity is needed for program quality (e.g., an administrative internship). Because the field has no firm consensus about any standard for unique capacity other than it be sufficient to insure that the program’s graduates are competent, caring, and qualified, these capacity standards are inevitably a matter for further inquiry and hypothesis testing.

TEAC and state standards
TEAC’s principles and standards are compatible with the standards promulgated by many states and professional educational organizations, for example, the six standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the seven standards of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). The program faculty members are free to adopt these standards and to organize the Brief around them, as they are an equivalent and permissible way to satisfy the content of Quality Principle I.
PART THREE: THE INQUIRY BRIEF AND INQUIRY BRIEF PROPOSAL

Overview ................................................................. 27

Content ......................................................................... 28
  The Inquiry Brief .................................................. 28
  The Inquiry Brief Proposal ...................................... 29

Required elements ..................................................... 30

Format ........................................................................... 32

Evaluation ..................................................................... 33

Guidelines for producing the Brief ............................... 35
Overview

In the TEAC accreditation process, the program’s self-study document is either an *Inquiry Brief* (for those pursuing accreditation) or an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (for those pursuing preaccreditation or new program accreditation). TEAC accredits a program on the basis of its evidence that it produces graduates who are competent, caring, and qualified educators, and that the program has the capacity to offer quality. The program presents this evidence in the *Brief*.

The whole point of the TEAC accreditation process is to test the claims that the program faculty makes in its *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. TEAC verifies the evidence presented in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and evaluates whether or not the evidence supports the program’s claim that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified educators. The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it are the two key factors in the TEAC accreditation decision.

The *Brief* is in essence a research monograph (or, in the case of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, a plan for such a monograph), and should be focused on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program’s performance. It should run about 50 pages, and it should be based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accreditation reports, institutional research, and other publications.

The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* should be meaningful to the program and contain information necessary to properly and responsibly administer and improve the program. It should be brief, and it should be about inquiry. Producing the *Brief* should be a seamless part of the program faculty’s normal, collective activity to improve the program.

The program faculty members should work together to produce the *Brief*. All faculty members of the programs represented in the *Brief* should contribute to the process, and TEAC requires that all faculty members in the program review and approve the final *Brief* before it is submitted for audit.

TEAC reviews drafts of the *Brief* and works with the program faculty, providing feedback and guidance, until the *Brief* is accepted for audit.

The time it takes a program faculty to prepare a *Brief* varies, depending on local circumstances, such a program structure, available documentation, state context, and the institution’s commitment to the process. Generally, it takes the same amount of time as needed to produce a solid research article.

To produce the *Brief*, TEAC recommends that program faculty follow the steps described at the end of this section. In doing so, the faculty members will develop a comprehensive understanding of their program necessary to writing the *Brief*. They will also be well prepared for the audit.
Content of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

The *Inquiry Brief*

To be accredited, an eligible program submits a research monograph, called an *Inquiry Brief*, in which the faculty and administrators present the evidence supporting their claim that their program satisfies TEAC’s three quality principles and standards for capacity:

- Evidence of their students’ learning
- Evidence that their assessment of student learning is valid
- Evidence that the program’s continuous improvement and quality control are based on information about its students’ learning
- Evidence of the program’s capacity for quality

Through the *Inquiry Brief*, the program faculty members present qualitative or quantitative evidence that their graduates are competent, qualified, and caring and that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program.

The program faculty members document the evidence they possess about what their graduates have learned, the validity of their assessment of that learning, and the basis on which the program faculty makes its decisions to improve its program. To do this, the faculty members must show that they have a valid method for determining what their students have learned and accomplished. Then they must show that their students have learned the subject matter they will teach, the pedagogical subject matters of the field of education, and, most important, that their students can teach effectively.

The faculty members must also show that they use what they learn about their students’ learning to both improve the program and the system they have in place for monitoring and ensuring the quality of the program. Finally, they must show that they have plans to undertake a systematic inquiry into the factors that affect the quality of the program and their students’ accomplishments.

The *Inquiry Brief* focuses on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program’s performance. It includes the claims a faculty makes about its graduates’ knowledge and skill, a rationale for assessments of those claims, a description of the psychometric properties of the evidence that is presented to support the claims, the findings related to the claims, and a discussion of what the evidence means and what has been learned from it. In addition, the *Inquiry Brief* reports on the faculty’s efforts to evaluate the rigor of its own quality control system and the adequacy of the program’s capacity to offer a quality program.

The *Inquiry Brief* is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accrediting and state review reports, and institutional research and publications. It contains only information and analysis relevant to the case that the program prepares competent, caring, and qualified professionals. The *Inquiry Brief* is the length of a research monograph, about 50 pages.
The Inquiry Brief Proposal

Faculty members representing new programs or programs that are in the process of collecting evidence for their claims may submit for preaccreditation an Inquiry Brief Proposal, in which they propose the method by which they will find the evidence that will show that their graduates are competent, qualified, and caring, and that the program meets TEAC’s three quality principles and standards for capacity.

The Inquiry Brief Proposal is appropriate for new programs or programs that have been significantly revised in recent years. The program faculty does not yet have sufficient evidence for its claims of student learning but has evidence of its capacity for program quality. The program also has evidence of a sound quality control system, evidence that the institution is committed to the program, and a plan and rationale for acquiring evidence over time to support its claims.

The Inquiry Brief Proposal is a research proposal, a scholarly work like a grant or dissertation proposal, in which the program faculty proposes the method by which it will find evidence (qualitative, quantitative, or both) to demonstrate that the program’s graduates are competent, qualified, and caring. The program faculty demonstrates that it has a reasonable basis for thinking (1) that the program’s students have learned the subject matters they will teach; (2) that the students have solid pedagogical knowledge; and (3) that the students can teach effectively. In addition, the program faculty demonstrates that the methods proposed for determining what the students have learned and accomplished are credible.

The faculty members also show how they will use what they learn about their students’ learning to improve both the program and the system they have in place for monitoring and ensuring the quality of the program. In addition, they present their plans to undertake a systematic inquiry into the factors that affect the quality of the program and their students’ accomplishments. They also provide evidence that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program.

The Inquiry Brief Proposal is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accrediting and state review reports, and institutional research and publications. It contains only information and analysis relevant to the case that the program will be able to bring forward evidence that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified professionals. The Inquiry Brief Proposal is about 50 pages.
**Required elements of the Brief**

As described below, TEAC makes three requirements for the *Brief*.

1. **Verifiable authorship and faculty endorsement**

The authors of the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must provide their names and roles in the institution and must identify themselves as having taken responsibility for the document.

In addition, the entire program faculty must formally endorse the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. Typically this is done in a footnote stating that the *Brief* was presented to, discussed, and approved by the faculty, and the date on which this occurred.

2. **Brevity and linguistic precision**

TEAC also requires that the *Brief*’s authors strive for brevity and linguistic precision:

- **Brevity** means using no more words than necessary to make the point. The *Brief*, as its name implies, is *brief* and is about *inquiry*. It should be no longer than 50 pages.

- **Precise language**. Producing an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* calls for a kind of writing that is different from the usual self-study or program approval document. The language of the *Brief* must be precise and clear.

**Why does precise language matter to TEAC?** TEAC requires clear and precise language because of the kinds of claims and supporting evidence that TEAC asks of its candidates for accreditation. The program faculty’s claims and the measures used to support them should be very specific. Vague, ambiguous, imprecise language obscures the goals and accomplishments of the program.

Checking the precision of the language and evidence is a key task in TEAC’s formative evaluation and the audit of the *Brief*. TEAC staff and auditors focus on language and precision in order to determine the degree to which the *Brief* means exactly what the program faculty intends. To verify the statements in the *Brief*, the auditors must be able to determine precisely what the authors meant; imprecise language complicates the verification process.

3. **Seven required components**

TEAC requires that the *Brief* include the following seven components (see following page):
1. Program overview
Overall logic: guiding philosophy and orientation of the program
Program areas, levels, specialties, options
Brief history of the program
Program demographics
  Table of enrollment trends, numbers and types of students, numbers of faculty and types, etc.

2. Claims and Rationale
Claims
Statement of the claims (consistent with all relevant claims in the program’s literature)
Arguments to support the links between the claims and components of Quality Principle I:
  1.1 Subject matter
  1.2 Pedagogy
  1.3 Teaching skill
Cross-cutting themes: learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, technology included in each
Rationale for the assessments:
Rationale for the assessments, justifying that they are reasonably and credibly linked to goals, claims, and program requirements

3. Method
Assessments used for the evidence
Detailed description of the assessments
Criteria for achievement or success
Published information about the reliability and validity of the assessments
Arguments for the content validity of the assessments
Sampling procedure and procurement of evidence

4. Results
Results of the investigation into the reliability and validity of the assessments
  Evidence of stability and consistency of the measures
  Evidence of relationship, convergence, triangulation with other measures or evidence
Results of the assessments
  Presentation of the findings: issues
  Significant digits
  Range of the instrument and variance
  Disaggregation
  Accurate table headings
  Sensitivity to insignificant differences
  Full disclosure of available evidence (all of the program’s cited evidence)

5. Discussion and Plan
Discussion
Meaning of the results: Were the claims supported?
Implications of the results for the program’s design

Plan
Steps to be taken: modifications to the program, quality control system (QCS), new investigations based on the results and evidence of student learning

6. References
A list of any works cited in the Brief.

7. Appendices
Appendix A: Internal audit report
Introduction: Auditors; faculty approval
Description: Schematic and mechanisms of QCS
Procedure: Audit plan and trail
Findings: Discoveries about 4.1–4.7
Conclusions: How well does QCS work?
Discussion: Needed modifications in QCS or future audit procedures

Appendix B: Capacity
Evidence that the quality control system monitors and promotes the quality of 4.1–4.7
Evidence that the program is supported on a par with other programs at the institution
Evidence that the program’s capacity is sufficient and adequate to satisfy 4.1.1–4.7.2

Appendix C: Qualifications of the faculty (table or chart)
Current academic rank and title
Terminal degree, institution, field, and date
Number of years of service
Scholarly publications (number, type)
Assigned courses in the program
Awards, public school teaching, boards

Appendix D: Program requirements (aggregation)
Admissions requirements
Course requirements and standards
Course titles and descriptions
Program standards and requirements
Graduation requirements
State license requirements

Appendix E: Full disclosure of all relevant and available evidence (including any evidence cited elsewhere in support of, or about, the program)
Grades
Standardized tests (entrance, exit, and license) about the graduates or the graduates’ own students
Surveys of students, alumni, employers
Ratings of portfolios, work samples, cases
Basis for rates: hiring/promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc.
Reasons for neglecting or rejecting certain categories of evidence
Plan for inclusion of new categories of evidence in a subsequent Inquiry Brief.
Format

Recommended format for the Inquiry Brief and Inquiry Brief Proposal

Within the TEAC system there is always considerable latitude in how the program faculty will make its case and what kinds of quantitative and qualitative evidence it will bring forth to support the case that it has fulfilled the requirements of TEAC’s system of accreditation.

However, as long as the Brief has verifiable authorship and program approval, is concise and linguistically precise, and contains the required components, a program faculty may use any format that allows it to best make its case: an essay with sections corresponding to each of TEAC’s quality principles and standards, a standard research article in conventional sections, or a comprehensive internal audit report that addresses the three TEAC quality principles and the standards for capacity. Program faculty members might present a qualitative case study about their students’ accomplishments and the program’s role in fostering them. TEAC staff hopes that whatever the format, writing the Brief serves the program’s needs apart from TEAC accreditation.

TEAC does not require a particular citation style for the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal, but because the document is a research monograph, TEAC recommends the elements of style required by the American Psychological Association and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) for journal articles and monographs.

Sample format. Program faculty may choose to organize the Brief by simply building on TEAC’s seven required components. This format allows the program faculty to efficiently and effectively document the program’s quality:

1. Program overview
2. Claims and rationale for the assessments
3. Method of assessing
4. Results
5. Discussion of results
6. References
7. Appendices
   A. Internal audit of quality control system
   B. Capacity standards
   C. Qualifications of the program faculty
   D. Program requirements
   E. Inventory: disclosure of available measures used or declined
TEAC’s evaluation of the Brief

TEAC evaluates the Brief in five steps: formative evaluation, auditability decision, audit, summative evaluation, and accreditation decision. Each step is based on a set of questions.

1. Formative evaluation

Is the program making a clear case for itself? Does the Brief include all the required elements? Is the language clear and precise? TEAC believes that evidence of ongoing program improvement is an essential element of quality assurance. For example, TEAC requires all programs with accreditation status to submit annual reports that include the results of an internal audit and discussion of plans to improve or make necessary changes.

The process of developing the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal embodies the idea of continuous improvement. TEAC sees the Brief as a living document, so to speak, and consequently expects frequent consultation between the program faculty and TEAC about the Brief, particularly about effective approaches to substantiating the claims the program faculty makes. The TEAC staff sees its role as assisting the program faculty in making the best case possible that is consistent with the evidence the faculty has about its students’ accomplishments and related claims. For this reason, TEAC reviews draft Briefs and provides feedback and guidance (see steps 2 and 3 of the TEAC accreditation process, inside front cover).

A key task of the TEAC staff’s formative evaluation of the Inquiry Brief is checking the precision of the language and evidence. It is important that the language in the Brief, particularly the language of the rationale and the quality control system, means exactly what it seems to.

See Appendix 1 for a sample of the checklist the formative evaluators use in reviewing drafts.

2. Auditability decision

Is the Brief complete and ready to be audited? When both the program faculty and TEAC staff are satisfied that the program has made the best case possible, the program faculty submits a final draft of the Brief, complete with a covering checklist (Appendix 1). TEAC staff completes a similar checklist that certifies that the Brief contains all the features required for an audit. This certification is a simple precaution and raises the probability that the audit will have a satisfactory outcome for the program and TEAC. Only then is the audit scheduled.

See audit schedule, Part One and Appendix 1.

3. Audit

Is the evidence in the Brief trustworthy? Through the audit, TEAC verifies the data behind the claims the faculty makes in the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal.

The auditors determine whether or not the evidence in the Brief is trustworthy. To do so, the auditors need access to the raw data of the Brief. The faculty should be prepared to show the TEAC auditors the data that are portrayed in the Brief. Because the TEAC auditors will try to verify as much of the Brief as can be practically managed from the TEAC’s offices, the faculty may be asked to send the supporting source data to TEAC before the audit. By its very nature, a substantial portion of the audit, however, must be conducted on site.

Audit of the Inquiry Brief

The main purpose of the audit of an Inquiry Brief is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims that the program meets TEAC’s three quality principles and seven capacity standards. The auditors select samples of evidence that they predict will reveal and represent the totality
of the evidence the program faculty has presented in the Inquiry Brief. The auditors are free to search for additional evidence in the process of the audit and these discoveries may support, strengthen, or weaken the verification of the evidence behind the program faculty’s claims with regard to the quality principles and the capacity standards.

Audit of the Inquiry Brief Proposal
The main purpose of the audit of an Inquiry Brief Proposal is to verify the text and evidence the program faculty members have cited with respect to the rationale, Quality Principle III, and the evidence of institutional commitment to the program and the other requirements of 4.1–4.7. As with the audit of the Inquiry Brief, the auditors select samples of evidence that they predict will reveal and represent the totality of the evidence the program faculty have presented in the Inquiry Brief Proposal. In the process of the audit, the auditors are free to search for additional evidence; these discoveries may support, strengthen, or weaken the verification of the evidence, or proposed evidence, for the program faculty’s claims that the program meets TEAC’s quality principles and the capacity standards.

See a full account of the TEAC audit in Part Six.

4. Summative evaluation
Are the evidence and the arguments in the Brief sufficient to support the program’s claims that it meets TEAC’s quality principles and standards? Are the program’s graduates competent, caring, and qualified? Is the evidence reliable, valid, and sufficient?

TEAC’s Accreditation Panel then determines if the evidence, as verified by the audit, is of sufficient magnitude to support the claims in the Brief, and if it is valid and reliable. On the basis of its examination, the panel recommends an accreditation decision to the Accreditation Committee.

See Part Seven for a complete description of the Accreditation Panel’s process.

5. Accreditation decision
Should the Accreditation Panel’s recommendation be accepted? Was the TEAC process that ended in the panel’s recommendation followed properly?

TEAC’s Accreditation Committee makes the TEAC accreditation determination after a systematic evaluation of the panel’s recommendations and the process that led up to it.

See chart in Part One or Appendix 1, describing the categories and terms of TEAC accreditation. See Part Seven for a full description of the panel and committee’s processes.

In their deliberations, the panel and committee are guided by a set of heuristics for the accreditation decision. These heuristics, described in detail in Part Seven of this guide, are the same for both the Inquiry Brief Proposal and the Inquiry Brief with regard to the rationale (2.1), Quality Principle III (3.1 and 3.2), and the evidence of commitment and capacity (4.1–4.7).
Guidelines for producing the Brief

The program faculty should produce the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal together. All faculty members of the programs represented in the Brief should contribute to the process, and they are required to approve the final Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal before it is submitted to TEAC for audit.

TEAC’s members participate in a formative evaluation process by submitting drafts of the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal for feedback and guidance. TEAC staff works with the Brief’s authors until the Brief is accepted for audit. TEAC also offers workshops on developing the Brief; TEAC recommends that at least two members of a program pursuing TEAC accreditation attend a workshop. (TEAC members receive regular announcements of upcoming workshops; the information is also available on TEAC’s Web site, www.teac.org.)

The time it takes a program faculty to prepare an Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal varies, depending on local circumstances such as program structure, available documentation, state context, and the institution’s commitment to the process.

Producing the Brief

TEAC recommends that program faculty follow these steps to produce the Brief:

Review
TEAC recommends that the program faculty first take the time to fully understanding the TEAC process of accreditation, the quality principles and standards for capacity, and the required components of the Brief.

Gather information
We urge that program faculty next invest time in examining the program thoroughly. We suggest that the program faculty gather and review all required information about the program, specifically—and in this order, from least to most complex—the information that will eventually appear in the program overview, the program requirements (Appendix D), the faculty qualifications (Appendix C), and the program’s capacity (Appendix B). It would be appropriate to draft these appendices at this time.

Inventory available measures
Continuing the examination of the program, the program faculty should make an inventory of all available evidence to the program (Appendix E), noting what evidence the program relies on, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future. The faculty should also assemble the assessments it uses to gather evidence.

Conduct an internal audit
Next, the program faculty should describe its quality control system, conduct an internal audit, and draft an internal audit report (Appendix A).

Take stock
TEAC suggests that the program faculty meet together to review what they have learned about their program.

Formulate claims
Draft a set of statements to describe how the program meets TEAC’s Quality Principle I (graduates know their subject matter, have pedagogical knowledge, and have teaching skills).

Draft the Brief
Assemble a draft Brief. Review the draft, using the two checklists (in Appendix 1 of this guide) for programs and formative evaluators. Submit drafts to TEAC for review.

Taking the time to do this work will yield a comprehensive, detailed picture of the program, its outcomes, and its resources. The program faculty members will then be ready to develop their case that the program meets TEAC’s three quality principles and standards for capacity. In the process, they will also have assembled the original documents needed for writing the Brief and for the TEAC audit.
**TEAC's recommended process for preparing the Brief**

Working together, program colleagues should follow these seven steps to produce the Brief:

1. **Review**
   - TEAC’s principles and standards*
   - State standards, as appropriate for programs in states with agreements with TEAC
   - TEAC’s accreditation process*
   - TEAC’s requirements for content of the Brief*
   - Sample Briefs and audit documents**

*In this volume, and also at www.teac.org. **Available at workshops or by request

2. **Gather information**
   - Program overview
   - Program requirements (Appendix D)
   - Program faculty qualifications (Appendix C)
   - Program capacity (Appendix B)

3. **Inventory available measures**
   - Inventory the program’s available evidence, noting what the faculty relies on, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future (Appendix E*)
   - Assemble a list of the program’s assessments and explain how and why the program uses them

*Inventory form is in this volume and also at www.teac.org

4. **Conduct an internal audit**
   - Describe the program’s quality control system and conduct an internal audit
   - Draft the internal audit report (Appendix A)

5. **Take stock**
   - Review assembled material, study the results of the assessments, and formulate the program’s interpretation of the meaning of the results of the assessments

6. **Formulate claims or use state/national standards, as appropriate**
   - Align claims and evidence
   - Check against public claims

7. **Draft Brief**
   - Compare drafts against checklists for program and formative evaluators*
   - Submit drafts to TEAC for review and comment

* In this volume (Appendix 1) and also at www.teac.org
PART FOUR: THE INQUIRY BRIEF

Section 1. Program overview .................................................. 37
Section 2. Claims and rationale for the assessments ...................... 38
Section 3. Method of assessment .............................................. 45
Section 4. Results ................................................................. 50
Section 5. Discussion of results ............................................... 51
Section 6. References ............................................................ 52
Section 7. Appendices ............................................................ 53
   Appendix A. Internal audit of quality control system ................. 54
   Appendix B. Capacity standards ....................................... 61
   Appendix C. Qualifications of the program faculty .................. 64
   Appendix D. Program requirements .................................. 64
   Appendix E. Inventory of evidence .................................... 65
PART FOUR: THE INQUIRY BRIEF
See Part Three for an overview of the Inquiry Brief, the required elements, recommended format, and TEAC’s evaluation of the Brief. See also in Part Three a plan for producing the Brief.

Section 1: Program overview

Section 1 of the Brief, the program overview, provides a brief context and a snapshot of the program. No more than two or three pages, it is an advance organizer for the Inquiry Brief and alerts the reader about what can be expected in the document.

The program overview includes the program’s age, general history, and distinguishing features; summary of requirements (elaborated in Appendix D of the Brief); a table of some straightforward demographics about the institution and the program (e.g., number of students, graduates, number of program faculty); the program’s place in the institution.

The program overview should also describe succinctly the train of reasoning behind the program: what theories, literature, thinkers, arguments, experiences, or traditions the faculty members rely on to support their beliefs about the program. In addition, the program overview might portray how the local market and political contexts have shaped the program.

The program overview to the Inquiry Brief should include the following items:

- General history of the program and the place of the program in the institution
- Program areas, levels, specialties, and options
- Distinguishing features of the program
- Requirements for admission; for graduation
- Demographics associated with the students in the program, such as admissions, graduates, SAT/ACT scores, diversity indicators, and the like
- Description (and numbers) of program faculty
- An explanation of the logic of the program
- Outline of the Brief as a whole, including the programs presented in the Brief
- Statements that faculty accepts the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators; and has read, discussed, and approved the Brief (and the date on which this occurred).
Section 2: Claims and rationale

The second section of the Inquiry Brief contains two related parts.

- In the first part, claims, the program faculty presents its claims about Quality Principle I (the program’s graduates are competent, caring, and qualified professional educators), including cross-cutting themes).
- In the second part, the program faculty provides a rationale for the assessments it uses to support its claims (Quality Principle II).

What are claims?
Claims are statements that a program faculty makes about the accomplishments of its students and graduates.

The faculty supports its claims with evidence. Through the audit, TEAC then verifies the evidence. Indeed, the whole point of the TEAC accreditation process is to test whether the program’s claims are supported with evidence.

In making its claims, the program faculty describes the professional characteristics of its graduates, addressing each of the three components of Quality Principle I (student learning: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skill) and the cross-cutting themes (learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, technology).

Note: Some claims may be written about students in the program while others may be written about graduates of the program. The latter is generally the better choice whenever possible because it is the graduates of the program about which TEAC and the public want to make inferences.

Claims and state and national standards
Many state agencies for teacher education and other professional educational organizations promulgate standards for teaching that require graduates to have mastered subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skills—the components of TEAC’s Quality Principle I. TEAC easily accommodates, for example, the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the ten principles of the In-
terstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the domains of Pathwise, formulated by the Educational Testing Service, or even the new standards of NCATE 2000.

Therefore, the program faculty members are free to claim that the program meets any national or state standards that are consistent with TEAC’s Quality Principle I. They are free to organize the Brief around these standards as an equivalent, and therefore permissible, way to define the content of Quality Principle I. The program faculty would simply show the alignment of the state or national standards with each component of TEAC’s Quality Principle I and explain that the evidence supports the claims that the program meets these standards. In other words, the Inquiry Brief would make the case that the program has verifiable and valid evidence that it meets state or national standards.

Formulating claims
It is important to write claims about Quality Principle I at an appropriate level of generality. To simply claim that All of our graduates are good teachers is worthy, but the claim may be too broad for the evidence behind it to be convincing. On the other hand, the particular evidence for the claim that All of our graduates know how to employ “wait time” in their lessons may itself be convincing, but trivial and therefore unconvincing with regard to the larger goals of the program.

It is best to pitch claims at the level the faculty believes is true of its program and its graduates, and at a level that is faithful to the manner in which the faculty represents the program and its graduates to the public and prospective students.

Formatting claims
Claims can be advanced as assertions (e.g., All of our graduates know their teaching subject matter. Our graduates have successfully completed an academic major in the subject and have passed the state licensing examination in the same subject).

Claims can also be advanced as questions in the same way that researchers advance their expectations and hunches as research questions. A program’s claim could read: Is it the case that the pupils of our graduates succeed on the state’s curriculum standards tests?

The Inquiry Brief is a research report that answers the faculty’s questions about the quality and effectiveness of its program. The question format, rather than the assertion format, gives emphasis to the inquiry process that is at the heart of the TEAC philosophy and embodied in Quality Principle III. However, both formats for claims are suitable, and within the same Inquiry Brief some claims about the program’s outcomes may be presented as assertions and others as questions.

Claims and evidence
As the program faculty members develop claims about their programs, they must ask themselves critical questions about evidence: What evidence do we have to support our claims? What quantitative or qualitative evidence do we have that makes us confident that our graduates are competent, caring, and qualified educators?

Kinds of claims and evidence
Some claims merely assert, or question, the status of the graduates: Do they know their subject matter? or Do they employ technology? Claims like these can be supported with evidence from the graduates alone and no other group needs to be examined.

Some claims assert a cause: The graduates know how to use technology because the program requires six credit hours of computer laboratories; or Does the academic major or minor we require ensure understanding of the graduate’s teaching subject? The evidence for claims of cause inevitably entails the examination of a group that did not participate in some way (e.g., did not take computer laboratories, did not take the major or minor). The evidence for the claim would include a comparison group.

Some claims may assert or question whether there was any value added by the program: Did the students grow in their understanding of technology over the course of the degree program? Did their knowledge of the subject matter improve over time? The answers to these kinds of questions require comparisons of the group with itself over the course of the program.
Being consistent with public claims
The program faculty should carefully review all public literature before beginning to develop its Inquiry Brief. It is important that the claims in the Brief are consistent with those made elsewhere to the public.

In the process of generating claims about Quality Principle I, the program faculty should examine the statements of the goals, objectives, promises, and standards published in the institution’s catalogs, brochures, state approval or registration reports, and Web sites describing the program’s projected outcomes. These public materials contain statements about what graduates of the program should know and be able to do. The claims in the Brief must be consistent with the program’s public claims. The faculty cannot make one set of claims for TEAC and a different set for other audiences.

One way to check these statements against the components of TEAC’s Quality Principle I would be to classify these published statements as statements about the program graduates’ knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy, or teaching skills (including learning to learn, technology, and multicultural perspectives). Some statements may fit more than one category, and some may not fit any category. Although the statements in the latter group may be important to the institution, because they do not fit any TEAC category, they need not have any further role in the TEAC accreditation process.

Generating claims: three steps
1. The process of generating the claims about Quality Principle I should begin with an examination of the statements of the goals, claims, objectives, promises, and standards published in the institution’s catalogs, brochures, state approval/registration reports, and Web sites describing the program’s projected outcomes.

2. If some component of Quality Principle I is not currently part of the program, or is not a component about which the faculty could make a claim, then the faculty members would need to take steps to modify the program, or their instructional emphasis, before they can submit an Inquiry Brief. Alternatively, the faculty might submit an Inquiry Brief Proposal (see Part Five) in which they would document, among other things, the steps they propose to take to modify their instructional program.

3. The program faculty should be able to identify at least two measures or categories of evidence associated with each claim.

Subsidiary claims throughout the Inquiry Brief
Throughout the Inquiry Brief, the faculty also makes subsidiary claims about other important matters, all ultimately supportive of the claims about Quality Principle I and student learning. These subsidiary claims concern, for example, the validity of the assessments, the effectiveness of the quality control system, and the capacity of the program for quality. They are claims in their own right, and like all claims, must be supported with evidence that is verified by audit and found to be sufficient by a panel of experts.

Meeting Quality Principle II requires that the faculty members make subsidiary claims about the validity of their interpretations of the evidence they use to substantiate their claims of student learning (Quality Principle I). Thus, each measure that the faculty employs entails a subsidiary claim that the measure is truly about what the students learned. Each claim of validity always carries with it the prior claim that the measure is reliable and dependable.

To meet Quality Principle III, the program faculty must also investigate the claim that its quality control system (QCS) is comprehensive, functions as it was designed, and that it improves the program’s quality by enhancing student learning. The faculty makes its case for this claim in the internal audit report, described in Appendix A of the Brief.

Finally, to address TEAC’s standard for capacity for quality, the program faculty members must make a...
claim that the program meets the seven components of the standard: curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

**Claims and causes**
The faculty’s case for *Quality Principle I* requires only evidence about the *status* of graduates, not how well they perform in comparison to some other group, or in comparison to how much less they knew at some earlier points in the program. The claims associated with *Quality Principle I*, in other words, need not be claims about the source of the graduates’ competence or how much it changed over the course of the program.

Claims about *cause* and *growth* are encouraged and expected in connection with *Quality Principle III*, however, as a way of demonstrating the ongoing inquiry of the program faculty. TEAC’s *Quality Principle III* requires the program faculty to be curious and conduct research into the factors associated with the effectiveness of its program.
**Rationale for the assessments**

The second part of section 2 of the *Inquiry Brief* establishes the credibility of the assessments the faculty uses in supporting each claim associated with *Quality Principle I*, student learning. This *rationale* section of the *Inquiry Brief* makes a persuasive argument that shows how the program’s assessment procedures measure

- the program’s goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified teachers;
- the program faculty’s claims about the accomplishments of the graduates with regard to *Quality Principle I*.

The rationale also shows how the assessment procedures reflect the features of the program (e.g., graduation requirements, admission criteria and procedures, coursework, field assignments, and experiences).

The program should describe its assessments in such a way that a reasonable person would conclude, *Yes, it makes sense that the measures selected are fitting, apt, and appropriate to test the claims. It makes sense, based on these measures, that the claims are (or could be expected to be) credible.*

The rationale would show how subject matter knowledge is connected to, for example, the completion of the major in the subject matter field, the individual course requirements, the grades given in the courses, the scores on standardized tests of the major field, pupil learning from the student teacher, a senior thesis, and the ratings of clinical supervisors.

The faculty members, in other words, explain why it is reasonable that they have chosen to support their claim that the teacher education candidates know their subject matter with such measures, for example, as grades in the major courses, scores on Praxis II, scores on the state curriculum tests, scores on the GRE subject matter test, grades on the senior thesis in the major, cogency of the candidates’ lesson plans in their subjects.

In sum, the rationale section explains why the faculty members think it is reasonable to use the particular measures of student learning they have selected. The rationale is implicitly revealed in the selection of the measures identified in Appendix E. The rationale section makes explicit the faculty’s reasons for the choices.

**EXAMPLE: A rationale for the assessment of subject matter knowledge**

The assessment (1) is tied to various program subject matter requirements, (2) has a basis and track record in the literature, (3) is empirically supported, (4) is practical and efficient, and (5) is otherwise a reasonable procedure for assessing subject matter knowledge.

In the rationale, the program faculty members give their reasons and their argument for using the measures they do. They address such questions as these:

*Why do we think this measure indicates subject matter knowledge?*

*How is this measure related to the teacher’s competence to teach the subject matter?*

*How does the measure align with the program requirements?*

*Why would anyone think the measure has anything to do with subject matter knowledge?*

*What are the limitations of the measure and what are its strengths?*

**Writing the rationale**

In the rationale, faculty members explain why they find it reasonable to believe that the results of the assessments they use (1) support their claims and (2) are credible and convincing. Building a case for credibility can be done step-by-step by considering each of the following three links:

1. **Assessment procedures and the program goal.** Is the link between the faculty’s assessments and the goal for the program credible and reasonable? The faculty’s assessments need to be linked conceptually, and empirically if possible, to the program goal that the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.
2. **Assessment procedures and claims.** This link in the rationale demonstrates how the assessment procedures are sensitive to the narrower claims that faculty may make about their graduates.

### EXAMPLE: **Assessment procedures and claims**

If a program claims that its graduates are constructivists, the faculty would address the question, *Why is it credible to believe that the measures employed by the faculty, for example, also measure constructivism?*

The faculty members would give their reasons for believing that they have at least assessed this specific goal of their program. They would give an operational definition for constructivism when they set out the argument for the link between the claim that their graduates are constructivists and their particular assessment or measure of constructivism.

### EXAMPLE: **Linking assessment procedures and the program goal**

If the program’s stated goal is to develop teachers who are reflective practitioners, the faculty’s task would be to write an argument that shows how being a reflective practitioner is connected to being competent, caring, and qualified.

The way the faculty assesses reflective practice should be shown to be plausibly, or authentically, connected to competence. This link is also an argument for the validity of the assessment—that it measures the graduates’ teaching competence.

3. **Assessment procedures and program requirements.** In the rationale, the program faculty also links the program requirements with the assessments that the faculty uses:

- *Are the requirements and the assessments aligned well?*

- *Are teacher candidates also assessed in terms of what they were actually taught in the program?*

### EXAMPLE: **Assessment procedures and program requirements**

Faculty members might argue, for example, that their graduates are competent because they have mastered their teaching subject, mathematics; that they have mastered their teaching subject because they have majored in the subject successfully; and that they have majored in the subject successfully because they passed a planned sequence of mathematics courses. On this line of reasoning, it follows that those who have majored in mathematics have mastered the subject and are competent to teach school mathematics.

This is a credible line of reasoning when the faculty knows, from the course grades, and other measures, that the graduates have mastered the teaching subject.

### The narrative of the rationale

After the program faculty members analyze and articulate the links, they develop the narrative of the rationale. The narrative might address such questions as these:

- *Did the faculty measure what was covered in the program?*

- *Did the faculty assess what the overall program was designed to produce?*

- *Did the faculty’s assessment procedures assure them and others that their graduates are competent, caring, and qualified?*

### COMMENT

**Why include a rationale?** The field of education has legitimate concerns about the reliability and validity of the evidence available in the field of education. To satisfy TEAC’s Quality Principle II, the program faculty must have an ongoing investigation of the means...
by which it provides evidence for each component of **Quality Principle I**.

**Quality Principle III**, in fact, is partly about the need for this investigation. The investigation must accomplish two goals related to the assessment of student learning:

1. Support the choice of the assessments, particularly their links with the program’s design, the program’s goal, and the faculty claims made in support of the program goal
2. Reduce the credibility of confounding factors associated with the evidence from which the faculty draws its inferences
Section 3: Methods of assessment

In this third section of the Inquiry Brief, the program faculty describes in detail the assessment methods cited in the rationale. These are the methods by which the faculty found the evidence that supported, or failed to support, its claims of student learning and accomplishment.

The faculty also describes the research design it has employed to secure the evidence. Was the evidence based on all the students and graduates of the program? Some representative sample? If it was based on a sample, how was the sample drawn and determined? The faculty members also describe how the research design addresses rival explanations for the results and how they will address potential aggregation errors and other threats to the validity of their findings.

The methods section also describes any assessments and measures that will provide corroborating evidence for the faculty’s main findings and any other evidence that has a bearing on any rival or alternative explanations of their findings.

The methods section speaks to TEAC’s Quality Principle II: the program faculty documents its claim that the inferences it draws from the evidence of student learning are sound and valid. This section is about whether the methods will prove to be credible, trustworthy, and reliable.

The design of the faculty’s investigation must support the faculty’s interpretations of the results of its assessment system and the appropriateness of the uses to which it puts them. The faculty members must consider several factors: evidence about the content of the assessments, the assessment criterion relationships, the theoretical and scholarly basis of the construct they assessed, and the uses to which they put the assessments.

In the Inquiry Brief, a program faculty provides evidence of the quality of student learning in the program. Typically, programs use some combination of the categories of evidence presented in the chart following this page. However, each program is encouraged to present novel and tailored evidence of student learning, in place of or in addition to, these categories.

Qualitative assessments and measures
When a program faculty uses qualitative assessments and measures, those writing the Inquiry Brief describe the methods of procuring the evidence and give a rationale for them, just as with any quantitative assessment. The program faculty would present precisely the procedures it employs: for example, team-recorded observations; interview protocols with students, alumni, faculty, administrators, employers; representations of student products or artifacts; interpretations of student journals, lessons, field notes, audio/video presentations.

Linking to Quality Principle I
Whether qualitative or quantitative, each source of evidence must have a clear link to a component of Quality Principle I. Without such links, the measures may still have value, but only in documenting the context of the program or providing corroboration for subsidiary claims in the Inquiry Brief.

Categories of evidence
The program faculty actually has a fairly limited number of sources of evidence with which to make its case for its claims about Quality Principle I. The types of evidence fall into the following five categories:

- Course grades in the areas of Quality Principle I
- Standardized test scores (entrance, exit, and license scores) from the graduates or the graduates’ own students, in the areas of Quality Principle I
- Ratings (by students, alumni, employers of portfolios, work samples, cases, impressions and recollections), in the areas of Quality Principle I
EXAMPLE: Types of evidence linked to Quality Principle I

Grades
1. Student grades and grade point averages in each component of Quality Principle I: subject matter; pedagogy; and teaching skill

Scores on standardized tests
2. Student scores on standardized license or board examinations in any of the areas of Quality Principle I
3. Student scores on admission tests for graduate study in the areas of Quality Principle I
4. Standardized scores and gains of the program graduates’ own pupils

Ratings
5. Ratings of portfolios of academic accomplishment
6. Third-party rating of the program’s students
7. Ratings of in-service, clinical, and PDS teaching
8. Ratings by cooperating teachers and college/university supervisors, of practice teachers’ work samples

Rates
9. Rates of completion of courses and program
10. Graduates’ career retention rates
11. Graduates’ job placement rates
12. Rates of graduates’ professional advanced study
13. Rates of graduates’ leadership roles
14. Rates of graduates’ professional service activities

Case studies and alumni competence
15. Evaluations of graduates by their own pupils
16. Alumni self-assessment of their accomplishments
17. Third-party professional recognition of graduates (e.g., NBPTS)
18. Employers’ evaluations of the program’s graduates
19. Graduates’ authoring of textbooks, curriculum materials, etc.
20. Case studies of the graduates’ learning
• Rates of hiring, promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc., when the decisions are made by third parties in the areas of *Quality Principle I*

• Case studies of students and alumni competence, in the areas of *Quality Principle I*

**Multiple measures**

Because each kind of evidence (grades, surveys, portfolios, standardized tests, etc.) can be misleading, it is important that the faculty commit to include several measures that converge, triangulate, and indicate true student learning. The faculty should also take steps to reduce factors that affect the validity of the faculty’s interpretations. (See Comment, at the end of this section, on issues of reliability and validity.)

The methods section of the *Inquiry Brief* gives a complete account of the measures and the faculty’s case for the reliability and validity of the measures. Table 1, below, offers one way to present the information about measures that is required in the methods section. Table 1 summarizes the kinds of information that the faculty would include in the methods section to address *Quality Principle I*. The table makes clear that the program faculty must provide at least two measures for each component of *Quality Principle I* and must describe and report its methods of investigating the reliability and validity of the measures.

In the case of qualitative measures, the faculty should present the triangulation methods used to reduce error and increase the trustworthiness, dependability, and authenticity of the measures.

---

### Table 1. Measures, reliability, and validity procedures for each claim associated with TEAC *Quality Principle I*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome claims</th>
<th>Measures (Two or more measures)</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The program’s graduates have acquired</em>…</td>
<td></td>
<td>Methods of reducing or estimating errors and establishing trustworthiness in the measures</td>
<td>Procedures for assessing the credibility of the interpretations of the evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject matter</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skill</td>
<td>1. 2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Subject matter, pedagogy, and teaching skill must be assessed by also taking into account the cross-cutting liberal arts dimensions of each: learning-to-learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology. Validity usually entails considerations of content, predictive, construct, or concurrent validity aspects of the measures.
**Validity issues**

There are validity issues for each category of evidence.

**Rates.** Hiring rates, for example, based upon the hiring district’s own evaluation of the subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skill *(Quality Principle I components)*, may not be as much an indicator of student accomplishment in times of teacher shortages, such as are expected in the decade ahead, as they would be in times of teacher oversupply. In times of shortage, hiring rates may indicate very little about quality because virtually everyone is hired. The rate of first choice hires, for example, may prove to be a more persuasive indicator of student accomplishment.

Similarly, some categories of evidence may be relatively meaningless if the rates are low or less than the normative rates. The rates may indicate something important about the program’s quality, however, if the rates are significantly higher than the norm.

Passing rates on the currently available teaching license tests, for example, are surprisingly high,\(^{14}\) but some passing-scores are set as low as the 25th percentile of actual cohort performance and with fewer than half the test’s items answered correctly in some cases. Retention, program completion, and graduation rates average 50 percent in most cases.

Rates have meaning in the TEAC framework only if they are based upon an evaluation by a third-party of some aspect of *Quality Principle I*.

**Survey data** particularly that derived from survey forms created by amateurs are known to be affected by a number of extraneous factors. For example:

- the order in which questions were presented
- the context in which questions appeared
- whether the questions weed out those with no opinion (filtering)
- the range and order of choices
- whether middle categories were provided
- whether the format was open or closed

Survey results need to be examined for their reliability and validity, as do course grades.

**Course grades** are meant to be a measure of subject matter understanding, but their validity is threatened by the fact that they are frequently measures of other matters that may have only a tangential or no relationship with the student’s mastery of the subject matter of the course.

Some of the common threats to the validity of course grades occur when they become influenced by other factors and become as a result measures of these other factors. In contemporary higher education, it is fair to say that grades may be, in varying degrees, measures of any, or all, of the following:

- **Punctuality:** when faculty members take points off for late work or give extra points for early work
- **Gain or growth:** when faculty members base the grade on the degree of improvement over the course of the semester
- **Place in a distribution:** when faculty assign grades on the curve, or some predetermined percentage formula, so that the grade indicates only the student’s percentile or rank in the class
- **Dishonesty:** when faculty or the university lower the grade for cheating, plagiarism, etc. with the result that a low grade is uninterpretable because it may signify a low level of understanding or a low level of honesty
- **Extra or additional achievement:** when faculty give extra points for more work that may

---

\(^{14}\) Pass rates of 100 percent are becoming common, but many programs achieve them by using the state's license test as a program admission test or screening test for latter stages of a program. High pass rates in this instance are of little use as indicators of program quality.
not be qualitatively superior to the prior work, but is simply quantitatively more than other students have done

**Attendance:** when faculty members deduct points for unexcused absences

**Writing skill:** or some prior expertise separable from the subject matter as when neatness, rhetoric, or format count

**Reduced spread:** when faculty members inflate the grades or reduce the variance (as in the quip, “the best way to turn C students into B students is to put them in graduate school”)

**Motivation and perseverance:** when students receive the last grade of several unsuccessful attempts at the subject matter, or when effort is rewarded

**Group membership:** when faculty members introduce examples and analogies that speak to some groups of students more than others, or when there is cultural, racial, or gender bias in the teaching format

**Political statement:** when faculty are sensitive to the student’s military draft or immigration status, scholarship and grant conditions, graduate or undergraduate status, race, and gender, etc., and take these into favorable consideration in the assignment of course grades

The inference that grades, or any other measures of learning, are valid can be based on a number of considerations and investigations:

- Are the grades the faculty members give consistent and correlated with other known measures of student learning (e.g., standardized tests of the same content)?
- Are they based on the appropriate content so that they measure only what they are supposed to measure?
- Are they correlated with and predict later accomplishment that depends on student learning?

- Are they related to other factors that one would expect, in theory, to be related to what the grade measures (e.g., intelligence, prior grades, aptitudes, specialty training, beginning or end of the program accomplishment, motivation)?

In general, the correlations about .50 provide confidence that the measure is valid for the purposes to which it is put.

**Reliability issues**

An investigation of the reliability of course grades or any other quantitative measure of student learning might entail the following:

- The computation of an alpha coefficient when the grades are thought to be measuring a single attribute.
- Correlations between two different administrations of a test that determined the grade;
  - or between even and odd items on the test;
  - or between the first and second half of the test;
  - or a correlation between equivalent versions of the test;
  - or the stability of the mean grades and standard deviations across several administrations of the test to comparable groups;
  - or published reliability statistics from test manuals.

Along the same lines, the faculty might explore the reliability of their grades through correlations of the grades from each half of the transcript for a random sample of students; or correlations between grades in the same course in two semesters from a sample of professors.

Or they might examine whether the variance in the distribution of a faculty member’s grades (0–4), or the variance in the average grade in selected courses, is contained within one point or a letter grade.

In general, correlations about .80 yield confidence that the measure is trustworthy and dependable.
In this fourth section of the Inquiry Brief, the program faculty reports the results of its investigation of the reliability and validity of the measures it is using.

Program faculty may present the results regarding their claims about their graduates’ accomplishments in either a quantitative or qualitative format, but they must meet the reporting standards commonly required in quantitative or qualitative research paradigms. The results must also address each component of TEAC’s Quality Principle I.

One straightforward way to present the reliability and validity of the data is through an inter-correlation matrix of the measures for each component of Quality Principle I. The faculty might also use the stability of mean grades over time to depict the reliability of the program’s grading system.

Table 2, below, offers an example of how a program faculty might organize its quantitative results for the components of Quality Principle I.

Table 2. Hypothetical means (standard deviations) of a sample of 80 students in six categories of assessments in support of claims for Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome claims*</th>
<th>Categories of evidence and range of scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The program’s graduates have acquired…</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grade point index</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject matter</td>
<td>(0–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes measures of learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology.

Note that although means and standard deviations are the likely entries in each cell of Table 2, frequency counts, ranks, percentages, percentiles, or whatever quantitative metric the faculty relies on could also be entered. These cell entries could also vary with regard to the power of their numerical properties entered (nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio numbers).

The results, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be truly representative of the program under review and not idiosyncratic to a particular time period or circumstance.

The results must also be disaggregated by subcategory when an aggregated presentation would mask important differences within the groups and categories being reported.

In cases where a program is undergoing revisions and renewal, the results should be of a character that will support a sound prediction of what future results will be. Generally, this means that the most recent results will carry greater weight in TEAC’s decision making.
In this section, the faculty announces its conclusions about each of the claims it has made about Quality Principle I. Were the claims supported by the results? Fully? Partially? Not at all? In other words, the faculty explains what the results mean with regard to the claims it advances in the Inquiry Brief about Quality Principle I. It is important that the faculty members be as explicit as possible about what they think the results mean and do not mean.

To meet Quality Principle III, the faculty must also explain what the results mean for the program. How, for example, will the results affect the faculty’s ongoing plan for continuous improvement of the program (required by Quality Principle III)? Will the results prompt the faculty to modify the program, undertake some further line of inquiry to check a finding, or probe a new area? What do the faculty members think the results mean for the improvement of the program’s quality, and how do they plan to use the results to continually improve the program?

It is appropriate to describe how past decisions about the program have been influenced by the evidence of student learning brought to light in the operation of the quality control system. How have decisions made in the past about the program been shaped by the evidence procured by the quality control system? Finally, how will the results of the assessments influence the faculty’s system of quality control?

The system that the faculty has developed to investigate, ensure, and monitor the quality of the program (documented in Appendix A of the Inquiry Brief) is the core of Quality Principle III, and the discussion must make clear how that system responds to the findings reported in the results section.
Section 6: References

This section contains a list of all works and sources mentioned in the Inquiry Brief. TEAC requests that program faculty use the citation format of the American Psychological Association and the American Educational Research Association. For example:

Works Cited


## Section 7: Appendices

The *Inquiry Brief* should have five appendices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Documents that the program faculty’s quality control system functions as claimed and enhances quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>With results from the internal audit, documents that the institution meets the TEAC standards of capacity for program quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Presents a profile of the characteristics of the quality of the program faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Presents comprehensively the program’s requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Catalogs the available evidence that is or is not included in the <em>Brief</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A. Report of the internal audit of the quality control system

Every institution and program has a set of procedures and structures—reporting lines, committees, offices, positions, policies—to ensure quality in hiring, admissions, courses, program design, facilities, and the like. Together, these procedures and structures—people and the actions they take—function de facto as a quality control system.

For example, Figure 1, below, describes graphically some of the components of a teacher education program’s quality control system: the research committee, workload policies, faculty and administrative positions, evaluation procedures.

Ideally, each component in the quality control system is intentionally connected in a meaningful way, each informing or reinforcing the others. The people and actions they take result in program quality, and specifically, improved student learning.

However, in most programs (and institutions), the components of the quality control system are not articulated, or fully articulated. Look again at Figure 1: notice the arrows linking the elements. Are the parts of the system sufficiently linked? Does one element inform the other?

The degree to which the institution thinks about the elements as a system and evaluates their individual and collective effectiveness varies enormously from institution to institution, program to program. Nonetheless, there is a system, and it should affect the quality of the program and student learning.

TEAC requires that the program faculty members understand the quality control system that affects their program. In addition, the faculty should understand how the program’s quality control system affects the program’s capacity for quality (TEAC sub-components 4.1–4.7: the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support, student recruitment and admissions, and student feedback) and how they affect student learning.

TEAC requires evidence that the faculty members of the program seeking accreditation describe and query their quality control system, asking if the individual components and the whole system function as intended. TEAC requires that the program faculty seek to understand how the quality control system affects program quality and, specifically, how it leads to student learning.

To meet this requirement, the faculty conducts an internal audit of the program’s quality control system. Through the internal audit, the faculty investigates whether the quality control system’s mechanisms have any influence on program capacity and on student learning and accomplishment.

The faculty represents the internal audit—the process and the results—in Appendix A of the Inquiry Brief. Appendix A includes the following sections:

- Description of the quality control system (in both graphic and narrative form)
- A description of the procedure followed in conducting the audit (also in both graphic and narrative form)
- Presentation of the findings, the conclusions that faculty draws from the findings, and a discussion of the implications for the program.

It is important to keep in mind that the internal audit is a description of what is, not a presentation of what the program faculty thinks should be, or thinks that TEAC wants. The internal audit captures the quality control system at the moment—its strengths and weaknesses alike.

What is an internal audit?
The internal audit of the quality control system is similar to an accountant’s audit of a financial system.

In a financial audit, the accountant randomly selects a payment and follows it through the institution’s financial policies and regulations (the audit trail) to see if the payment was duly authorized, was in the correct amount, was recorded and reported properly, was for a proper purchase and purpose, was backed by deposited funds, and so forth. These many probes
are the basis for the accountant’s professional opinion about whether or not the corporation’s financial system can be trusted or depended upon to provide the corporation’s directors, stockholders, and federal agencies with sound results regarding the corporation’s financial integrity and quality.

Figure 2, below, gives a visual representation of an internal academic audit. It indicates the starting point of the audit (in this case, a student folder) and shows the pathways and the elements that the faculty members checked from that point forward. These pathways are a sequence of audit tasks: targets and probes to understand how the quality control system works.

Getting started
To carry out the internal audit of its quality control system, the program faculty should follow these steps:

Conducting the internal audit
1. Understand the program’s quality control system. In whatever way is effective and efficient for the program, assemble a picture of the quality control system. List all the elements, group them, and note their relationship to each other.
2. Describe the quality control system visually. Create a schematic (Figure 1 is an example of one way to do this).
3. Describe the quality control system in words. Write a narrative of the system.
4. Determine an overarching set of questions about the quality control system.
5. Develop an audit plan. Determine the focus and the point of entry. Determine targets and probes. Assign roles and responsibilities for carrying out the audit. Be clear and sensitive to potential weaknesses in the system. (See “Entering the quality control system,” below.)
6. Ask for formal approval of the audit plan. Everyone involved should know and understand why and how the audit will be conducted, and should approve the plan in some formal way.
7. Carry out the audit. Keep track of the process and findings.
8. Create an audit map or audit trail. (Figure 2 is an example)
9. Write the audit report (see below).

Entering the quality control system
The internal audit can begin at any point in the system. The entry point has no particular significance and merely provides a manageable way to begin the audit probes and constrain the amount of information that must be considered. The faculty may enter the system in several ways.

For example: As in Figure 2, the faculty identifies a student folder through an unbiased method (e.g., randomly, or by a student whose birthday is closest to a randomly selected date).

To see if the quality control system works as it is designed to work in that instance, the faculty probes each element in the system that is linked to the folder (follow Figure 2).

The internal audit probe would determine, for example, whether or not

- The particular faculty member who gave the grade in a randomly selected course in the student folder was appointed, reviewed, and assigned properly;¹⁵
- The student was admitted and enrolled properly;
- The work on which the grade was given was evaluated properly;
- The course became required properly;
- The course was evaluated and reviewed properly;
- The course was properly funded;
- The course was given in an appropriate facility,
- The program in which the course was required was properly evaluated.

¹⁵ Properly means only that the actions took place in accordance with the program’s statements of policy and regulation and that they yielded quality outcomes. The TEAC audit verifies the evidence the faculty provides in its internal audit in support of its assertions that the system functioned properly.
The faculty examines all links to the course grade that are implicated in the system to see whether or not the system functioned properly in the particular instance.

If the program faculty members feel their system is probed better by starting with a particular faculty member, the initial audit probe can begin there and move through the system from that point. The questions of the system are the same:

- Was the faculty member’s appointment, assignment proper?
- Was the tenure or promotion decision conducted properly?
- Were the faculty member’s students selected and admitted properly?
- Does the faculty member evaluate student learning properly?
- Was the faculty member’s course properly approved and evaluated?
- Was the course properly funded?
- Was the course given in an appropriately equipped classroom?

The probe continues until each element in the system that bears on the quality of a particularly selected case has been examined.

**Entering the audit at points of suspected weakness.**
If the faculty members are concerned about some aspects of its system (for example, the process of hiring adjuncts or the trustworthiness of grades), it would be appropriate to audit the system from this perspective and with these elements perhaps receiving an initial focus of the audit procedures. Thus, the faculty would specifically address these areas of suspected weakness and begin the audit trail at these points and enter the system, for example, with the agent within the system that was supposed to produce quality adjunct appointments.

**Audit probes**
The number of probes necessary to the internal audit depends, as in all sampling, on the degree of variability that is revealed. The number should be of a magnitude that would convince the faculty and others that a reasonably accurate reading of the system had been taken. A sample of 10 percent is usually sufficient.

Sampling just one or two students, for example, or one or two courses, will probably not provide sufficient confidence to the interpretations gleaned from the audit. When the faculty determines how many elements should be sampled, a rationale for the number should be provided so that the reader can be assured that the audit findings are truly representative of the system.

**Understanding the audit findings**
The purpose of the internal audit is for the faculty to make some judgments about how well its quality control system is working. It is unlikely that a faculty could come to an unqualified conclusion that the system works as it was designed. Almost nothing works just as it was designed. The faculty’s conclusions will be credible only if the audit uncovers some exceptions and problems.

The faculty might advance any one (or more) of the following conclusions:

- Our quality control system is working well, overall, except we have learned that we cannot put a great deal of faith in the course grades our students receive because they are not predictors of the subsequent performance in student teaching.
- Our quality control system has several significant breakdowns: violations of our appointment policies in the hiring of adjunct faculty, inconsistencies in content and practices within various sections of the same course, and inconsistencies in the way clearances into student teaching are administered.

These conclusions would give direction to faculty for strengthening their quality control system and their program. However, a fair-minded reader might still ask, What is your evidence that the system is working well, or that breakdowns exist?
The faculty finds the basis for its judgments in the evidence that it collects during the internal audit. So, it makes sense to see judgments as flowing from evidence. For this reason it is important to keep the reporting of the evidence separate from the reporting of the judgments or conclusions about the quality control system.

**Writing the internal audit report**

TEAC suggests that program faculty organize the internal audit report in the following way:

**Introduction:** The introduction to Appendix A explains who conducted the audit, how the plan for the audit was approved by faculty, and how the internal audit complemented the evidence presented for Quality Principle III in the Inquiry Brief.

**Description of the quality control system (QCS):**

The program faculty provides both a narrative and a schematic of the quality control system.

**Audit procedures:** In this section, the faculty members describe how they conducted the audit, what evidence they collected, what trail they followed, how many elements (students, courses, and faculty members) they audited, and who participated in organizing and interpreting the findings. Figure 2 represents such a procedure. The faculty should provide a similar visual representation.

**Findings:** What did the faculty discover about each part of its QCS? The faculty may organize the findings by either the various elements of the program’s quality control system or the TEAC components 4.1–4.7.

**Conclusions:** What are the internal auditors’ summative judgments? Here the faculty addresses two key questions:

- How well is the quality control system working for our program?
- Is there evidence of student learning that is attributable to any capacity dimension?

**Discussion:** In this section, the faculty addresses several questions:

- What are the implications of the evidence?
- What are the faculty’s conclusions for further action?
- What modifications, for example, will the faculty make in its QCS as a result of the findings and conclusions of the internal audit?
- What investigations will the faculty undertake to test whether the system is enhancing the quality of the program and the quality of student learning in particular?

In the discussion section, the faculty will also recommend ways to conduct the internal audit in subsequent years.

**The quality control system and Quality Principle III**

Whereas Quality Principle I represents the core outcome of the TEAC accreditation system, student learning, Quality Principle III represents the core activity of the TEAC accreditation system, institutional learning. Quality Principle III requires the program faculty, in monitoring the program’s quality, to engage in a systematic program of inquiry about the factors that support the program’s success and failure with respect to Quality Principles I and II.

TEAC believes that programs must continuously investigate the factors that contribute to their success and failures, so they can better understand them and improve upon them. TEAC’s Quality Principle III and the QCS are precisely about the need for programs to investigate and understand the sources of their success and failure, to search for ways to improve the program, and to discard unproductive practices.

**Linking the quality control system and student learning**

In truth, almost no one has done the inquiry needed to establish the suspected links between the components of quality control and the quality of student learning.
For example, through the quality control system, faculty can monitor whether or not the students admitted to the program in fact meet the entrance requirements. Yet few programs are in the habit of asking whether or not the entrance requirements accomplish the program’s mission or how they might be modified if they fail to support the mission.

TEAC requires the internal audit so that the faculty has the occasion to inquire about how the program yields student learning. TEAC requires the program to include in the internal audit report its plans to research the link between its capacity for quality and student learning.
Figure 1. Hypothetical schematic: quality control system and its links to TEAC’s dimensions of program quality

Key: The numbers refer to the TEAC elements and components of capacity. The rectangles refer to agents and policies of the system that act and serve to improve the quality of the program. The arrows refer to the influence, direct and indirect, of the agents on each other. The ovals represent outcomes of the system: the quality of the program, faculty, and students’ learning with program quality interacting with the quality of student learning.
Figure 2. Hypothetical audit trail followed in the internal audit

Note: The TEAC audit comprises a series of audit tasks. Each audit task is made up of a target and a probe activity. In the figure below, the “check on” arrows represent the audit tasks, the links between the targets (represented by the diamonds) and probes (represented by the ovals). The “leads to” arrows represent the audit trail, or sequence of tasks. This audit trail begins with a student folder and indicates what it led to.
Appendix B: Evidence of institutional capacity for program quality

In Appendix B, the faculty addresses the claim that the program meets TEAC’s standard for capacity to offer a quality program (4.0).

To this point in the Inquiry Brief, the faculty has demonstrated the program meets TEAC’s three quality principles, which by definition means that it is a quality program. However, because TEAC’s role is to assure the public about the quality of professional education programs, TEAC must also be also concerned about the way in which the program meets the quality principles; in other words, its capacity to offer a quality program. For this reason, TEAC requires programs to address and provide evidence of the program’s capacity for quality in seven areas identified by the USDE: curriculum; program faculty; facilities, equipment, and supplies; fiscal and administrative capacity; student support services; recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising; and student feedback (4.1–4.7).

The program’s case for capacity

The program faculty can make the case in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence, but TEAC requires that the faculty address the following basic points in making its case for capacity to offer a quality program:

1. The faculty must show that it systematically monitors the quality of the program and that the members act to continuously improve program quality. TEAC’s Quality Principle III requires that programs have a system of quality control, inquiry, and monitoring that is verified by periodic internal audits; that has ways of monitoring the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, publications, etc.; and that is sensitive and responds to student comment and complaint. The program’s internal audit report findings will provide one line of evidence that supports the conclusion that each component of capacity is sufficient for program quality.

2. The faculty must also show evidence of institutional commitment to the program and, in particular, evidence that the level of commitment is consistent with the institution’s commitment to its other programs. The program must at least have parity with the institution’s typical academic program with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, publications, and the like. By showing that the program conforms to the institutional norm on each of the seven components of program quality, the faculty establishes the program’s capacity for quality.

Further, if the program has parity within the institution, TEAC can then ensure that the program’s capacity for quality is sufficient to meet USDE accreditation standards for the typical academic program. All accreditors recognized by the USDE adhere to the same seven capacity standards: an institution’s accreditation by a regional accreditor in good standing signifies that the institution’s overall capacity for quality has been documented and verified. The institution that offers the program under review by TEAC must be regionally or nationally accredited.

3. The faculty must also address whatever unique capacity is necessary for quality in a professional teacher education program. TEAC recognizes that because the field has no consensus about any standard for unique capacity (other than it is sufficient to ensure that the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified) the program faculty must rely on scholarly speculation, inference, and inquiry in making its case.

COMMENT

TEAC’s interest in the institutional commitment to the capacity of the program for quality extends beyond TEAC’s standards on capacity, however. When it can be shown that the institution is serious about teacher education, and that it is committed to the continual improvement of the quality of the programs it offers, TEAC can refute the common allegation that education programs are “cash cows.”
**Writing Appendix B**

Appendix B should be organized by each component of capacity (4.1 through 4.7) with supporting text explicating the program’s evidence for each claim that it has satisfied TEAC’s standards.

Much of the text of Appendix B can simply reference other sections of the *Inquiry Brief*. The internal audit report findings show how the system monitors and promotes quality. The discussion section of the *Inquiry Brief* documents the program’s record of improving the quality of the program through the instrument of its quality control system and research plan. Part of the standard for the capacity of the faculty (4.2) for quality is found in Appendix C. Similarly, the standard for the curriculum (4.1) is documented in Appendix D.

An efficient way to document that the program has parity with other programs in the institution is by means of a brief statistical report composed of a table like Table 3 below.

**Metrics**

Institutions have different conventions for measuring capacity in each dimension. They may keep track of their facilities with such measures as square feet per student or faculty member, number of faculty per office, classroom size or students per classroom, proportions of dedicated program space. Similarly, an institution may use various metrics for its equipment (e.g., the number of computers, copying machines, projectors, phones per faculty member or student, the age of its equipment). Faculty workload may be measured by the number of sections or courses, by the number of students served, by student-credit hours, or some similar metric.

TEAC encourages the program faculty to use metrics that may be particularly revealing or persuasive of the program’s capacity for quality.
Table 3. Capacity for quality: a comparison of program and institutional statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity dimension</th>
<th>Program statistics</th>
<th>Institution statistics (Norm)</th>
<th>Difference analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Curriculum(^{16})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Faculty(^{17})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Facilities(^{18})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Fiscal and administrative(^{19})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Student support services(^{20})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Recruiting and admissions(^{21})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Student feedback(^{22})</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{16}\)E.g., total number of credits for graduation, grade requirements, number of credits in the major

\(^{17}\)E.g., proportions of terminal degrees, genders, races, etc., research support per faculty member, workload composition, balance of academic ranks, promotion and tenure standards

\(^{18}\)E.g., allocated space and equipment, support facilities, special facilities

\(^{19}\)E.g., cost/student, staff compensation, scholarships, proportion of administrators/support staff

\(^{20}\)E.g., counseling, advisement, media/tech support, career placement

\(^{21}\)E.g., proportions of student body by gender, race; catalogue accuracy and publication standards

\(^{22}\)E.g., proportion of complaints about program, course evaluation ratings
Appendix C: Faculty qualifications

TEAC asks that the program faculty members summarize their qualifications in a table. For each faculty member, the profile would include the following information:

- current academic rank and title at the institution
- terminal degree
- the institution that granted it
- the year it was granted
- the field of the degree
- the number of scholarly publications
- number of years at the institution
- the numbers of the courses the person is regularly assigned to teach in the program

The program faculty may choose to provide any other information that the program values and that represents the quality of the program faculty: for example, the number of awards the person has received, grants, editorial board memberships, professional service assignments, public school teaching experience. The program faculty members, of course, are free to create a table with different entries as long as it accurately represents the quality of the program faculty and its suitability for the assignments and responsibilities in the program.

As with all information in the Inquiry Brief, each entry is subject to audit verification.

Appendix D: Program requirements

In Appendix D, the program faculty presents the program’s standards and requirements. Typically, these include

- Admission requirements,
- Course requirements and standards,
- Course titles and descriptions,
- Requirements and standards for continuing in the program,
- Graduation requirements, and
- Requirements and standards for the state’s professional license.
Appendix E: Inventory of evidence

Using the inventory
What evidence does the program have to support its claims that its graduates are competent, caring, and qualified? On what evidence does the program rely to assess its own progress toward the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators?

Early in the process of preparing to write the Inquiry Brief, program faculty should complete the inventory (see form, below) as a way of taking stock: the program faculty asks, What is the status of the evidence? What measures and indicators for TEAC Quality Principle I are available to the program? What evidence is available to the program? What does the faculty rely on? What might the program need to collect? What does it choose to rely on?

Later in the process, the completed form becomes Appendix E of the Brief. TEAC’s auditors are required to verify and find any evidence, whether reported or not in the Brief, that can corroborate or disconfirm the evidence that is cited in the Brief. The inventory that makes up Appendix E assists them in their work and makes their on-site audit more efficient and productive. (See the form below and in Appendix 1 of this guide.)

What evidence should we use?
In supporting its claims that the program meets TEAC’s quality principles, program faculty members are free to make their case for Quality Principle I with only the evidence on which the program truly relies. Not all the categories of evidence listed in the inventory may be relevant or useful to the program faculty. However, faculty must fully report all the available evidence that bears on its claims or that it has reported elsewhere in support of the quality of the program.

In the spirit of open inquiry, faculty must examine and explain all the evidence available to it that bears on the TEAC quality principles. However, if some evidence is not supportive of the program’s claims, or seems to be unsupportive, the faculty would make the case, like any other research group, that the contrary evidence should not be relied on for various reasons.

Thus, TEAC expects that any assessment results related to TEAC Quality Principle I that the program faculty uses elsewhere will be included in the Inquiry Brief. For example, evidence that is reported to the institution or state licensing authorities, or alluded to in publications, Web sites, catalogs, and the like must be included in the Inquiry Brief. Title II results, grades (if they are used for graduation, transfer, admission), admission test results (if they are used), hiring rates (if they are reported elsewhere) would all be included in the Brief.

Available evidence that is not cited elsewhere or used in decisions, placements and the like, and which the program does not use to support its claims can simply be identified as both “Available” and “Not used in the Brief.”

Although program faculty may be making its case for student learning with several novel measures, it will also need to disclose all the measures available to it, such as the grades the students have earned, the results of the state’s license test that is reported for Title II, and the results of any admission tests the institution requires. The faculty may hold these measures in low regard and see each as problematic for several reasons. If it does, the faculty would simply indicate that the measure was available, but that it was investigated and found to be problematic because it was unreliable or invalid for the program.

Some forms of evidence listed in the inventory may be perfectly acceptable to the faculty, but the evidence is currently unavailable. In that case, the faculty would indicate that the evidence is unavailable at the current time, but not problematic and that it may employ the evidence in the future. Or, the faculty may indicate that some evidence is both unavailable at the present time and so problematic that the faculty would not propose to examine it at any time in the future. The inventory affords the faculty the opportunity to indicate any of these possibilities with regard to each form of evidence (or any other forms of evidence) the faculty may wish to consider.
### Inventory: status of evidence from measures and indicators for TEAC Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evidence</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Brief Reasons for including the results in the Brief Location in Brief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in the Brief Reasons for not including the results in the Brief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For future use Reasons for including in future Briefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not for future use Reasons for not including in future Briefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grades**

1. Student grades and grade point averages

**Scores on standardized tests**

2. Student scores on standardized license or board examinations

3. Student scores on admission tests of subject matter knowledge for graduate study

4. Standardized scores and gains of the program graduates’ own pupils

**Ratings**

5. Ratings of portfolios of academic and clinical accomplishments

6. Third-party rating of program’s students

7. Ratings of in-service, clinical, and PDS teaching


---

23 Assessment results related to TEAC Quality Principle I that the program faculty uses elsewhere must be included in the Brief. Evidence that is reported to the institution or state licensing authorities, or alluded to in publications, Web sites, catalogs, and the like must be included in the Brief. Therefore, Title II results, grades (if they are used for graduation, transfer, and admission), admission test results (if they are used), and hiring rates (if they are reported elsewhere) would all be included in the Brief. Available evidence that is not cited elsewhere or used in decisions, placements and the like, and which the program does not use to support its claims can simply be checked off on the inventory under “Available” and “Not used in the Brief.”
### Type of Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>For future use</th>
<th>Not for future use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In the Brief</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not in the Brief</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reasons for including the results in the Brief</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reasons for not including the results in the Brief</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Rates

1. Rates of completion of courses and program
2. Graduates’ career retention rates
3. Graduates’ job placement rates
4. Rates of graduates’ professional advanced study
5. Rates of graduates’ leadership roles
6. Rates of graduates’ professional service activities

#### Case studies and alumni competence

7. Evaluations of graduates by their own pupils
8. Alumni self-assessment of their accomplishments
9. Third-party professional recognition of graduates (e.g., NBPTS)
10. Employers’ evaluations of the program’s graduates
11. Graduates’ authoring of textbooks, curriculum materials, etc.
12. Case studies of graduates’ learning and accomplishment

---

**Note:** Items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence.
PART FIVE: THE INQUIRY BRIEF PROPOSAL

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* for preaccreditation and new program accreditation .......................... 69

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and TEAC’s accreditation standards and principles .......................... 70

Details of the content of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* ................................................................. 71
  Section 1. Program overview ................................................. 71
  Section 2. Claims and rationale for the assessments .................. 71
  Section 3. Method of assessment ........................................... 71
  Section 4. Results ............................................................. 72
  Section 5. Discussion of results ............................................ 72
  Section 6. References ........................................................ 72
  Section 7. Appendices ....................................................... 72
    Appendix A. Internal audit of quality control system ............ 72
    Appendix B. Capacity standards ....................................... 72
    Appendix C. Qualifications of the program faculty ............... 72
    Appendix D. Program requirements .................................. 72
    Appendix E. Inventory: disclosure of available measures used or declined ....................... 72
The Inquiry Brief Proposal (for preaccreditation and new program accreditation)

See Part Three for an overview of the Inquiry Brief Proposal, the required elements, recommended format, and a plan for producing the Brief.

See Part Three of this guide for a full description of TEAC’s five-step evaluation process of the Inquiry Brief Proposal and the questions that inform each step.

Preaccreditation or new program accreditation from TEAC indicates that the program, based on its Inquiry Brief Proposal, should be able to provide all the evidence required for full accreditation within a five-year period. It is a status that is appropriate for the case where a program may not yet have evidence for its claims of student learning but does have evidence of a sound quality control system; evidence of capacity, including evidence that the institution is committed to the program; and a plan and rationale for acquiring evidence over time to support its claims that it will meet all the requirements of the TEAC system.

There may be many reasons why a program, even one that is state approved and in a regionally accredited institution, may not have the evidence it desires to support its public claims of its students’ competence. When a program is new or has been substantially modified recently, the faculty may have had no opportunity to acquire evidence for its claims, but it still could have evidence of a sound quality control system, institutional commitment and capacity, and a plan and rationale for acquiring the evidence to support the claims that TEAC requires for accreditation. Or, it may be that a program has a respectable reputation for quality and success, but the faculty has not yet collected systematically the evidence that presumably supports and corroborates the reputation or examined the evidence recently to see if it continues to support the program’s exemplary reputation.
The Inquiry Brief Proposal and TEAC’s accreditation standards and principles

The Inquiry Brief Proposal presents a plan for acquiring evidence that the program meets TEAC’s Quality Principle I. The program faculty may have some evidence about its program, or results from pilot studies or prior programs, to report, and these may be indicative of the evidence the faculty hopes to find and report in the Inquiry Brief. However, while at this time, the faculty can only report on its plan to acquire the evidence, the program faculty can provide a rationale for choosing the particular assessments it plans to use to acquire evidence for the subsequent Inquiry Brief. The program faculty’s choice of assessments should be based on some empirical and historical familiarity with the assessments.

The rationale for the assessments, required as part of Quality Principle II, is the central element of the Inquiry Brief Proposal because in it the program faculty makes the case that the proposed assessments will yield the evidence of student learning that TEAC requires to satisfy Quality Principle I.

Because the evidence of reliability and validity of the method of assessment, also required by Quality Principle II, is invariably based upon the results of the assessments, the faculty may not have of evidence of validity, either. The faculty members may, however, have pilot studies of validity, or they may have published studies of these assessments as used in other programs, or historical knowledge of the validity of the measures.

In the absence of any prior or systematic empirical work about the assessments, the faculty members explain why their likely interpretations of the proposed measures would be valid and credible and how they will determine the reliability and validity of the measures and assessments they are proposing.

Although the Inquiry Brief Proposal cannot fulfill all the requirements of Quality Principles I and II, it can and should fulfill the requirements of Quality Principle III by presenting the evidence that the program faculty has a quality control system that functions as it was designed and promotes program improvement. Also, in fulfillment of Quality Principle III the faculty should be able to show how it has relied on evidence of student learning in the past to shape the program they are seeking to have accredited by TEAC.

In their Inquiry Brief Proposal, the faculty members must present evidence that the institution is committed to the program. An effective way to do this, as in the Inquiry Brief, is by showing that the statistics about their program, with regard to capacity standards 4.1 to 4.7, are equivalent or superior to the same statistics about the institution as a whole.

The complete case that the program’s quality control system monitors quality entails evidence that the steps the faculty takes to control quality actually have some positive impact on student learning and accomplishment. For this reason, the Inquiry Brief Proposal, like the Inquiry Brief, should describe the program faculty’s plans for investigating the links between the program’s capacity for quality and the evidence for Quality Principle I.
Details of the content of the Inquiry Brief Proposal

See also Part Four of this guide for details about each section of the Brief.

Section 1. Program overview
This opening section is identical to that described for the Inquiry Brief.

Section 2. Claims and rationale
This section, as in the Inquiry Brief, contains two parts. In the first, claims, the program faculty hypothesizes that the program’s graduates will be competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. The program faculty is free to use comparable terms or the language of state and national standards to describe its graduates’ expected professional characteristics but must address each component of TEAC’s Quality Principle I. As with the Inquiry Brief, the particular claims proposed in the Inquiry Brief Proposal must be consistent with, and inclusive of, the claims made about the program that appear in the institution’s catalog, mission statements, state program approval/registration reports, and other promotional literature. The faculty cannot make one set of claims for TEAC and a different set for other audiences.

Claims. In the Inquiry Brief Proposal the term claim is used to indicate the proposed claim, the prediction, the hoped-for-outcome, or the hypothesis. The general guidelines for writing claims about the projected outcomes of the program are the same as they are for writing claims for the Inquiry Brief.

In the Inquiry Brief Proposal, claims are more appropriately advanced as questions in the same way that researchers advance their expectations and hunches as hypotheses and research questions. A claim in the program’s proposal could read: Is it the case that our graduates succeed on the state’s curriculum standards tests? The Inquiry Brief Proposal sets out the plan to answer this and other related questions in the affirmative.

Rationale. The second part of this section of the Inquiry Brief Proposal provides a rationale for the assessments as credible measures of each proposed claim associated with Quality Principle I. The guidelines for the rationale of the Inquiry Brief Proposal are the same as those for the Inquiry Brief with one exception. In the Inquiry Brief, the credibility of the measures is ultimately addressed by the evidence that the program faculty presents in the results section (section four). Although the faculty members developing the Inquiry Brief Proposal do not have results of the scale required for the Inquiry Brief, they can and should provide some evidence of student learning. This evidence can come from pilot investigations of the measures they propose or from recent experience in using the measures they have readily available (e.g., grades, license test scores) for a small sample of students.

In other words, to be confident in and to make a credible rationale for the proposed measures, the program faculty must examine and present in the proposal the evidence for student achievement that it already possesses.24

Section 3. Methods of assessment
In this section, the program faculty describes in detail the research design and the proposed methods of assessment that it proposed in the rationale. It also describes, in detail, the methods by which it proposes to find the evidence it will use to support the claim

24 All accreditors recognized by the USDE are required to provide feedback on student learning to the programs they accredit. The evidence that makes credible the proposed assessments cited in the rationale and presented in the results section of the Inquiry Brief Proposal also enable TEAC to fulfill its obligation under §602, which requires TEAC to “provide the institution or program with a detailed report that assesses the institution or program’s performance with respect to student achievement.”
that its assessments of student learning are reliable and valid. Here the program faculty proposes the methods by which it will assure itself and others that the claims it will make about its students are credible and that the proposed methods can be trusted and relied upon.

A program faculty will typically provide its evidence of student learning through some combination of the available evidence (see the inventory for Appendix E). Only in the Inquiry Brief must the program faculty report all the evidence available. However, in writing the Inquiry Brief Proposal, the faculty will also need to consider research design issues discussed in the section on methods in Part Four, above.

Section 4. Results

The results section of the Inquiry Brief Proposal briefly describes the kinds of data and evidence that can be expected in the Inquiry Brief. The proposal should also contain results from previous analyses, or pilot studies, which would be predictive of results that will be expected and used to support the claims that will be made in the subsequent Inquiry Brief itself. The section may also contain evidence that speaks to the reliability and validity of the measures the faculty is proposing to use. If the faculty members have had the opportunity to investigate the properties of measures they have used for some time, they may already have evidence about the reliability and validity of the measures they are proposing. It is appropriate to present this evidence in the results section of the Inquiry Brief Proposal.

The proposed evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be representative of the program under review and not idiosyncratic to a particular time period or circumstance. In cases where a program is undergoing revisions and renewal, the results should be of a character that will support a sound prediction of what future results will be.

Section 5. Discussion and plan

This section also speaks to two elements of Quality Principle III: (1) how the program and the plan for continuous improvement of the program will be affected by the expected results, and (2) how past decisions about the program have been influenced by the results from the operation of the quality control system.

Section 6. References

In this section, the faculty lists all works and sources mentioned in the Inquiry Brief Proposal.

Section 7. Appendices

The Inquiry Brief Proposal should have the same five appendices as does the Inquiry Brief:

- In Appendix A, the program faculty documents that its quality control system functions as claimed and enhances the program. The program’s quality control system is evidence that the program has met TEAC’s Quality Principle III. It is of paramount importance in the TEAC preaccreditation or new program accreditation decision. TEAC expects that the faculty has developed a system to investigate, ensure, and monitor the quality of the program.

- In Appendix B, the program faculty addresses the components of capacity (4.1–4.7) and documents that the institution committed to program quality.

- In Appendix C, the program faculty describes its qualifications.

- In Appendix D, the program faculty describes the program requirements.

- In Appendix E, the program faculty describes the available evidence and identifies the evidence that it will include or reject in the subsequent Inquiry Brief. Appendix E, the inventory of evidence, is the same as it is in the Inquiry Brief except that through it the faculty proposes the evidence that will be used in the Inquiry Brief.
PART SIX:
THE TEAC AUDIT

Overview of the TEAC audit .................................................. 73
Scope .................................................................................. 73
Responsibilities ................................................................. 73

The TEAC audit ................................................................. 78
Before the audit visit ......................................................... 78
On-site audit activities ...................................................... 82
Post-visit audit activities ................................................... 84

Additional guidelines for auditors ......................................... 85
The audit team’s decision-making process ......................... 85
Guidelines for the audit strategy ...................................... 85
Auditors’ heuristics .......................................................... 87
PART SIX: THE TEAC AUDIT
Overview of the TEAC audit

One defining feature of the TEAC accreditation process is the academic audit: a team of auditors visits a campus to examine and verify on site the evidence that supports the claims made in the professional education program’s Inquiry Brief or the Inquiry Brief Proposal.

The team of two to four TEAC-trained auditors visits the campus for two to four days. In some cases, the visit may be extended and the team enlarged if the audit challenge is especially complex or broad.

It is TEAC’s philosophy that throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and program faculty maintain open and frequent communications on any and all relevant matters. Maintaining communication is especially important during the audit process, as is understanding the process and the responsibilities of each party involved.

Scope of the audit

The audit process does not address the basic accreditation question of whether or not the evidence is compelling, persuasive, sufficient, or convincing. Instead, the audit, with the exception of the case for institutional commitment, determines only whether the descriptions and characterizations of evidence in the Brief are accurate. The auditors’ question is no more or no less than Are the statements in the Brief accurate?

In designing and conducting the audit, TEAC staff and auditors use as a guide the general instructions laid out in TEAC’s annotated template of principles and standards (see Appendix 2 of this guide).

Responsibilities

Before the audit, TEAC staff, the auditors, and the program faculty should review the responsibilities of all involved, described directly below, and the details of the TEAC audit process described in this section. The program faculty and TEAC staff members share responsibilities for supporting the work of the auditors both before and during their visit, and the auditors have very specific responsibilities before, during, and after their time on site.

The program’s responsibilities

In addition to the audit fee ($1,000 per Brief), the institution defrays the expenses for travel, meals, and lodging incurred by auditors; and pays the auditors’ fees ($1,500 per auditor) and any other administrative or secretarial costs related to the auditors’ execution of their on-site responsibilities.

The program faculty under review is responsible for the logistical aspects of the audit visit, outlined below. TEAC requests that the program designate an audit coordinator to make all arrangements and communicate directly with TEAC:

• Make provisions for lodging, meals, transportation, and the handling of expenses.

• Develop a schedule for the auditors and arranging for a working/meeting room so that they can make the best use of their time on site; prepare a written schedule for the audit visit that includes times and locals for all activities, including time to work alone as a team and time for looking at facilities. (TEAC suggests that the program coordinator designate a conference room for the auditors to work in. The auditors should be able to review all documentation and meet with program and campus representatives here.)

• Assemble all information, documentation, and other evidence necessary for the auditors. The auditors will need all documentation the program faculty used to develop and write the Brief: files, data, references, program and institution materials, and all documentation related to the internal audit. These materials should be gathered in the auditors’ working room.)
• Schedule all interviews and meetings. The auditors will need to visit at least two classrooms; interview a sample of the senior administrators, including a group of chairs of other professional schools or departments; interview a sample of the program’s students; interview and consult with the program’s regular and adjunct faculty. Interviews should be held in the auditors’ designated conference room.

• Provide administrative support such as access to telephones, a fax machine, computers, photocopiers, and secretarial services.

• Distribute to all specified parties a letter from TEAC’s president, soliciting comments about the program from all the parties with a stake in the program.

• Ensure that the program’s responses to any pre-audit tasks (questions about parts of the Brief that the auditors find unclear or ambiguous) are sent to TEAC before the audit visit.

• Send any materials the auditors may request before the visit (for example, the auditors may request catalogs or brochures, copies of policies, documentation of state program approval).

TEAC’s responsibilities
Before the audit visit, TEAC staff will be responsible for the following:

• Scheduling the audit, assigning auditors, sharing auditors’ cv’s with the program for review.

• Posting the call for comment on TEAC’s Web site and preparing a letter, soliciting comments, for the program to distribute.

• Communicating with the audit coordinator to assure that all logistical arrangements have been made satisfactorily.

• Communicating with the auditors to discuss logistical arrangements, the visit schedule, the ethical obligations of auditors, and other audit policies and concerns.

• Preparing, with the auditors and the chair of the Accreditation Panel, the initial audit tasks, with reference to any matters in the Brief that seem of particular interest or show signs of being problematic.

• Sending any pre-audit tasks to the program for response and materials.

• Reviewing the auditors’ summary of the case and sending it to the program for review and approval.

• Communicating with the program’s audit coordinator about the schedule and details of the auditors’ time on site, pre-audit tasks, and any other audit policies or concerns.

• After the audit, sending the audit report to the program for review.

Auditors’ responsibilities
TEAC auditors have five interrelated responsibilities:

• Understand. At the outset of the audit, the auditors must understand the local contexts about which the Brief is written. This understanding helps build a sense of rapport and confidence among the parties, thereby avoiding the tense and confrontational relationship that sometimes characterizes audits in other circumstances.

TEAC auditors base their judgments solely on the evidence and not on preconceived ideas or biases, no matter what their source. The auditors therefore make every effort to fully understand the contexts in which they are operating and to treat all persons they meet with respect and comity.

• Verify. The text of the Inquiry Brief or the Inquiry Brief Proposal and the selected evidence are the targets of the audit.

The auditors verify the text of the Brief, and they do this by examining the referents of the text to be sure that the text is accurate with respect to language, data, and evidence. The auditors examine and probe the accuracy of the language of selected formal statements of the program’s goals, claims, rationale, and the TEAC quality control system. These probes are meant to verify that the language is precise, trustworthy, and means exactly what it seems to say.
The auditors also verify evidence dealing with all elements of the accreditation system and their components, but principally with the evidence pertaining to the quality principles, the capacity components for program quality (reported in Appendix B of the Brief), and the internal audit report (reported in Appendix A of the Brief).

- **Corroborate.** Sometimes the verification purposes of the audit lead the auditors to examine evidence that was not cited in the Brief but nevertheless has a direct bearing on their verification of the evidence and the precision of the language in the Brief. The auditors, in fact, sometimes seek evidence that was not in the Brief to corroborate, reinforce, or disconfirm the evidence that is in the Brief.

- **Judge.** The auditors come to a conclusion about whether the errors found in the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of the TEAC quality principles, the capacity components, and internal audit mean that the evidence was not in fact verified.

To do this, the auditors distinguish between errors in the Brief that are of no significance or consequence to the meaning of the text and errors that change the meaning of the text and make a difference in the verification of the evidence.

In addition to verifying the evidence in the Brief, the auditors also make a determination of whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

- **Represent TEAC.** Auditors represent TEAC as an organization and as the embodiment of a new idea about specialized accreditation in higher education. As such, the TEAC auditors answer questions, grant interviews, and present TEAC positions in informal and formal occasions.

It is expected that during the visit to the campus, auditors may, at the discretion of the program faculty, meet with campus leaders to exchange greetings, to answer any questions about TEAC and the TEAC processes, and to corroborate evidence and argument found in the Brief. The training program that TEAC provides for auditors prepares them to answer questions that can be anticipated and gives them procedures for responding to questions that have not been anticipated and which challenge the auditors’ knowledge.

In all exchanges, it is important that the auditors acknowledge their own limited roles, and that the campus representatives respect the limits of the auditors’ roles. With the exception of the evidence about institutional commitment, auditors do not make evaluative decisions about accreditation, nor should they be asked to. Also, they are not on campus to suggest how programs might be improved or to offer personal positions about accreditation issues in higher education.
**Nine principles to guide auditors in their work (or, what programs should expect from TEAC auditors)**

In addition to the responsibilities described above, it is important that TEAC auditors adhere to the following nine principles. These qualities are what program faculty, staff, and students should expect from all TEAC auditors:

1. **TEAC auditors maintain confidentiality during and after audits.**
   - Auditors do not discuss or share their knowledge of programs or institutions, faculty, staff, and students except as required to fulfill their responsibilities to TEAC.
   - Auditors should not discuss at one institution the auditing experiences they underwent at another institution. There is a *need to know* criterion about shared information from site to site, and interpreting the *need to know* should be done as cautiously and conservatively as possible. (See principle 9, below.)

2. **TEAC auditors commit fully to the process of the audit.** The auditors are prepared to participate in all activities related to the audit (pre-audit, on-site and post-audit work). While on site, they maintain focus and are not distracted from the work at hand by making and receiving calls, faxes, and other messages. They arrange their personal and professional schedules accordingly.

3. **TEAC auditors disclose any conflict of interest.** Auditors should not audit programs at institutions where there is an appearance of a conflict of interest. For example:
   - The auditor worked at the institution at some previous time
   - The auditor applied for a position at the institution at some previous time
   - The auditor was involved in a professional or personal conflict or collaboration with a member of the institution’s faculty at some previous time
   - The auditor is a candidate or will soon be a candidate for a position at the institution.

None of these conditions will necessarily disqualify an auditor from serving as an auditor of a program at an institution. However, in these cases and other similar ones, the auditor alone cannot decide whether a conflict of interest exists. The decision must be made by TEAC and by the institution after consultation. Because TEAC staff will not be able to know if these or similar conditions exist, it is incumbent upon the auditor to bring them to the attention of TEAC staff.

4. **TEAC auditors are sensitive to privacy issues.** If faculty members or their faculty representatives show reluctance to share data that are requested, then TEAC auditors should be sensitive to their feelings and stop asking for them. If the data are central to the auditing process, the auditors will contact TEAC for direction in these matters. Privacy issues are very important to faculty and to TEAC, and care is needed to respect them and seek other ways to verify the evidence in the Brief.
5. **TEAC auditors do not evaluate the program or offer judgments to the program faculty or institutional representatives.** At no time should auditors characterize the data they are reviewing in terms of whether or not they provide support for the faculty claims (except data about institutional commitment). It is important that TEAC auditors stay in role on this question—speaking and reporting only to whether the evidence in the *Brief* is accurate and fairly represented.

6. **TEAC auditors are not coaches or consultants.** Auditors should not advance suggestions about how programs can be improved, how *Briefs* might be improved, or how the program’s chances for accreditation can be improved. Auditors are not to diagnose weaknesses in education programs, nor volunteer advice on these matters.

7. **TEAC auditors characterize TEAC policies with great care.** It is useful for auditors to always qualify their interpretations or cite the language in one of the TEAC publications that officially addresses the questions posed to them. In case of doubt, the inquirers should call the TEAC office for official interpretations of TEAC policies.

8. **TEAC auditors maintain a professional distance between themselves and the program faculty.** Sharing rides or social meals with faculty and administrators during the audit sessions should be avoided if at all possible. Of course, the issue is maintaining an optimum professional distance. Auditors should not be cold, aloof, or unfriendly.

9. **TEAC auditors are discrete.** Auditors share information and perceptions with discipline and care. Wherever auditors travel, whether to large cities or remote rural areas, they will find that the *community* represented by the institution is well represented in airports, restaurants, and public transportation. Although auditors might feel safe in off-campus sites to characterize, for example, an exchange with a faculty member, or to portray a data set advanced to support a claim, such activity is extremely unwise.
The TEAC audit

Before the audit visit

TEAC’s process of formative evaluation includes reviewing the Brief in draft form to ensure that it (1) is complete; (2) addresses the appropriate elements and components of the TEAC system; and (3) is written clearly and precisely. When TEAC is satisfied that the draft Brief meets all requirements, then it declares the Brief “auditable.” At that point, TEAC instructs the program to submit a final version of the Brief (and the checklist), in multiple copies.

Once the program’s Brief has been accepted as auditable, TEAC staff and the program faculty schedule and plan the audit. TEAC will assign a team of auditors and schedule the audit. (See the TEAC audit schedule in Part One and Appendix 1 of this guide.)

Once selected, the audit team members insure that there are no undeclared conflicts of interest surrounding their participation in the audit. In this initial period of planning for the auditors’ visit, program faculty members have an opportunity to review the resumes of the members of the audit team to identify any potential conflicts of interest that may exist. TEAC staff and program faculty will negotiate claims of conflicts of interests.

After their study of the Brief, the auditors will propose audit tasks (see “constructing audit tasks,” below) and review the audit tasks proposed by others. Some audit tasks can be conducted without an on-site analysis; in those cases, the auditor may conduct the analysis before arriving on site.

Then, TEAC and the program faculty will determine what evidence the program must make available to the auditors, the interviews that need to be scheduled, and the observations that are required. In some instances, TEAC and program faculty may agree that some data records can be sent to the auditors prior to the visit to make more efficient use of their on-site time.

Next, the auditors prepare a summary of the case. The summary of the case expiates the case the program has made to support its claims; it tells the program’s story. The purpose of the summary is at least threefold: (1) to convey to the authors (and to others) the auditors’ interest in fully understanding the Brief’s meanings and contexts; (2) to facilitate the construction of the final audit strategy; and (3) to provide the members of the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee with an accurate summary of the case the Brief makes.

Following these five guidelines, the auditors prepare the summary of the case:

1. In their own words, the auditors restate all the claims advanced in the Brief related to TEAC’s Quality Principle I, the evidence related to the reliability and validity of the measures used to assess the claims (Quality Principle II), and the standards of capacity for program quality.

2. The auditors summarize the results, linking particular findings to claims, including any summative judgments the faculty members make about their claims (e.g., our students have mastered their teaching subjects because they meet a 3.0 grade index in their major and meet the state’s Praxis II examination standard).

3. In a separate section of the summary, the auditors write out the principal results of the program’s internal audit and the findings reported in Appendix B (e.g., all students in the sample who were admitted to student teaching met the committee’s GPI standard).

4. The auditors quote from the Brief itself in composing the narrative and cite page numbers of the quote.

5. Finally, because the auditors are telling the program’s story, they do not comment about aspects of the case for accreditation that they
may think are weak or problematic. Nor do they make the case stronger than the program faculty made it. The summary is about the program’s case, not the case the auditors would have made.

The lead auditor prepares the initial draft of the summary of the case; other members of the team review it, and once the team accepts the summary, TEAC sends it to the program head.

Constructing audit tasks
The audit is a series of tasks, each assigned to an aspect of the Brief that is also associated with one of the principles or standards of the TEAC system.

There are three kinds of audit tasks: (1) those the auditors create for the verification of a particular Brief; (2) those the panel director requests or creates for the Brief; and (3) tasks that are common to all audits, which the TEAC staff has created. These latter audit tasks, called standard audit tasks, typically target the subcomponents of the program’s capacity for quality (4.0).

Before the auditors arrive at a campus, the TEAC staff and the auditors will have created a set of initial audit tasks that are directed at the parts of the Brief that are relevant for one or another of the TEAC principles and standards. They are called initial tasks because the auditors may also employ follow-up tasks and new tasks that they create during the audit or that they draw from the larger set of potential audit tasks TEAC has created. The standard audit tasks are constructed without reference to a particular Brief.

An audit task is composed of a target and a probe. The audit task is constructed by selecting some aspect of the Brief text (the target) and probing it.

A target is what the auditors are seeking to verify in the Brief. A target can be a particular sentence, claim, statistic, or piece of evidence. Each target is linked to an element, component, or subcomponent of the TEAC system. For example, if the target is the sentence all faculty teach in their areas of competence, the purpose of choosing the target is its link to subcomponent 4.2.3, the faculty’s qualifications.

A probe is a specific action taken by the auditor to establish whether the evidence for a target (in the first sense) is accurate. If the result of the probe of a target is ambiguous or in cases where the outcomes of a probe are variable or uncertain with regard to the accuracy of the evidence for a target in the Brief, the auditors probe further until a stable pattern is uncovered or until a probe’s result is unambiguous.

A probe is said to be confirming if the auditor determines that the evidence, statistic, or claim, representing the target is accurate. This judgment can be made even if there are slight and inconsequential inaccuracies in the targeted text of the Brief.
**Example: audit tasks (targets and probes)**

1. Checking records, such as minutes of meetings or memos on file of faculty actions in making program decisions in approving the *Brief*, and similar group decisions.

2. Reviewing notes taken of interviews with focus groups and with students at their exit from the program from which summaries are prepared or generalizations included in the *Brief* are induced.

3. Inspecting the responses received from stakeholders who are surveyed in the self-study process when the responses are summarized in tables or in narrative and included in the *Brief*.

4. Re-computing percentages, means, and standard deviations reported in the *Brief* from the original raw data taken from institutional files, state reports, or other sources.

5. Using institutional records to re-compute the means and standard deviations of grade point averages reported in the *Brief*.

6. Tracing the sources of claims having to do with budget allocations, space allocations, and similar matters with institutional officials (e.g., provosts, bursars, or vice presidents).

7. Re-applying the coding schemes used to draw inferences from qualitative data to see if the results can be reproduced.

8. Interviewing faculty or staff who applied the coding schemes to qualitative data to learn how well they were trained, how their reliability was checked, and the depth of their understanding of the process.

9. Re-computing correlations and other statistics that were used to support claims of reliability and validity using, when appropriate, the faculty’s statistical packages.

10. Checking reports concerning the reliability of multiple observers by inspecting the raw reports and re-computing the appropriate coefficients.

11. Touring the campus to verify evidence about claims concerning services available to program candidates, the availability of computers, faculty office space, and other capacity-related issues.

12. Checking brochures, catalogs, and local Web sites to make sure the information found in the *Brief* is consistent with the information found in these sources.

13. Examining both the data (video tapes, transcripts, field notes) and the procedures for coding the data if the faculty’s claims are supported by qualitative analyses of interviews with informants.

14. Examining data sets (also institutional reports where those same data are provided) to verify evidence present in comparisons of funds, space, full-time faculty equivalent per student enrollment of the target program with other programs on campus.

15. Interviewing faculty who participated in the deliberations leading to program change, examining minutes of meetings, and inspecting the copies of proposals that were taken to the faculty or administration for action to determine if the *Brief* claims that changes were made in the program after considering data generated by the quality control system.

16. Targeting text to see if there is in fact a referent for the language, particularly if the language is educational jargon or is unqualified.

17. Interviewing faculty who conducted the internal audit probes and asking that their efforts be described to discern how familiar faculty members were with the internal audit and its purposes, findings, and recommendations.

18. Interviewing students who were the focus of the internal audit probes to ascertain that the characterizations found in the internal audit report in Appendix A about these students are accurate.

19. Interviewing faculty members who were the focus of an internal audit probe to ascertain that the characterizations of those faculty members found in the internal audit is accurate.

20. Examining files and archives describing actions taken by the faculty to improve the program to document the accuracy of the characterizations of these actions in the *Brief*. 
Of course, situations will vary from site to site. Claims and the sources of data for claims that have not been anticipated may arise, and auditors may need to consider additional kinds of probes to use in their efforts to determine if the statements and evidence found in the Brief are accurate.

TEAC prescribes the following additional features for some of the audit tasks. At least one audit task must meet each of the following conditions:

- The auditors must observe a session of at least two regularly scheduled courses that the program offers.
- The auditors must interview the students in the program’s sample for its internal audit or for the evidence for Quality Principle I.
- The auditors must interview a sample of cooperating teachers.
- The auditors must select four facilities cited in the Brief and tour each to verify their existence and similarity to their description in the Brief.
- The auditors must verify a plan to investigate, or an investigation, of a link between student learning and any program factor.
- The auditors must interview members of the administration to verify their commitment to the program, their allocation of resources to the program, and their qualifications for their positions.
- The auditors must verify that the call for comment from third parties was distributed to the parties required by TEAC policy.
- The auditors must verify that the raters were trained and the rating forms and instruments exist.

The auditors must note any discrepancies between characterizations of the institution described in the Brief and the experience of the site visit, particularly facts at variance with what is reported in Appendix E.
On-site audit activities

The auditors’ verification process entails the review of relevant documents and interviews with representatives of the institution, faculty, staff, and students associated with the program. The sorts of activities the auditors might undertake, and the data to which the auditors need to have access, are described below.

Review of the pre-audit tasks
The auditors tell the story of the program seeking accreditation so that the program faculty can be assured that the auditors have understood the Brief in the manner intended by the program faculty. The story (summary of the case) will have been sent to the program faculty before the audit so the faculty members can respond with corrections and amendments. The point is to ensure that the auditors and program faculty can conduct the rest of the audit from a common basis of understanding of the Brief.

Understanding the local context. During this first meeting with program faculty, after the introductions are complete, the discussion turns to the summary of the case prepared by the TEAC staff and auditors and sent to the program faculty before the audit visit.

The auditors seek the program faculty’s reaction to the summary of the case: Does it hit the mark? Is it complete? Has it distorted any elements of the Brief? The auditors should receive feedback from the faculty without argument or debate. When the auditors write their report, they will also amend the summary, based on these comments from the program faculty.

Having determined that the auditors understood the Brief at a level acceptable to the program faculty, the auditors move to clarifying their own understanding, or misunderstanding, of the Brief.

Clarification. Before the audit visit, the auditors ask the authors and endorsers of the Brief to clarify any language used in the Brief that may be unclear to the auditors. This effort is critical because it is essential that the program faculty believe that the auditors understand the Brief. TEAC believes that this feature of the audit process helps to build the rapport between the audit team members and the program faculty that comes when one party feels the other party understands its positions.

Before the audit visit, the auditors sample from a pool of statements in the text that are unclear to them and ask the program faculty to put in writing an explanation and clarification of the text. The auditors need to probe assertions made in the Brief to determine if the referents exist and mean exactly what they seem to mean. The purpose of these probes is to verify that the match between the referent and the language in the Brief is accurate and precise. The auditors can verify the program’s assertions only if the language is clear and precise.

The audit tasks focused on language are designed to clarify text that is ambiguous or that, when explained, may be particularly revealing of the program faculty members’ thinking about matters related to the quality principles and capacity standards. Through this process, the auditors provide the Accreditation Panel members with a basis for determining the degree to which the language and evidence in the Brief mean exactly what they seem to.

On-site audit tasks
The main purpose of the audit is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims with respect to the quality principles and capacity standards. From a pool of audit targets, the auditors select a sample that is particularly revealing and representative of the totality of the evidence the program faculty has presented in the Brief. The auditors divide some tasks among themselves, and others, such as interviewing students, administrators, and faculty or observing classes, address together as a full team. Throughout the entire visit, the auditors are alert and sensitive to unobtrusive information that may have a bearing on the targets of the audit.

While the auditors are on site, they use the evenings and team meals as opportunities for debriefing. The auditors make mid-course corrections in the audit tasks, modify the agenda and schedule as needed, develop new audit trails, and review preliminary impressions and observations.
Verifying the evidence related to specific claims. The Brief includes the evidence the faculty uses to support its claims related to the program’s goal of preparing competent, qualified, and caring professionals as well as to support the claim that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program. The auditors do not judge whether the claims are true or even credible. The auditors do not judge, for example, whether or not the program’s graduates understand pedagogy. They judge only whether or not the evidence is what is reported in the Brief. For example, if the program faculty relies on a mean score on a standardized test to advance and support its claim that the program’s graduates understand pedagogy, the auditors will check to see if, in fact the score the program’s graduates earned on the test is as the program faculty reports in the Brief.

Corroborating evidence. Throughout the audit the auditors are alert to the discovery of evidence that was not cited in the Brief but has a direct bearing (positive or negative) on the verification of the evidence and the precision of the language in the Brief. The auditors are charged with assuring the Accreditation Panel that there is evidence behind the claims made in the Brief. There are two kinds of errors the auditors need to avoid: (1) false positive errors (concluding the evidence is present and accurate when it is not); and (2) false negative errors (concluding there is no evidence for a claim when in fact there is).25

Errors. The auditors must determine whether any errors they find in the Brief are trivial or are of some consequence to the meaning of the text. When a misstatement is trivial and of no consequence, the targeted text is not misleading in spite of the error and the statement means more or less the same thing with the error as without the error.

For example, if the auditors had recalculated a mean and found it was 3.16 instead of the 3.06 reported in a table or in some text, it is probably the case that the targeted text would have the same meaning whether the mean is one or the other value. If the faculty claimed they are constructivists and it turns out in response to the auditors’ probe that they meant only that they are Piagetians, the statement is still acceptably accurate.

The errors, or misstatements, that are of consequence are those that alter the meaning of a targeted statement in the Brief in such a way that the statement is not verified. If the Brief asserts, for example, that the faculty endorsed the Brief at a particular faculty meeting, but the minutes of the meeting do not report the action, or a sample of faculty do not recall the endorsement or is unfamiliar with the contents of the Brief, the misstatement is of consequence and may signify to the panel that one part of the standard for faculty qualification in the TEAC system could not be confirmed (e.g., 4.2.1). The evidence claimed for the endorsement, in other words, cannot be relied upon. If the recalculated mean (to take the example above) differed by more than 25 percent of the standard deviation from the reported mean, the misstatement of the mean is of consequence and the auditors would conclude that the reported and misstated mean was not confirmed and verified.

Final on-site session
In its final on-site session, the audit team considers the findings from each audit task and formulates its audit opinions. The team also analyzes the evidence about institutional commitment and determines whether or not the evidence is sufficient to support the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program. The team uses the session to start planning the audit report.

Judging. The auditors must come to a conclusion about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of the TEAC quality principles, the capacity components, and internal audit was in fact verified. The auditors also must make a separate determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

In their audit report, the auditors give one of the following four judgments (audit opinions) about the overall trustworthiness of the Brief and about each element (1.0–4.0) and the seven components of 4.0:

25 False negative errors are somewhat less likely than false positive errors as the former would surely be noted in the program faculty’s response to the audit report while the latter might not be mentioned.
• **Clean opinion**: An element is assigned a clean opinion when the evidence in the *Brief* that bears on it is found to be trustworthy.

• **Qualified opinion**: An element is assigned a qualified opinion when some of the evidence in the *Brief* that bears on it has significant errors, but overall the evidence for the element is found to be trustworthy.

• **Adverse opinion**: An element is assigned an adverse opinion when a significant portion of evidence in the *Brief* that bears on it cannot be confirmed and verified.

• **Disclaimer opinion**: An element is assigned a disclaimer opinion when it is not possible to verify a significant portion of the evidence in the *Brief* that pertains to an element owing to missing data, limited access to information and informants, or evidence that the findings in the *Brief* are not genuine.

---

**Post-visit audit activities**

After the visit, the team drafts the audit report. TEAC then sends the draft to the program for review. With TEAC staff, the auditors respond to any comments from the program faculty, negotiate points raised by the faculty, and finalize the audit report. The auditors might meet in person, if convenient, or communicate by phone or electronically. Finally, the lead auditor, as a non-voting member of the Accreditation Panel, participates in the panel meeting devoted to the program’s *Brief*.

**Audit report**

Immediately after their campus visit, the auditors prepare the audit report, which is submitted to TEAC and the program faculty within two weeks of the visit, first in draft form inviting comment, and subsequently in final, official, form.

In the audit report, the auditors give their opinion about the accuracy of the evidence in the *Brief*. The auditors do not comment on the implication the evidence holds for the accreditation decision.

Within two weeks of receiving the audit report, the program faculty must correct any factual errors made by the auditors (the program faculty simply points out the errors). At this time, the program may formally respond in writing to the findings of the audit; however, at this time the program faculty cannot make or offer any corrections or changes to the *Brief* or the facts of the program.

After correcting factual errors in the auditors’ findings and considering any responses by the program faculty, the auditors submit a final audit report to the TEAC staff, program faculty, and Accreditation Panel.

Once accepted by the program faculty and the TEAC staff, the audit report becomes part of the record submitted first to the TEAC Accreditation Panel and then to the Accreditation Committee. Each body considers the report in its respective deliberations and in support of the recommendations and decisions concerning the *Brief* and the appropriate accreditation decision.

The audit report includes four major sections:

**Section 1: Abstract.** The first part of this section contains the final version of the summary of the case. The second part gives the auditors’ overall opinion about the *trustworthiness* of the *Brief* coupled with a summary of the principal findings of the audit. The auditors’ judgment about the level of institutional commitment to the program is also included in the abstract.

**Section 2: Method.** This section briefly describes the character and method of the audit: what the auditors did, with whom they met, what they examined, and the schedule of the audit.

**Section 3: Findings.** The third part is a full report of the findings from the auditors’ probes into the evidence included in the *Brief* related to each of the TEAC quality principles and standards of capacity.

**Section 4: Judgments.** The fourth section contains the auditors’ judgments, given as audit opinions, about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of each element was verified. If a sufficient number of the probes confirm, or fail to confirm or verify the evidence, the report explains the findings and reasoning behind the auditors’ opinions. Finally, the auditors make a determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.
The audit team’s decision-making process

Substantive decisions

Audit tasks. Before the audit, the team selects appropriate targets and formulates audit probes that comprise the initial audit tasks. Some audit tasks will be constructed by the TEAC staff before the audit in response to particular concerns of the Accreditation Panel director. Before the audit visit, by consensus, the team agrees to a set of about 65 initial audit tasks.

Audit report. The audit team uses its final on-site session to come to consensus on the three key issues that must be reported in the audit report:

1. The determination of whether the target of each audit task was verified, verified with errors, or not verified.

2. The formulation of the correct audit opinion for each element, each component of 4.0, and the overall Brief.

3. The judgment of whether or not the institution is committed to the program.

In the unlikely event that the team cannot reach a consensus on a point, the audit report notes the stalemate, the reasons for it, and moves to a conclusion, or conclusions, based upon the separate findings and opinions. It may be that the stalemate has no bearing on an accreditation decision, but if it does, the audit report presents the differing options, and consequences of the options, for the Accreditation Panel’s deliberation.

The lead auditor, unless the team has agreed to another plan, writes the first and final drafts of the audit report, in consultation with the other member(s) of the team. The precise language of the report is negotiated by consensus, and, as above, both versions of any stalemate are noted in the final audit report.

Process decisions

The team makes many decisions about how the audit will be conducted. These decisions are made by consensus and based on equity and special competence. The principal decisions center on the schedule and the assignment of responsibility for various audit tasks to the team members. The lead auditor, however, has the final say in these matters should consensus be elusive.

Guidelines for the audit strategy

The lead auditor, the director of the Accreditation Panel, and TEAC’s director of audits select the audit tasks beyond the standard audit tasks. The particular audit trail (the sequence and nature of the audit tasks) is a matter of the auditors’ professional judgments. The entire audit (the initial, standard, and follow-up probes and tasks) is guided by the following general principles.

- A target is appropriate for probing if it is related to one of the elements and components of the TEAC system (1.0–4.0).

- In formulating the audit strategy and building the audit map, the auditors choose among all proposed audit tasks (targets and probes) that are related to the TEAC quality principles and standards of capacity.

What commends one audit task over another, and what leads to some claims receiving more audit tasks than others? TEAC employs the following additional criteria for the crafting and selection of the tasks that comprise the audit:

Centrality. There must be an audit task for each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC quality principles and standards of capacity (elements 1.0–4.0 and the components and subcomponents). The centrality criterion for the selection of
audit tasks provides a challenge for the auditors because the authors of the Brief are free to address the quality principles and capacity components in differing ways. The auditors are required to audit each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC system, but the Brief authors may write claims and provide evidence that spans more than one element of the system. Because the same claim and data source may serve more than one element, a single audit task may help verify more than one part (e.g., the verification of the student teaching evaluation data may be related to claims of teaching skill, pedagogical knowledge, student services, student feedback, and subject matter knowledge). Nevertheless, the auditors must verify the evidence in the Brief that is associated with each claim, and they must also verify and certify that the evidence cited in the Brief fully addresses each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC principles and standards.

**Priority.** Some parts of the TEAC system play a larger role in the accreditation decision than others and have a higher priority on that account. The evidence behind Quality Principle I, for example, is a determinative factor in the accreditation decision and for that reason it is important that the evidence be conclusively verified for components 1.1–1.3.

Quality Principle III also has a determinative role in the accreditation decision, which is why special attention is given to the verification of the internal audit report. On the other hand, the evidence of institutional commitment has less influence on the accreditation decision than does the evidence behind the quality principles. Thus, the audit probes of some components have a higher priority in the strategy of the audit than other components.

**Difficulty.** Some components may be relatively easy to verify (such as the faculty’s acceptance of the program goal or the Brief) while others, such as teaching skill and knowledge of subject matter, may require more probes to verify that the evidence is as it was presented because there may be multiple measures or weak measures administered in inconsistent ways. Thus, a target for 4.2.1 (acceptance of the TEAC goal) may require only a single probe that amounts to little more than a question to a sample of faculty members, while the target for 4.2.2 (the faculty’s balanced and accurate understanding) may require several probes to verify the evidence of an accurate and balanced view.

**Variability.** If the outcome of a probe fails to confirm the target, the auditors should probe an additional target, or a related target, until they find a stable pattern of outcomes. If the auditors cannot find a stable pattern, then it is unlikely that the target can be verified because fewer than 75 percent of probes of the target will have succeeded in confirmation.

For example, if the sequence of courses on the transcript in a randomly selected student file is the target of a probe to verify whether graduates majored in their teaching subject (as may have been claimed in support of Quality Principle I), and the probe fails to confirm that fact, then other students’ transcripts need to become targets of probes until the pattern of majoring for the program’s students can be discovered, confirmed, or disconfirmed.

Internal consistency and corroboration. Auditors are encouraged to seek targets that could corroborate evidence that is in the Brief. If, for example, the Brief cites a grade point index of 3.25 in certain mathematics courses in support of the claim that students know their mathematics, the index could be the target of an audit probe that could calculate the index of a sample of students to confirm that the index indeed was 3.25. The scores of the sample of students on Praxis I (math), Praxis II, the scores on the SAT (math), the variability in math course grades, or the math lessons in student teaching could also be probed to see if they were consistent with, and corroborated, the math grade index.

If, to take another example, the program faculty supports a claim of institutional commitment by reporting that the median salaries of assistant professors in education are insignificantly different from the median salaries of all assistant professors, the auditors might probe other sources of salary information in the institution to check if they corroborate the evidence reported in the Brief.
**Conclusive and persuasive.** Some sources of evidence are more persuasive and compelling than others. The evidence for the claim that the program’s graduates possess teaching skill (1.3) might be attributed to their student teaching course grades, their employers’ ratings of them, their cooperating teachers’ opinion, or the academic accomplishments of the graduates own pupils. The latter source of evidence, if it were available, would be more persuasive than the student teaching course grade, for example, and would be a preferred target of the probe over the target of the grades in the student teaching course.

**Disconfirmation.** Upon seeing the results of a survey of employers cited in support of a claim, an auditor could verify and confirm the results. The auditor might also wonder what would falsify or disconfirm the evidence. If the survey response rate were 10 percent, or if the employers were also employees of the program, or if the survey instrument had a bias for positive ratings, the evidence would be disconfirmed although the actual results of the survey were accurate as reported in the Brief. The auditors may construct probes to examine these areas of potential disconfirmation as a further way of verifying the survey evidence.

For example, if the Brief claims as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of the “teachers of the year” in their state are graduates of the program, the auditors could easily confirm the number and percentage. They could also probe how many teachers in the state are graduates of the program. If 90 percent of the teachers in the state are also graduates of the program, the teacher of the year data would probably not be persuasive to the Accreditation Panel. However, if only 10 percent of the state’s teachers are graduates of the program, but 90 percent of the teachers of the year are graduates, the panel might be more persuaded that the teacher of the year data indicated something about the program’s quality with regard to the acquisition of teaching skill.

Similarly, if the program cites as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of its graduates secure teaching positions within three months of graduation, the panel could direct the auditors to determine what the hiring rates are for the program’s region. If there is a severe teacher shortage in the region, and 100 percent of applicants are routinely hired by local districts, the program’s evidence for its claim would be less persuasive to the panel.

**Primary sources.** Whenever possible, it is better to trace the evidence back to its origin, the raw data. When the results of a survey of graduates, for example, are cited as evidence that the graduates care about their students, the verification of the results of the survey is on surer ground when the auditors inspect the survey instrument, inspect some completed forms from graduates, re-tally a random sample of returns, and perhaps interview one or two of the respondents.

---

**Auditors’ heuristics**

The audit report must include a judgment, or opinion, about the trustworthiness of the program’s evidence for each of the elements of the TEAC system, including the components of 4.0. The auditors use the following five guidelines, or heuristics, to determine their opinion of the evidence for the quality principles and standards of capacity (1.0–4.0) as they are presented in the Brief:

1. A target is said to be verified when it is confirmed by at least 75 percent of the probes assigned to it. In practice this means that if one probe fails to confirm a target, at least three other probes would need to yield positive results to verify it.

2. An element (1.0–4.0), or component of 4.0, receives a clean opinion if at least 90 percent of its targets are confirmed. If more than 10 percent of the targets are not confirmed, the element (or a component of 4.0) cannot receive a clean opinion and must receive some other opinion, depending on the circumstances described below.

3. An element or component is given a qualified opinion when at least 75 percent, but less than 90 percent, of its targets are confirmed. An element that would otherwise receive a clean opinion is also given a qualified opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets reveal misstatements of any kind, either trivial or consequential.
4. An element is given an adverse opinion if more than 25 percent of its targets cannot be confirmed. An element is also given an adverse opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets cannot be verified owing to the fact that the targets could not be confirmed for any reason (including disclaimer).

5. An element is given a disclaimer opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets associated with it cannot be verified because of missing data, limited access to information and informants, or evidence that the findings reported in the Brief are not genuine.

These five guidelines are heuristics for formulating an audit opinion about each element and each component of element 4.0. They are not algorithms or rules: a simple counting of outcomes of probes could be misleading with regard to the trustworthiness of the Brief. Some audit tasks may be more revealing than others. For example, some may have targeted only minor points, and some may be merely following up on other audit tasks on a single point. The guidelines may prove unreliable in cases where the number of audit tasks is small. The audit team knows that they are not to treat the heuristic as an algorithm or rule that can be mechanically applied. If the findings suggest anomalies that make the heuristic unworkable, the auditors will rely on their good judgments, explaining in their audit report the difficulties they experienced and the reasons for their opinions.

Heuristics, by definition and design, only guide decision making. Because TEAC cannot predict or accommodate all possible outcomes and circumstances, the auditors make judgments when the findings are complex and lack a regular pattern. When there is doubt, the auditors will render a lower, more conservative audit opinion rather than a higher audit opinion to alert the Accreditation Panel and the Accreditation Committee to possible dangers in interpreting the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal as trustworthy and reliable. Should a TEAC auditing team make errors in judgment in these matters, the lower and more conservative audit opinions always can be adjusted in the process that requires the mutual acceptance of the audit report or through the TEAC appeals process.

Overall auditors’ opinion. If no element received an adverse or disclaimer opinion, the auditors give the Brief a clean audit opinion overall if 90 percent or more of the targets are verified, and they give it a qualified opinion if at least 75 percent of the targets, but less than 90 percent, are verified. The Brief can go forward to the Accreditation Panel only with a clean or qualified opinion (i.e., at least 75 percent of the targets are verified). Otherwise, it is returned to the program faculty for reworking and resubmission.

Auditors’ judgment of commitment. The auditors are charged not only with verifying the evidence for commitment, but with determining whether the evidence is sufficient to support the program’s claim that the institution is committed to the program. The program faculty members are free to provide any evidence they find convincing of their institution’s commitment to their program, but they must address the issue of parity between the program and the institution in the components of capacity (4.0) in making their case for commitment.

With respect to 4.0, the standards for capacity for quality, TEAC expects the program faculty to provide evidence that the program is fairly treated and not appreciably different from the institution overall. As measured by each of the seven components of 4.0, the program, in other words, should receive its fair share and be treated like most of the other programs at the institution.

Before the auditors can conclude that the institution is committed to the program, the evidence of parity in Appendix B must receive a clean or qualified opinion. In forming their conclusion, the auditors are guided by the same heuristic that guides the Accreditation Panel with regard to its judgments of how much evidence is sufficient to support a claim. This heuristic, when applied to the evidence of commitment, supports the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program when at least 75 percent of the points of comparison show parity or favor the program.

Parity between the program and the institution is taken as signifying the institution’s commitment to the program. Unless there is a credible rival hypothesis to the contrary, it is prima facie evidence of commitment.
For example, the mean salaries of the teacher education faculty and the mean salary for the institution as a whole could be indistinguishable and show a parity that would seemingly signify commitment. One salary might be for 12 months of effort, however, and the other for nine months of effort, or one might include overload teaching assignments while the other does not, etc. Thus, the salary parity, as reported in the Brief, between the program and the institution may not always indicate institutional commitment, but may indicate the institution’s exploitation of the education program faculty. Or the allocations of resources to the program faculty and the institution’s faculty in general may be the same, but the allocations to the education faculty may include unique costs not shared by the others (e.g., payments to cooperating teachers, a curriculum resource center, mileage for student teaching supervision, and so forth). The auditors must consider the possibility that parity in resource allocation may have come about for reasons that might signify that the institution is really not committed to the program.

While parity usually signifies commitment, the lack of parity may not be prima facie evidence of a lack of commitment. For example, the faculty may claim that a discrepancy between program and institutional salaries is in fact evidence of commitment: the institution has added a disproportionately large number of new, junior-level positions to the program, positions that were not available to other programs. The auditors would have targeted this salary claim, and if they had verified the evidence for the claim, they could easily have concluded that the salary discrepancy, as explained, indicated the institution was in fact committed to the program with regard to compensation.
# PART SEVEN: THE ACCREDITATION DECISION

The accreditation decision ....................................................... 91

The Accreditation Panel ........................................................ 92
  Role .................................................................................. 92
  Composition and responsibilities .......................................... 92
  Process .............................................................................. 93
  Guidelines for the panel’s deliberations ................................. 96
  Heuristics for the quality principles and capacity standards ... 101
  Heuristics for the accreditation recommendation ................. 106

The panel’s accreditation recommendation ............................. 108

TEAC’s Accreditation Committee and the accreditation decision . . . 110
  The Accreditation Committee’s decision process ................. 111
  The Accreditation Committee’s decision ............................ 115
  Program’s acceptance or appeal of the accreditation decision . 116
  Other roles of the Accreditation Committee ....................... 118
The accreditation decision

Overview

Once the audit is complete, the final phase of the accreditation process is the accreditation decision. The accreditation decision is made in two steps.

1. First, the Accreditation Panel reviews all the materials related to the case to answer the following questions:
   - Are the evidence and the arguments in the Brief sufficient to support the program’s claims that it meets TEAC’s quality principles and standards?
   - Are the program’s graduates competent, caring, and qualified? Is the evidence reliable, valid, and sufficient?

   TEAC’s Accreditation Panel then determines if the evidence, as verified by the audit, is of sufficient magnitude to support the claims in the Brief, and if it is valid and reliable. On the basis of its examination, the panel recommends an accreditation decision to the Accreditation Committee.

2. TEAC’s Accreditation Committee, a committee of the TEAC board of directors, then makes the TEAC accreditation decision. The committee arrives at the decision after a systematic evaluation of the panel’s recommendations and the process that led up to it. In this work, the committee is guided by two overarching questions:
   - Should the Accreditation Panel’s recommendation be accepted?
   - Was the TEAC process that ended in the panel’s recommendation followed properly?

   In their deliberations, the panel and committee are guided by a set of heuristics for the accreditation decision. These heuristics, described in detail in this section of the guide, are the same for both the Inquiry Brief Proposal and the Inquiry Brief with regard to the rationale (2.1), Quality Principle III (3.1 and 3.2), and the evidence of commitment and capacity (4.1–4.7).

   Once the committee makes its decision, the program is notified. If the decision is to accredit, and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report. If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEAC initiates its appeal process, as described at the end of this section.
The Accreditation Panel

Role

After the auditors have determined that the evidence in the Brief is sufficiently accurate and trustworthy, the Accreditation Panel reviews the case. The panel’s charge is to address two questions, and, based on the findings, make a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee:

- Does the evidence of student learning indicate that the program’s graduates are competent, caring, and qualified?
- Does the program have the capacity to monitor and achieve quality and improvement?

To answer these questions, the panel examines and evaluates the evidence about each element and component of the TEAC system (1.0–4.0) to see (1) if there are other plausible interpretations of the evidence, and (2) if the evidence presented is sufficient to satisfy TEAC’s requirements.

In their deliberations, the Accreditation Panel members consider the following documents, all prepared in advance of the meeting: the Brief; the audit report; any responses to the audit report from program faculty; reports from any consulting reviewers; the staff analysis of the case (which sets out the case for accreditation, notes the degrees to which the program satisfies TEAC’s principles and standards, and also notes the staff’s summary of the panelists’ worksheets).

On the basis of its findings, the panel recommends to the Accreditation Committee one of the following categories of TEAC accreditation. The Accreditation Committee, a subcommittee of the TEAC board of directors, then reviews the accreditation report and all the materials related to the case, and makes the accreditation decision.

Accreditation (the preponderance of evidence for each element and its components is sufficient for the claims made in the Brief)

New program or preaccreditation (there is insufficient evidence of student accomplishment and learning, but sufficient evidence for the other elements of the TEAC system)

Provisional accreditation (there is insufficient evidence of capacity for the improvement of the quality of the program, but sufficient evidence for the other elements and components of the system)

Denied accreditation (preponderance of evidence is insufficient and inconclusive about essential elements of the TEAC system)

(More details about the accreditation categories appear below, in the discussion of the Accreditation Committee.)

Composition and responsibilities

The director of the Accreditation Panel, a TEAC staff member, manages the Accreditation Panel’s work and supervises and directs panel functions and meetings. The director serves as chair of all Accreditation Panel meetings and is an ex-officio voting member. The director also assists TEAC’s president in recruiting and training members of the Accreditation Panel.

The panel’s seven members are appointed by TEAC’s president for their expertise in the evaluation of evidence and to represent, collectively, the following categories:

Teacher educators: program faculty, chairs, directors, and deans

Higher education faculty and administrators: non-education program faculty and campus administrators

P–12 practitioners: teachers in the case of teacher education programs, and other practicing professionals in the case of other professional preparation programs
The public: parents and others interested in maintaining the highest standards for professional education programs

Education policy makers: state education agency personnel, legislators, legislative staff, members and staff of state boards of education, and local school board members

Education policy scholars: individuals concerned with relevant research and policy issues

TEAC auditors: the lead auditor of the audit team is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the panel.

At least one member of the Accreditation Panel is someone who is familiar with institutions similar in size, mission, and context to the one offering the program.

In addition, so that they may be fully aware of the issues and reasoning that played roles in the panel’s recommendations for the program’s accreditation, representatives of the program are entitled to attend (in person, by video- or teleconference) the meeting of the Accreditation Panel at which their program is considered for accreditation. They are invited to observe, without comment, the panel’s deliberations and voting process. They also answer any remaining questions the TEAC staff and panel members may have about the Brief. But they do not present their Brief or debate their case; nor do they introduce new evidence, as it would not have been audited.

Any or all of the panelists may participate in a meeting of the panel by conference telephone or by e-mail or video conferencing. As long as everyone participating in the meeting is able to hear or read one another’s messages, the panelist is considered present.

Terms of service on the panel. The panel is assembled from a pool of about a dozen persons. The members of the pool are appointed to an initial three-year term and may be reappointed for one additional term of up to three years. No member serves in the pool for more than two consecutive terms (i.e., consecutive terms cannot exceed six years).

Training for the panelists. All members of the Accreditation Panel pool receive initial and periodic training in the TEAC system and operational policies.

Frequency of panel meetings. The Accreditation Panel convenes twice a year, and on an as-needed basis, but usually no more than three times a year.

Any action required or permitted by the panel may be taken without a meeting if consent in writing, setting forth the action to be taken, is signed by all the panelists authorizing the action. The panelists’ consent has the same force and effect as their unanimous vote would in a meeting.

Voting protocol. Accreditation recommendations require no less than four affirmative votes. This means that a four-person quorum must provide a unanimous recommendation for an accreditation recommendation to be forwarded to the TEAC Accreditation Committee. Similarly, five- and six-member panels must achieve at least four affirmative votes to advance a positive recommendation.

Process

Before the meeting
At least two weeks before the meeting, all participants receive the Briefs and supporting materials. The panelists are expected to study the materials thoroughly, complete and submit the evaluation worksheets on each program before the meeting, review the staff’s analysis of the program’s case for accreditation, and be prepared to make and defend a recommendation about each Brief in accordance with TEAC’s principles and standards.

For the meeting, the TEAC staff assembles all relevant material, including a summary of the panelists’ evaluative worksheets, noting the points of consensus and disagreement about the evidence for each element and component of the TEAC system and citing any potential weaknesses and stipulations that were nominated by the panelists.

The panel director assures that all necessary materials for the meeting are assembled, and that rules related to the meeting quorum and composition are satisfied. Any supporting documents not mailed to panelists are made available for review prior to the beginning of the opening panel session.
Order of business for the panel’s meeting. During its meetings, the Accreditation Panel follows Roberts Rules of Order. A simple majority vote is required to affirm all procedural motions.

During the meeting
At the opening session, the director reminds panelists and observers of the guidelines for the meeting and reviews pertinent information, including the availability of materials and the schedule. The panel’s deliberation of each program will conform to the following format.

Motion. TEAC requires that the accreditation motion be placed before the panel at the outset of its deliberation. So, to open the deliberation, the director of the Accreditation Panel forwards a motion for the accreditation status requested by the program faculty and seeks a pro forma second from members of the Accreditation Panel.

Review of materials. The initial discussion among the panel members concerns the documents pertinent to the case, particularly the findings in the audit report, the staff analysis, and the staff summary of the worksheets. During this open discussion, the panelists may query the auditors and staff about these documents and any matters relating to them.

Questions for the program representatives. During this portion of the meeting, the panelists formulate any questions that may be addressed to the program’s representative(s). The director of the panel and TEAC staff record these questions.

Review of questions. If there are questions, the director of the Accreditation Panel then reviews with the panel the questions that have emerged during this discussion and indicates they will be asked of the program representative(s).

Clarifications by the program representatives. The program representative(s) responds briefly to each question, which is posed by the director of the Accreditation Panel on behalf of the panel. The answer must be limited to the question asked and should not be a response to other issues heard during the panel’s opening discussion, except to correct an error of fact. The purpose of this part of the meeting is only the clarification of points of fact pertinent to an accreditation recommendation. It is not an occasion for debate, presentation, or the introduction of new evidence and information.

Panel’s deliberation. After the program representative(s) has responded, the panel members deliberate two points: (1) if there are any credible alternative explanations of the evidence, and (2) if the evidence adequately supports the claims in the Brief.

At this point, the director of the panel or the staff reviews the staff analysis, which includes the staff’s summary of the panelists’ worksheets. The panel members will have indicated in their worksheets any alternative explanations of the evidence in the Brief that might undermine a faculty’s claim and whether the evidence is sufficient for each element and component of the TEAC system.

Once the plausible alternatives are dismissed to the satisfaction of the panel members, the panel moves on to consider the heuristics (presented in heuristics tables 1 through 4, below) and whether or not the evidence is of sufficient magnitude to support each element adequately.

Consideration of candidates for stipulation and weakness. It is expected that before the meeting and during their deliberations, the panel members will have noted if any evidence for some claims made in the Inquiry Brief is weaker than the evidence for other claims.

The director of the panel reviews any possible stipulations and weaknesses, both those that were noted in the panelists’ worksheets, and any new ones that emerged during the discussion. Following a discussion, the director notes any weaknesses and stipulations for inclusion in the accreditation report.

Panel’s judgment. After the panel has set aside any plausible rival explanations for the evidence, determined that the evidence is of a sufficient magnitude, noted any areas of weakness and potential stipulation, and determined if the program makes the case for satisfying each TEAC element (1.0–4.0), accord-
ing to the TEAC heuristics (tables 1–4), the director turns the panel’s deliberations to the opening accreditation motion. Using a paper ballot, the panel seeks an accreditation recommendation, guided by the heuristics described in tables 5 and 6.

The evidence for a particular component or subcomponent of the TEAC quality principles and standards may be insufficient, but, overall, the program’s evidence sufficient to adequately support the program’s claim that it meets the quality principles and standards. In these cases, the panel formally notes the deficiencies in evidence for the particular quality principle or standard of capacity. It does so in one of two ways, depending on whether the deficiency is in a subcomponent or a component of the quality principle or capacity standard.

If the evidence for a subcomponent is insufficient, the panel formally cites a weakness in the principle or standard and cites the subcomponent as weak.

If the deficiency is in the evidence for a component, the panel cites a stipulation in the quality principle or standard and states that the principle or standard is supported but with the stipulation that the evidence for the component must be made sufficient and remedied within a two-year period.

- Problems with the program’s evidence for subcomponents are noted as weaknesses.
- Problems with the program’s evidence are cited as stipulations.
- Problems with the program’s evidence for Quality Principle I (1.0) results in a recommendation that the program be awarded preaccreditation status.
- Problems with the program’s evidence for Quality Principle III (3.0) or the standard for capacity (4.0) result in a recommendation for provisional accreditation.
- Problems with the program’s evidence for two or more elements result in a recommendation to deny accreditation.

**Voting.** The motion must be voted on and passed with a minimum of four votes (a meeting quorum consists of four voting Accreditation Panel members).

If the motion does not receive at least four positive votes, the chair enters a substitute motion that is guided by the heuristic presented in tables 5 and 6. A second to this motion is, then, secured from members of the Accreditation Panel.26

At the conclusion of this portion of the meeting, any program representatives are excused from the room, with the panel’s appreciation.

**Accreditation justifications.** After the panel approves the final accreditation recommendation and any formal stipulations and weaknesses, its deliberations are concluded. The panelists now review their worksheets to (1) sharpen the justifications for their evaluations and recommendations; (2) amend their descriptions of any weaknesses they noted in the program’s compliance with TEAC’s standards and principles; and (3) assess the program’s performance with regard to student achievement, as required by USDE regulations. The panelists’ individually written comments are used (without attribution) by the director to provide justification and feedback to the program in the accreditation report.

The panel then turns to the next case on the agenda.

**Debriefing.** After all cases are considered, the Accreditation Panel discusses the meeting and offers the director suggestions for improving the quality and efficiency of the review and deliberation process.

**Accreditation report and follow-up activities.** The director of the Accreditation Panel writes an accreditation report and follow-up activities.

---

26 Protocol for an unlikely scenario. Should the motion for accreditation, weakness, or stipulation fail, another motion is made until one is passed by at least four votes. In the event of a tie, the president of TEAC will cast a tie-breaking vote and enable a majority report. In the unlikely event that four votes cannot be found for any motion, the members in majority write an accreditation report and the members of the minority write a minority report in which they explicate their contrary recommendation. The two reports are sent to the Accreditation Committee for a decision. The program is able to appeal the lack of a single panel recommendation if there are adequate grounds. If there are no qualifying grounds, the two reports are sent to the Accreditation Committee. The above scenario is unlikely because TEAC’s formative evaluation would prevent an ambiguous Brief from going forward for audit and for the panel’s deliberation.
The charge to the panel
In evaluating the program’s evidence for each component of the TEAC system, the panel has two tasks: (1) to eliminate, if possible, the plausible rival hypotheses for the interpretation of the evidence that undermine its validity; and (2) to determine how much evidence is sufficient to support the claim that the program satisfies the system’s elements.

In this respect, TEAC panel members are like jurors in the American judicial process, who must determine whether the evidence rises to a level that satisfies a legal standard. Whereas the legal standard may require, for example, evidence of intent, the evidence that supports the claim of intent resists a clear-cut standard in the traditional sense of some bright line between intention and no intention. TEAC Accreditation Panel members, like jurors, must weigh the evidence and decide if the evidence is sufficient to certify that the program merits accreditation, provisional, new program, preaccreditation status, or a continuation of candidate status.

In practice, given the state of scholarship in education, the TEAC standard of evidence is met when the evidence cited in the Brief is consistent with the claims made about student learning and when there is little or no credible evidence that is inconsistent with the claims.

How the panel makes its decision
Although TEAC’s quality principles and standards for program capacity suggest the characteristics of a quality program, they do not offer sure rules or algorithms to follow that would determine whether or not the evidence that a program has these characteristics is trustworthy and sufficient.

For this reason, to establish that a program has met TEAC’s principles and standards, TEAC employs heuristics to guide the accreditation decision making and judgment about whether or not the evidence of student learning is trustworthy (determined by the audit team) and sufficient (determined by the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee).

TEAC’s heuristics guide the determination of whether or not the cited evidence of student learning, for example, is accurate and trustworthy; is, in fact, evidence of what it purports to be; and is sufficient to support the program faculty’s claims for student learning.
Ruling out rival hypotheses. The panel members represent several roles in the profession because their diversity makes it more likely that they can bring forward alternative explanations of the evidence presented in the Brief. The panel conceptually tests the evidence in the Brief to see if these alternatives can be ruled out, or shown to be inconsistent with the claims made in the Brief.

 Sufficiency of the evidence. The panel then determines whether the evidence that survives these tests is of sufficient magnitude. It does this, in the absence of any other guidance, by applying a heuristic of 75 percent.

The 75 percent heuristic is a guide to assist the panel in its determination of evidentiary sufficiency in cases where there are no other guides provided in the TEAC principles and standards or by research standards or findings from the scholarship in education.

The 75 percent heuristic is applied to the evidence that is presented in the Brief. It is applied, in other words, to the evidence the faculty truly relies upon. It is also applied to corroborating, or disconfirming, evidence that was uncovered by the auditors and presented in the audit report.

TEAC elements. The panel must determine whether or not the program meets TEAC’s quality principles and standards of capacity for quality. For this decision, TEAC has adopted a part/whole heuristic. This heuristic calls for the panel to consider the components of each element, make a decision about each, and move on successively to the consideration of each element in the TEAC system until the panel can determine by vote the program’s conformity to one of the TEAC accreditation categories.

The sections that follow describe in detail the heuristics that the panel uses to determine the sufficiency of evidence, to determine that the program meets TEAC’s quality principles and capacity standards, and to make the accreditation recommendation. (The heuristic tables are also presented together in Appendix 3.)

Ruling out rival hypotheses and determining sufficiency of evidence

The panel begins its work by attempting to reduce the credibility of the obvious rival hypothesis of chance—that the evidence the program presents in the Brief is simply what would have been expected by chance, and not by what the program faculty claim. Generally, the role of unsystematic or random factors and “noise” can be reduced, or substantially eliminated, when the Brief has evidence supporting the reliability of the assessment procedures used to generate the evidence in the first place. This is the logic behind Quality Principle II (component 2.2).

 Threats to reliability

The panel considers several threats to the reliability and validity of the evidence in the Brief. One threat is from unsystematic factors that introduce errors that plague much of the evidence in education.

For example, if a program faculty were to claim that 20 percent of the board-certified teachers in its state are graduates of its program, the panelists would wonder whether or not this was merely what would be expected by chance. If the program had prepared 60 percent or more of the teachers in the state, 20 percent or more could be expected by chance alone. Had only 1 percent of the teachers in the state graduated from the program, it would be unlikely that the 20 percent board-certified teacher rate could be dismissed as just what would have been expected by chance. Had the program faculty missed this point, incidentally, the formative evaluation or the audit could be expected to have examined it by way of corroborating the evidence in the Brief.

To take another example, if the distribution of scores of the program’s graduates on the state’s license examination were on the order of the variation in scores that would be expected by chance, the program faculty or the panel would make nothing of them. There are, of course, several statistical techniques for assessing the degree to which chance is a compelling rival hypothesis that would account adequately for the evidence in the Brief.

Regression to the mean is a statistical artifact associated with the retesting of those who had extremely
high or low scores. These retested scores can be expected to shift by chance towards the group’s average or mean score as a consequence of the statistical error properties of extreme scores, and not as a consequence of what might be claimed by the program faculty.

Ruling out rival hypotheses
The next step in the deliberation calls for the panelists to attempt to rule out rival hypotheses that are rooted in systematic errors that might be embedded in the evidence cited in the Brief. Campbell and Stanley27 have identified several sources of systematic error that could reduce the validity of the evidence cited in a Brief. Those potentially related to a Brief are recounted below.

For every data point (mean, count, frequency, etc.) reported to advance the credibility of a claim associated with Quality Principle I, the panel members should ask themselves the following questions.

1. Representative data. Are the measures reported truly representative of the program’s students and graduates? At least two rival hypotheses or factors come into play in deliberating on this question and each needs to be ruled out:

a) Is there a “selection” factor? Is the evidence in the Brief about only a select and unrepresentative group of students and graduates? If a program reports 100 percent pass rate on a license examination, or an average score at the 85th percentile, but it is only for some of its students, the panelists cannot easily rule out the rival hypothesis that evidence may have more to do with the selection of the students than with accomplishments of the entire group about which the claims are made. It may be that the evidence cited in the Brief is only about full-time students when the majority of students are part-time attendees, or it may be about only those who work in State when most of the graduates work elsewhere, or it may be about only the in-state residents, when substantial portions were out-of-state enrollees, or it may exclude transfer students, or it may exclude dual majors, etc.

b) Is there a “dropout” factor? This question is quite similar to the selection factor, because it refers to the possibility that the evidence is restricted to a particular select group—in this case, those who secured a teaching position. This factor might show itself in gain score evidence. Here a rival hypothesis for the gains reported in an Inquiry Brief would be that the gains in average scores, for example, were not really gains in accomplishment on anyone’s part, but only evidence that the weaker students were not hired as teachers and were not counted. Or it might be the case that the evidence of accomplishment of the program’s graduates might only be based on the more able graduates who gained employment immediately upon graduation. It might not be evidence that was representative of all of the students who completed the program.

The panel determines that the statistics and findings are relevant to the populations about which the claims are advanced and not just some part of the population that does not truly represent the population of students or graduates.

2. Measurement errors and influence. Are the procedures and assessments used by the program faculty to collect the evidence reported in the Brief themselves a factor in the evidence? Do they rival the claims the faculty seeks to make about the evidence?

Again, the panel members should take at least three factors into consideration.

a) Is the assessment itself a factor? Do raters get tired as they rate large numbers of students, so their discriminations become less accurate over time? Is there “observer bias”? Is care taken to shield raters and observers from having a bias (positive or negative) toward the program or toward its graduates? Are the reviewers “blind”? Are they disinterested parties? Do they have the opportunity to rate students in the program and those not in the program? Do they have the opportunity to rate students near the finish of their program as well as those just beginning?

Is there variation in the calibration of the assessment instrument from one time to another so that a score gain is nothing more than a recalibration effect (as in the new SAT, for example)? Has the cut-score, or the scale range, been changed so that gains in pass rate,

or even absolute scores, are meaningless? Is the true zero score known? A score of 170 out of 190 may look impressive if the zero score is truly zero, but not if the zero score (as in some Praxis tests) is set at 150. Has there been grade inflation over the period of the program’s reporting? Are grades given for reasons other than academic accomplishment, such as attendance, punctuality, honesty, effort, or extra work?

The results from surveys, as noted earlier, are known to be affected by the order in which questions were presented, the context in which questions appeared, whether the questions weed out those with no opinion (filtering), the range and order of choices, whether middle categories were provided, whether the format was open or closed, and so forth.

b) Is there a testing factor? Testing itself is a factor, for example, when the students taking the test, or being rated with a checklist, have experienced the ratings and received feedback many, many times prior to the occasion reported in the Brief. Repeated testing, while perhaps a component of an effective evaluation system, renders the measures hard to interpret because the reported effects may be more parsimoniously accounted for as practice effects, i.e., the result of the student’s experience or practice with the test. Related to the testing factor is the Hawthorne effect, namely the finding that testing or observation itself, independently of what is being tested, is a factor that affects the results of the test or observation (i.e., the mere looking or measuring itself has an effect on what is being measured).

Next, drawing on their professional expertise, the panel members consider (and, presumably, reject) any other rival hypotheses. For example, any number of events, and the interaction of events, that could have intervened between one measurement and another. Many of these events are candidates for hypotheses that rival the one the faculty has advanced in its Brief, and the panel members should bring them forward in the discussion and deliberations so that they may be eliminated.

Determining sufficiency
The final step in the deliberation comes after the panel has satisfied itself that there are no surviving plausible rival hypotheses. At this stage, the panel would also have concluded that the TEAC standard of evidence is met because the evidence is consistent with the claims, and there is little credible evidence in the Brief or in the audit report that is inconsistent with the claims. The question that remains, however, is whether the evidence, which has survived the challenges cited above, is sufficient to support the claims that TEAC requires to satisfy the quality principles and standards of capacity.

To determine sufficiency, the panel applies a 75 percent heuristic to the evidence as a guide. This heuristic is applied in instances where there is no other guide provided by TEAC or by the state-of-the-art practices and standards of contemporary scholarship.

Why use the 75 percent heuristic? The field has established very few metrics for magnitude, but it has some, like the universally used, although not uncontested, criterion for statistical significance:

- A probability less than .05 is the research standard used to establish that an event probably happened for some reasons other than chance.
- Reliability coefficients for individually administered standardized tests are found generally in .90 range, and in the .80 range for group administered standardized tests.
- The best validity coefficients are about .50 (e.g., between IQ and school grades).
- Universities and colleges typically require a 2.0 minimum index out of 4.0 for graduation.
- States have set the Praxis I cut scores around 170 out of 190 (where the zero score is 150).
- The academic major is typically 30 credits, the academic minor is usually 15 credits, the semester is 14 to 15 weeks, the BA or BS degree is rarely less than 120 credits, the master’s degree is about 30 graduate credits, and so forth.28

By and large, however, the field has not committed itself to a minimum magnitude for the measures it

---

28 There is, however, no consensus about the number of credits for the doctoral degree.
uses, and it has rarely validated the few minimums it has set. So, the question remains for the panelists: how much is enough to support the claim that Quality Principle I has been satisfied, or how much stability or consistency is enough to support the claim that a measure is reliable, or how large does the association need to be between two measures to support the claim that they are measuring more or less the same thing, and so forth?

Therefore, in areas where there is no other guidance, TEAC employs a 75 percent heuristic as a guide to solve these problems; that is, 75 percent of whatever measure is cited in the Brief is a good guide to the amount or magnitude that would be sufficient to meet TEAC’s standard. The panel applies the 75 percent heuristic to whatever measure the program cites as evidence.

**When to use the 75 percent heuristic.** The panel should apply the 75 percent heuristic to the empirical maximum, not the theoretical maximum.

- For example, one Praxis test has a ceiling score of 990, but, in fact, no one out of 27,000 test takers scores higher than 790. The panelists would apply the 75 percent heuristic to this ceiling score, not to the 990 maximum score. Because the highest reliability coefficients in the literature are about .90, the TEAC heuristic would accept .68 as the lowest index of reliability and about .38 for the lowest index of validity as the best validity coefficients are about .50. The lowest mean grade index on a four-point scale would be 3.0 by the heuristic, but only if there were a reasonable number of 4.0 scorers, for example. The empirical maximum, if it is not otherwise known, may be established by determining the average score (frequencies, counts, etc.) of the top 10 percent of scorers.

- If the program reports the mean score on a standardized test, the 75 percent heuristic would be applied to the maximum empirical score. For example, if the program reported a mean score of 170 on Praxis I (math), which ranges from 150 to 190, the panelists would take 75 percent of the 40 point spread (or 30 points) and be guided not to accept mean scores less than 180 as sufficient evidence (not 75 percent of 190 or the much lower score of 142). If, however, the program reported only pass rates (as currently required under Title II), and not the mean score, then the panel would determine sufficiency by considering 75 percent of the pass rates for the top 10 percent of programs. Thus, if the average pass rate of the top 10 percent of programs were 95 percent, a program’s 71 percent pass rate would be sufficient.

It would also be appropriate for the panelists to apply the 75 percent heuristic to the preponderance of the evidence standard, as TEAC has left the judgment of what constitutes “preponderance” to the panel’s judgment. The panel, using the 75 percent heuristic, would accept as sufficient evidence of commitment a case where at least 75 percent of the program’s measures meet the parity standard (appreciable difference between the norms of the program and the institution with regard to the standards of capacity).

**When not to use the 75 percent heuristic.** The panel employs the 75 percent heuristic only in the absence of any other guidance with regard to the magnitude of what would constitute a sufficient or adequate amount for TEAC’s principles and standards.

- TEAC requires, for example, the program faculty to address in its Brief all the components of the TEAC system (1.0-4.7), not just 75 percent of them.

- TEAC requires that the preponderance of evidence for commitment show no appreciable differences between the institutional norm and the program norm. Because the field has established procedures for determining if differences are trivial or significant, it would not be appropriate for the panelists to apply the 75 percent heuristic to the parity requirement. The panel would not accept as evidence of commitment a case where the program norm was 75 percent of the institutional norm in place of TEAC’s requirement of it being trivially different from it.
Because the 75 percent heuristic is not a rule or an algorithm, it is only a guide to assist the panel in determining the sufficiency of the evidence with regard to any claim made in the Brief. It cannot be a rule or algorithm because if it were applied automatically to all the evidence, it could lead to serious errors. For example:

- Some regions of the country have such teacher shortages that nearly 100 percent of graduates who wish to teach will find teaching positions. In such a region, a 75 percent hiring rate might actually indicate a significant weakness in the program, not the strength that the program faculty may be alleging. If a program in a region with teacher shortages were to base a claim of program quality on hiring rates, the panel would need to be free to consider a more demanding standard than 75 percent. If the panel did, it would insure that it applied its logic even-handedly to all programs during the period in which there was a teaching shortage in a region.

- If there were evidence of grade or score inflation, the panel would need to be free to consider a higher magnitude than 75 percent of the top grade or score as a measure of sufficient evidence. On the other hand, the panel needs to be free to consider a lower magnitude for programs that have resisted grade inflation pressures and held to an older standard in which the modal grade at the institution and program for satisfactory work is a C or 2.0. In other cases, the 75 percent guideline may not reflect the grade index a program may have actually determined through careful studies of predictive and concurrent validity.

Heuristics for the quality principles and capacity standards

TEAC has adopted a part/whole heuristic for guiding the next stage of the panel’s decision-making. This heuristic calls for the panel to consider the components of each element, make a decision about each, and move on successively to the consideration of each element in the TEAC system until the panel can determine by vote the program’s conformity to one of the TEAC accreditation categories.

By this time in its deliberations, the panel would have determined whether or not there is sufficient evidence for the claims associated with each component in the system, (1.1 through 4.7). Once that is determined, the panel takes up the major elements of the TEAC system (1.0 2.0, 3.0, and 4.0) in accordance with the guidance provided in heuristic tables 1–4.

Quality Principle I

The factors that the panel considers in its evaluation of the evidence of student learning are presented in the first column of heuristic table 1 along with the characteristics of Quality Principle I (element 1.0), which determine whether it is above or below TEAC’s standard.

The above standard column defines a goal, which means that some programs may be well above the threshold for meeting the standard while others may be just above the below standard mark.

An Inquiry Brief that is well above standard has compelling and persuasive evidence, from several mutually consistent and representative sources, about each component and has received a clean opinion in the audit.

A Brief that is at the standard might have received a qualified audit opinion on element 1.0 evidence that was, if not compelling, at least sufficient for, and consistent with, its claims of student learning on each component of Quality Principle I.

However, if the preponderance of below standard attributes adheres to the Inquiry Brief, the panel would find the Brief below standard on Quality Principle I.
The cross-cutting liberal arts themes (learning-to-learn, multicultural perspective, and technology) are parts—or subcomponents—of the components of Quality Principle I: subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skill. If the evidence for them is weak, the panel may cite a formal weakness. If the weakness is severe enough to undermine the claims for subject matter knowledge, etc. altogether, the weakness may be cited as a stipulation.

Heuristic Table 1. Guidelines for Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of student learning:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>All components are analyzed (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td>Some components missing in the analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Evidence is consistent with the claim that each component was learned</td>
<td>Evidence is inconsistent with the claim that each component was learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>Preponderance of evidence is of sufficient magnitude</td>
<td>Preponderance of evidence is of insufficient magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quality Principle II
The factors that contribute to the evaluation of Quality Principle II (2.0, the evidence for valid assessment of student learning), are presented in heuristic table 2.

This element of the system has two interrelated components: the rationale for the validity of the assessments (2.1); and the empirical evidence that supports the faculty’s interpretation of validity (2.2). In evaluating the methods the faculty employs to secure evidence of student learning, the panel must balance the credibility of the rationale for the validity of the assessments (2.1) and the empirical evidence of the validity of the measures (2.2).

It is possible, for example, that the empirical evidence for reliability and validity (2.2) could be weak, but that overall the rationale that the assessments were trustworthy and on target could be compelling. Authentic assessment approaches sometimes fit this case where the evidence is persuasive, but the usual evidence for reliability and validity, if acquired at all, is lacking. In this case, the panel could find Quality Principle II above standard on the strength of a compelling rationale for the assessments (2.1), coupled with a feasible plan to secure better evidence of validity about the methods used to procure evidence of student learning.

Or, it could be the other way around. The program could be found to satisfy Quality Principle II if the panel determines that the program provides compelling and persuasive empirical evidence that the assessments were valid, but its rationale for the assessments is relatively weak. This might happen in the case of some standardized tests: they have sound reliability and validity statistics, but the faculty’s rationale does not make a credible connection between the test and the program’s goals, the faculty’s claims for the program, or the program’s requirements.

Note: The panel’s evaluation of 2.0 in the Inquiry Brief Proposal is determined solely by the panel’s judgment of rationale (2.1). The Inquiry Brief Proposal only proposes the means by which it will provide evidence of validity (2.2) and student learning. As with Quality Principle I, the evidence for Quality Principle II is more properly seen as pilot data that strengthens the rationale’s credibility.

Note: Quality Principle I is not considered in the panel’s evaluation of the Inquiry Brief Proposal, except if the program presents pilot data about Quality Principle I.
Quality Principle III

The panel bases its evaluation of *Quality Principle III* (3.0) on the evidence of institutional learning. The factors for the evaluation are presented in heuristic table 3, below.

The evidence that supports *Quality Principle III* is found in the program’s internal audit report. The internal audit report shows that the program has addressed each capacity standard, and if it did not address one, other elements in the quality control system compensated for the absence. A program, for example, might have an open admissions policy (no evidence of selection for quality), but also evidence that other elements in the quality control system enhanced quality and compensated for the weakness or absence of admission standards.

A quality control system (QCS) is successful not only when it addresses each capacity standard, which it must, but also when it identifies factors, issues, and problems that the program faculty should address to improve their program. These problems and issues are documented in the record of decisions the faculty has made over the years, and in the faculty’s plans to undertake the inquiries needed to improve their program.

When the QCS identifies problematic areas in the program, the faculty is expected to consider ways to remedy the problem and formulate a plan to improve the program. The principal test of whether a modification in the program is an improvement, and not simply a change, is its link to the subsequent evidence of greater student learning that enhances the faculty’s claim that the program’s graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.

Over time, the faculty members’ ongoing inquiry and research efforts, called for in *Quality Principle III*, should be able to uncover important links between the capacity dimensions and appropriate levels of student learning. *Quality Principle III* requires that there is a plan to undertake these investigations as a part of the normal workings of the program’s QCS.
Capacity for Program Quality (4.0)
The program faculty needs to provide evidence-based and verifiable responses to 4.1.1–4.7.2 to satisfy the requirements of 4.0. The factors that contribute to the panel’s conclusion about whether the program has sufficient capacity to offer a quality program are presented in heuristic table 4, below.

The heuristic that guides the panel in its deliberations about 4.0 has three parts. These are associated generally with three lines of evidence that support the claim that the program seeking accreditation is offered by an institution and faculty that have the capacity to offer a quality program. These three lines of evidence are

1. Evidence that the program’s QCS addresses 4.1.1–4.7.2 (covered for Quality Principle III in heuristic table 3 and in heuristic table 4);

2. Evidence of parity between the program and the institution with regard to features the program has in common with the other programs given by the institution (determined by the auditors);

3. Evidence of sufficiency with regard to the unique features of a professional education program.

The TEAC system has a mechanism or provision for ensuring quality with regard to each of the capacity components (4.1–4.7). As required for Quality Principle III, in its internal audit of the QCS, the program examines each component (4.1–4.7) of the program’s capacity for quality. The program’s findings in the internal audit, as verified by TEAC’s audit report, provide one line of evidence that supports the conclusion that the program monitors each component of capacity for its connections to the quality of the program. The Discussion section of the Inquiry Brief also documents the program’s record of improving the quality of the program through the instrument of its quality control system (3.1) and also gives the program’s plan for acting on the evidence of student learning it has found over the years and at present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heuristic Table 3. Guidelines for Quality Principle III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.0 Factors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1 Decision making</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis for past decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis for future decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2 Quality Control System</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The panelists consider the factors cited in heuristic table 4 when they deliberate about whether or not the Inquiry Brief contains sufficient evidence that the program faculty has the capacity to offer a quality program. The panel comes to the conclusion that there is sufficient overall capacity when the evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents (4.1.1–4.7.2) is consistent with that conclusion.

**Heuristic Table 4. Guidelines for Capacity (4.0)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>All subcomponents of capacity (4.1–4.7) are addressed</td>
<td>Some subcomponents of capacity (4.1–4.7) are not addressed in the Inquiry Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment*</td>
<td>Parity on the preponderance of components (4.1–4.7)</td>
<td>Lack of parity on the preponderance of components (4.1–4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>Sufficient evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In their audit report, the auditors render the judgment of whether or not the institution is committed to the program seeking accreditation. In accepting the report, the panel does not make a separate decision about commitment.

**Issues in evaluating capacity for quality**

One key indicator that the program has the capacity for quality is if the program is either superior to or indistinguishable from other programs in the institution with regard to the components of capacity. Because all accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education have capacity standards for the seven areas covered by TEAC 4.1–4.7, the institution’s accreditation by a regional accreditor in good standing, or the equivalent, is required by TEAC because it signifies that the institution overall has the capacity for quality.

The capacity of a professional education program for quality, while rarely investigated directly by a regional accreditor, can be established in the Inquiry Brief when the program faculty can show that the program conforms to, or exceeds, the institutional norm on each of the dimensions of program quality that are shared by the program and the institution’s other programs.

On this line of reasoning, TEAC requires evidence that the institution is committed to providing sufficient capacity for program quality. This commitment is shown by the fact that the institution’s investment in the program with regard to the curriculum, faculty, facilities, fiscal and administrative support, student services, and respect for student views conforms to the overall institutional standards in each of these areas. Each of these institutional standards, of course, has previously met the capacity standards of an accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The details of the metrics associated with the seven components of capacity are left to the institution to craft with the provision that they be applied uniformly across all programs the institution offers.

TEAC’s interest in the institutional commitment to the capacity of the program for quality extends beyond TEAC’s standards on capacity, however. TEAC seeks to assure itself and others that the institution is serious about teacher education, and that it is committed to the continual improvement of the quality of the programs it offers. The institution can be said to be committed to the program when it supports the program at the same level as, or better than, its support of the institution’s programs as a whole.

The program faculty also needs to provide evidence that the capacity the program enjoys, even when on a par with the capacity of the institution overall, is sufficient for a quality professional education program. For this reason TEAC’s capacity standards in-
clude subcomponents, in addition to those devoted to parity and the QCS, which specifically address the evidence of the sufficiency and adequacy of the program’s capacity for quality.

**Heuristics for the accreditation recommendation**

Heuristic table 5 provides a continuation of the part/whole heuristic of decision-making that the panel uses to come to one of the accreditation recommendations.

**Heuristic Table 5. Heuristics for the Accreditation Decision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale &amp; methods</th>
<th>Results 1.0</th>
<th>Quality control system 3.0</th>
<th>Accreditation decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Preaccredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard* 2.1</td>
<td>Absent*</td>
<td>Above standard*</td>
<td>New Program or preaccredit*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Inquiry Brief Proposal only

The heuristic, one of several that could be employed, calls for the separate evaluation of each element of the system (1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0) as a way of guiding the decision about the whole system. The table shows how the evaluations of the elements of the TEAC system are combined to inform and guide the panel to making an overall accreditation recommendation.

The table reveals a delicate balance between the weight to be given to the results (1.0) and the weight to be given to the efforts for program improvement and quality control (3.0) in the overall accreditation decision. On balance, a weakness in the quality control system is more serious than weak results, which is why the former leads to provisional accreditation, a status which can be held for only two years, while the latter leads to preaccreditation, a status which can be held for five years. On the other hand evidence of student learning (results) is the pivotal factor in full accreditation.

On logical grounds alone it would seem that compelling evidence could not flow from invalid means of gathering evidence and for that reason heuristic table 5 shows no instance where the evidence for Quality Principle II is below standard and the results (Quality Principle I) are above standard. It may be the case, nevertheless, that a program has solid results, but without evidence of validity and a credible rationale for its assessments even a program with seemingly good results cannot be accredited by TEAC.

Heuristic table 6, below, indicates how the capacity standards moderate the decisions portrayed in heuristic table 5. If the evidence supporting the capacity standards is collectively below standard, then the program that would otherwise have earned an accreditation decision now receives provisional accreditation, and a program that would earn provisional accreditation must be denied accreditation.

If the evidence about commitment in an Inquiry Brief Proposal is below standard, neither preaccreditation or new program accreditation is granted without a plan for improvement that specifically and credibly addresses the elements of commitment that are below standard.

Preaccreditation and new program accreditation are generally based upon the soundness of the quality control system, the claims and assessment rationale, and evidence of capacity. The expectation in any
case is that the program faculty can develop evidence supporting the claims of student learning, validity of the measures, and sufficiency of capacity for quality within five years.

Preaccreditation has different connotations depending upon whether an Inquiry Brief or an Inquiry Brief Proposal was submitted. In the case of the Inquiry Brief, it would mean the evidence of student learning is below standard. In the case of the Proposal, it would mean no evidence was available to be submitted and the program faculty members were proposing means to secure evidence.

On logical grounds it would also seem that programs without the capacity for quality (i.e., below standard in 4.0) could not have compelling evidence to support the three quality principles. The theoretical and empirical links between capacity and quality, however, are confused and uncertain in the field of education.

As a result, it is possible that a program could satisfy TEAC’s quality principles and still fail to satisfy all, or even the preponderance, of TEAC’s capacity standards for quality (4.1–4.7). It could do this through heroic efforts on the part of students and faculty, for example. For this reason heuristic table 6 indicates that some programs below standard in their capacity for quality can still be accredited, but only provisionally or with stipulations, on the strength of their demonstrated quality with regard to TEAC’s quality principles.

---

**Heuristic Table 6**
(Int a program is below the capacity standards for program quality in the final accreditation recommendation and decision)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation decision in heuristic table 5</th>
<th>Capacity for quality (4.0)*</th>
<th>Accreditation decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accredit</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaccredit or New program accredit</td>
<td>Below standard (but above on commitment)</td>
<td>Preaccredit (with stipulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaccredit or New program accredit</td>
<td>Below standard (but below on commitment)</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If capacity is above standard, there is no change in the decision portrayed in heuristic table 5.
The panel’s accreditation recommendation

Inquiry Brief
A recommendation to accredit is made when, guided by the factors in heuristic tables 5 and 6, the panel finds that the Inquiry Brief, coupled with the auditors’ findings, indicates that the program faculty’s claims about the quality principles and capacity standards are fully warranted and justified, or that support for the claims is at least consistent with evidence derived from contemporary research practices.

A recommendation to grant provisional accreditation is made when, guided by the factors in heuristic tables 5 and 6, the panel finds that the Inquiry Brief, coupled with the auditors’ findings, indicates that the program faculty’s claims about Quality Principles I and II are warranted and justified, but there is insufficient of evidence to support Quality Principle III or the capacity standards.

Provisional accreditation indicates, on the strength of the evidence, that the program faculty can remedy the weaknesses in the Inquiry Brief and become fully accredited within two years.

A recommendation to grant preaccreditation status is made when, guided by the factors in heuristic tables 5 and 6, the panel finds that the Inquiry Brief, coupled with the auditors’ findings, fails to support the program faculty’s claims about Quality Principle I, but there is sufficient evidence to support the claims with regard to the other quality principles and capacity standards.

A recommendation to grant preaccreditation status is made when, guided by the factors in heuristic tables 5 and 6, the panel finds that the Inquiry Brief Proposal, coupled with the auditors’ findings, indicates that there is evidence of a sound rationale, commitment, and quality control system and that the evidence of Quality Principle I is forthcoming.

Preaccreditation or new program status indicates that the program, on the strength of several positive indicators, would be able to provide the evidence required for accreditation within a five-year period.

Accreditation denied
A recommendation to deny accreditation is made when, guided by the factors in heuristic tables 5 and 6, the panel finds that the Inquiry Brief or the Inquiry Brief Proposal, coupled with the auditors’ findings, fails to support the program faculty’s claims and there is little likelihood that additional evidence and analysis would indicate the faculty’s claims about the quality principles and capacity standards could be supported.

A denied decision usually indicates a weak quality control system and a program faculty that has not been able to react productively at the current time to the weaknesses uncovered in the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal. Accreditation must be denied in these circumstances. The program has the option of terminating its bid for accreditation in TEAC or returning to candidate status and the eventual formulation of plan that would lead to accreditation.

Panel’s consideration and designation of stipulations and weaknesses
In their evaluation of the evidence for and against each quality principle, the panelists may find that the evidence for a particular component or subcomponent of the principle is insufficient, but that overall there is other evidence that is sufficient to adequately

29 Or in the standard of capacity for program quality [element 4.0, which has seven components (4.1–4.7), each of which has three to four subcomponents (4.1.1, etc.).]
support the quality principle. In these cases, the panel formally notes the deficiencies in evidence for a quality principle or the capacity standard. It does so in one of two ways, depending on whether the deficiency is in a subcomponent or a component of the quality principle or the capacity standard.

A **weakness** is a deficiency in the evidence that is *not* so serious that it causes the panel to find one of the components below standard. A **stipulation** is a deficiency that is serious enough to place a component below the standard, but not so serious that it causes the panel to find one of the elements below standard.

If the evidence for a **subcomponent** is insufficient, the panel formally cites a **weakness** in the quality principle and cites the subcomponent as weak.

If the deficiency is in the evidence for a **component**, the panel cites a stipulation in the quality principle and states that the quality principle is supported, but with the stipulation that the evidence for the component must be made sufficient and remedied within a two year period.

For example:

- **Weaknesses.** If the program does not publish an academic calendar (as required in 4.6.2) but there is sufficient other evidence for 4.6, this circumstance would lead the panel to cite the failure to publish a calendar as a weakness in the evidence for capacity. If the evidence for one of the cross-cutting themes associated with a component of Quality Principle I was insufficient, the panel would cite a weakness in the quality principle.

- **If the evidence for technology in the subject matter (or learning to learn or multicultural competence) was insufficient, but the rest of the evidence for subject matter knowledge were sufficient, the weakness in subject matter attributed to technology would be formally noted as a weakness in the evidence for subject matter technology.**

- **Stipulations.** It might be the case that the evidence for the resolution of student complaints is insufficient (4.7), but the evidence for the rest of 4.0 is adequate. In this case the panel would conclude that 4.0 was satisfied in its entirety, but with the stipulation the deficiencies in evidence for the successful resolution of student complaints (4.7) be remedied in two years.

- Or, it might be the case that the evidence for pedagogical knowledge (1.2) was insufficient, but that the evidence for 1.1 and 1.3 and the cross-cutting themes was so strong that the Panel concluded that Quality Principle I was satisfied. In that case, the panel would cite pedagogical knowledge as a stipulation. In other words, the panel would find that the evidence for Quality Principle I was sufficient but with the stipulation that deficiencies in evidence for pedagogical knowledge be remedied.

- Or it might be the case that the program has insufficient evidence for the reliability of its assessments (2.2), but has a particularly persuasive and comprehensive rationale for the assessments (2.1). The panel might find that overall Quality Principle II was satisfied, but with the stipulation that the deficiencies in the evidence of reliability and validity be remedied in the future.

**Weaknesses, stipulations, and the panel’s accreditation recommendation**

- Problems with the program’s evidence for subcomponents are noted as **weaknesses**.

- Problems with the program’s evidence for components are noted as **stipulations**.

- Problems with the program’s evidence for element 1.0 results in a recommendation that the program be awarded **preaccreditation** status.

- Problems with the program’s evidence for elements 3.0 or 4.0 result in a recommendation for **provisional** accreditation.

- Problems with the program’s evidence for two or more elements result in a recommendation to **deny** accreditation.

---

30 The cross-cutting themes serve as subcomponents of the components of Quality Principle I with regard to the citations of weaknesses.
The Accreditation Committee, a committee of TEAC’s board of director, makes the accreditation decision.

After the panel meeting, the TEAC staff sends the panel’s accreditation report, which contains its accreditation recommendations, to the program’s head, who has two weeks in which to respond in writing to the recommendations in the report. In anticipation of the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the president of TEAC collects, reviews, and distributes the appropriate documents from the accreditation process.

At its meeting, the Accreditation Committee reviews the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal, the final audit report, any reports from consulting reviewers, the staff analysis, the accreditation report, any additional information provided by TEAC’s president, and any responses from the program under review. After deliberation, the Accreditation Committee either accepts or rejects by a majority vote the recommendation of the Accreditation Panel.

In the unlikely event that the Accreditation Committee fails to accept the panel’s recommendation, the committee must give written reasons for its own decision to reject the recommendations in the accreditation report and to formulate new ones. The program may appeal the Accreditation Committee’s decision and an Appeals Panel, appointed by the chair of the board of directors, hears the appeal in accordance with TEAC’s policy on appeals.

Order of business
At the opening of the Accreditation Committee meeting, the chair of the committee introduces the members, staff, observers, and guests. The chair reminds those in attendance of the guidelines for the meeting and reviews pertinent information, including the availability of materials and the schedule. The consideration of each Brief conforms to the following format:

1. Presentation of the case. One member of the committee, selected beforehand by the chair, gives an overview of the panel’s recommendations and the evidence that the TEAC staff complied with TEAC’s policies and regulations.

2. Certification of the process. Certification that TEAC has followed its procedures in the case before the committee is determined by a majority vote of the committee. The committee examines the documentation cited by the TEAC staff and certifies that the TEAC’s procedures, policies, regulations were followed. In cases where the committee finds that the staff’s failure to satisfactorily comply with the procedures was of some consequence, it orders remedies for the errors made by the staff.

3. Acceptance of the panel’s recommendations. Once the committee certifies that TEAC has followed its process, or determines that the process was not unduly compromised, the committee examines each finding and recommendation the panel has made, as well as any third-party comments and any rejoinder the program may have made.

Inquiry Brief Proposal
In the case of an Inquiry Brief Proposal, the committee scrutinizes the panel’s conclusions with regard to (1) the rationale required for Quality Principle II; (2) the program’s internal audit of its quality control system required for Quality Principle III; and (3) the evidence of for TEAC’s standard of capacity for quality. In other words, the committee must examine the panel’s conclusions about the following elements of the TEAC system: 2.1, 3.2, and 4.0.

In most cases, the panel, based on its evaluation of the entire record, finds that the Inquiry Brief Proposal supports the program’s overall claim that it can produce an acceptable Inquiry Brief within five years if it follows the plan presented in the Inquiry Brief.
Proposal. The committee’s task, however, is to see if there is credible evidence to show that the program faculty will not succeed. If there is credible evidence, the committee would not award preaccreditation or new program accreditation. If, on the other hand, there is no counter evidence of consequence, the committee accepts the panel’s recommendation for new program accreditation or preaccreditation.

If the panel had not recommended new program or preaccreditation status, then the committee would seek evidence in the record that the program can produce an acceptable Inquiry Brief within five years if it follows the plan presented in the Inquiry Brief Proposal. If the committee finds credible and persuasive evidence that the program can produce an acceptable Inquiry Brief, the committee rejects the panel’s recommendation to deny accreditation and awards the appropriate accreditation status in its place.

Inquiry Brief
In the case of an Inquiry Brief, where the recommendation typically is for initial or continuing accreditation, the committee similarly scrutinizes the panel’s conclusions, including any stipulations and weaknesses the panel has formulated with regard to each of the three quality principles and the standard of program capacity for quality. The committee examines the record to see if there is any basis for a different accreditation recommendation from the one the panel brought forward.

If the evidence is insufficient to support a subcomponent of the TEAC system, the panel cites a weakness. If the evidence is insufficient to support a component of the TEAC system, the panel cites a stipulation. In either case, the committee’s examination of weaknesses and stipulations entails searching for supportive evidence in the record that might have been overlooked or misinterpreted by the panel. If it fails to find sufficient supportive evidence, the committee accepts the weaknesses and stipulations cited by the panel.

5. Committee’s decisions, minutes, and report. After the committee has made each of its accreditation decisions, by majority vote, it discusses the contents of the draft minutes of its meeting. The committee’s minutes in the instance where it accepts the panel’s recommendations can be brief and simply state the outcomes of the committee’s deliberations.

In the cases where the committee rejects any of the panel’s recommendations, including those about stipulations and weaknesses, and makes a new accreditation decision, the committee must fully justify its findings and new decision. This will require a separate report to the program faculty and to the TEAC staff.

The committee’s minutes also present its findings, its decision on the certification of TEAC’s procedures, and any remedies it orders. The minutes may also present recommendations to the staff and the full board of directors about changes in TEAC’s policies, regulations, and procedures.

6. Debriefing. At the close of its meeting, the committee will analyze its own decision-making, particularly with reference to its individual and collective confidence in its conclusions and accreditation decision and to procedural modifications it would like to implement at its next meeting.

The Accreditation Committee’s decision process
The Accreditation Committee is asked to make two decisions. The first concerns whether TEAC followed its own procedures throughout the process of bringing the panel’s recommendation about the program’s accreditation to Accreditation Committee.

The second concerns the accreditation decision itself. The Accreditation Committee must decide whether the accreditation report, which contains the Accreditation Panel’s recommendation, is convincing and consistent with its own reading of the Brief, the audit report, the staff analysis, any reports of the consultants, any correspondence, TEAC’s Guidelines, and TEAC’s policies. To modify the recommendations and findings of the accreditation report, the Accreditation Committee must find evidence that falsifies or contradicts the panel’s recommendation.
Certification of TEAC procedures

The Accreditation Committee determines whether the TEAC staff has complied throughout the accreditation process with TEAC’s policies and regulations by examining the documentation provided by the staff for each stage of the accreditation process. If the TEAC staff did not follow a policy, the committee would need to determine if the error had a material effect on the accreditation recommendation. If the program faculty was not given an opportunity to respond, for example, to errors in the audit report (favorable or unfavorable to the program) before it went to the Accreditation Panel, the panel’s recommendation might have been different from the one it submitted to the Accreditation Committee. On the other hand, if the program faculty waived its right to the full period it had in which to comment, the effect on the recommendation might be negligible.

If the director of the Accreditation Panel made no suggestions for audit tasks, as recommended in TEAC’s policy, and the panel’s deliberations raised no additional issues of verification, this departure from TEAC policy could be a matter of no consequence.

If the panel’s deliberations, were frustrated by the fact that some key pieces of evidence were not verified owing to the auditors not receiving proper instructions, the committee might conclude that the audit would need to be done again, or that some other remedy should be found to compensate for the effects of the staff’s error.

If the auditors strayed from the verification of evidence into judgments about the meaning of the evidence in the Brief (apart from the evidence about institutional commitment), the committee would need to consider whether this auditors’ error interfered with the proper deliberations of the Accreditation Panel.

It may be, to take a less problematic issue, that some important elements of TEAC’s procedures cannot be documented directly owing to the staff’s oversight, carelessness, inattention, and so forth (e.g., there may not be a letter formally accepting the Brief, panel minutes might be silent on the matter of a quorum, or some dues or fees may not have been paid, etc.). Here again, the committee will need to decide if the point is sufficiently important to call into question the panel’s recommendation.

Occasionally there may be departures from TEAC’s established policy that were driven by local exigencies. A conflict of interest between the program and an auditor or panel member may not have been declared in a timely manner or at all. The committee would consider whether the existence of the conflict, or even the appearance of the conflict, had compromised the auditors’ or panel members’ conclusions.

The auditors may have been unable to avoid, as required in TEAC policies, occasions of “wining and dining” while they were on the campus. Compromises in the procedures may have been made over unavoidable changes in travel plans, flight delays, and so forth. The committee would assure itself that these compromises were of little consequence.

It is the responsibility of the Accreditation Committee to probe the evidence the staff has assembled to verify that the procedures followed in each case have the integrity required by TEAC’s system.

Scrutiny of the accreditation report

The TEAC system is designed so that the Accreditation Committee is able to easily accept the recommendations that the Accreditation Panel makes in its accreditation report.

The method the committee uses to determine whether it will accept or reject the panel’s recommendations is the common method of falsification. If the committee cannot falsify a panel recommendation, the committee must accept it because its opposite cannot be supported with arguments or evidence in the record.

In this method, the committee considers each recommendation in the accreditation report to see whether it can find some evidence in the Brief, the audit report, the accreditation report itself, or any other documentation about the case, that would undermine a recommendation or finding in the accreditation report.
• For example, the panel may have recommended accreditation but with the stipulation that the program must remedy its weak evidence for the graduates’ subject matter knowledge. The topic, in the panel’s judgment, may have been overlooked, misconstrued, or the modes of assessment may have been suspect with regard to their validity. The committee would then seek to find evidence that would undermine or falsify the panel’s conclusion. The committee, for example, would look for persuasive evidence of the valid assessment of subject matter, or a cogent rationale for the assessment of subject matter that adequately reflected the current state of scholarship about the subject matter. If the committee found sufficient evidence to satisfy the Quality Principle I requirement that the program’s graduates learn their subject matter, they would reject the panel’s recommendation that accreditation be granted with a stipulation. The stipulation would be removed from the TEAC accreditation decision. However, if the committee could find no evidence in the record that could undermine or nullify the panel’s recommendation of a stipulation, the committee would accept it, and the stipulation would stand.

• To take another example, the panel may have recommended provisional accreditation on the grounds that, while there was sufficient evidence that the students had learned the elements of Quality Principle I, the evidence was inconclusive about Quality Principle III. The committee’s approach on this point, as on all points, would be to seek evidence that would disconfirn the panel’s conclusion. The committee would examine the evidence about the internal audit and Quality Principle III presented in the Brief and in the audit report to see if it were sufficient to support the program’s claim that it had in fact satisfied Quality Principle III. To accept the panel’s recommendation for provisional accreditation, the committee, in other words, would need to satisfy itself that there was insufficient evidence that the program’s quality control system was effective.

• If the panel were to recommend preaccreditation or new program accreditation on the strength of the program’s rationale, quality control system, and the evidence of commitment, the committee would examine the evidence, and seek evidence that would show that the rationale was weak, or that the internal audit, or the audit report, failed to confirm the evidence about the quality control system, or that there was persuasive evidence that the institution was not committed to the program. Should the committee fail to find evidence on these points, they would have to accept the panel’s recommendation.

The Accreditation Committee’s method is closely connected to the panel’s method and is, in a sense, its mirror image. The committee is attempting find sufficient and persuasive evidence for the opposite of what the panel claimed. Thus, when the panel rejects an alternative or rival explanation for a program faculty’s claim about the quality principles and standards, the committee seeks evidence that would enable it to accept the rival explanation.

In a field like education, where the evidence is rarely conclusive, greater weight is given by necessity to the panel’s conclusions because of the difficulty in finding conclusive evidence on any point that would rebut the panel’s determination.

The standard of evidence for the panel is somewhat lower than is the standard for the committee in the sense that the threshold for the panel’s recommendation is that the evidence in the Brief be consistent with the program faculty’s claims, while the standard for the committee is that the evidence against the panel’s recommendation must be conclusive.

If the panel found that the program’s evidence is consistent with the conclusion that the program’s graduates learn their subject matter, the committee would have to base its challenge to the panel’s recommendation on evidence that indicates that the graduates do not know their subject matter, not weak evidence for subject matter knowledge.
**Documentation of the TEAC accreditation procedures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Required TEAC staff actions</th>
<th>Documentation (document numbers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Application</td>
<td>Consultation with the institution and program faculty carried out as needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application accepted. Eligibility requirements met. <em>Fees paid and program listed on Web site.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Formative evaluation</td>
<td>Formative evaluation (consultation, workshop attendance, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receipt of draft Brief acknowledged. Staff reviewed draft for coverage, clarity, and auditability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outside reviews solicited on technical matters, claims, and rationale as needed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Brief</td>
<td>Brief accepted for audit and submitted to Accreditation Panel chair for instructions to auditors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Call for comment</td>
<td>Program listed on Web site and call for comments solicited.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Audit</td>
<td>Auditors selected.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TEAC staff formulated audit tasks and strategy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audit conducted on campus (2–4 days).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audit report prepared and sent to program faculty, TEAC, and panel chair within time limits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to program faculty about the audit report if needed. <em>Final audit report distributed.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Panel</td>
<td>Brief, reviewers’ comments, audit report sent to Accreditation Panel chair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panelists notified (public member, practitioner, educator, and person familiar with type of institution).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panel meeting conducted, recommendation formulated, accreditation report prepared and sent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff response as needed to program faculty. <em>Signifies the process continued until TEAC and the program reached a mutually acceptable resolution.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Third-party comments</td>
<td>TEAC staff solicited third-party comment by e-mail and Web site.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Accreditation Committee</td>
<td>Accreditation Committee notified (public member, practitioner, and educator).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief, audit report, accreditation report related correspondence sent to committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation decision made and announced to program. After program accepts decision, positive decision announced on TEAC Web site and to appropriate agencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Signifies that the process continued until TEAC and the program reached a mutually acceptable resolution.*
The Accreditation Committee's decision

The Accreditation Committee makes one of the following determinations:

Accreditation (Inquiry Brief)
A decision to accredit is made upon the recommendation of the panel when the committee cannot find sufficient contrary evidence to the program faculty’s claims that the quality principles and capacity standards are fully warranted and justified, or that support for the claims is at least consistent with evidence derived from contemporary research practices.

Preaccreditation (Inquiry Brief)
A decision to grant preaccreditation status is made upon the recommendation of the panel when the committee cannot find sufficient evidence for the program faculty’s claims about Quality Principle I, nor sufficient contrary evidence to the panel’s finding that the claims with regard to the other quality principles and capacity standards were supported.

Preaccreditation (Inquiry Brief Proposal)
A decision to grant preaccreditation is also made upon the recommendation of the panel when the committee cannot find sufficient contrary evidence to the faculty’s claims of a sound rationale, commitment, and a quality control system, and that the evidence of Quality Principle I is forthcoming.

New program accreditation (Inquiry Brief Proposal)
A decision to grant new program accreditation status is made upon the recommendation of the panel

TEAC's accreditation categories and terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation category</th>
<th>Term*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate:** Program is pursuing initial accreditation after having met the membership eligibility requirements</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial accreditation: Program is awarded accreditation by TEAC for the first time</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing accreditation: Program is awarded reaccreditation by TEAC</td>
<td>Ten years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaccreditation (Awarded on a one-time basis): Program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal is approved by the Accreditation Panel and Committee; or program’s Inquiry Brief is promising but found to be inconclusive by the Accreditation Panel and Committee</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New program accreditation (Awarded on a one-time basis): New or revised program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal indicates initial accreditation is likely in the future</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional accreditation: Program’s Inquiry Brief meets most but not all of TEAC’s quality principles</td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied accreditation: Program’s Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal does not meet TEAC standards or quality principles</td>
<td>Reverts to candidate status***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Duration of term before a new Inquiry Brief must be submitted. Term is conditional upon submission of an acceptable annual report and no adverse actions due to complaints or substantive changes.

**Candidate status is renewable only if the program continues to meet eligibility requirements and has begun the process of submitting a Brief.

***Provided eligibility requirements are met. If not, the program has no accreditation status with TEAC.
when the committee cannot find sufficient contrary evidence to the faculty’s claims of a sound rationale, commitment, and quality control system and that the evidence of Quality Principle I for the new program is forthcoming.

*Preaccreditation* or *new program status* indicates that the program, on the strength of several positive indicators, would be able to provide the evidence required for accreditation within a five-year period.

**Provisional accreditation.** A decision to grant provisional accreditation is made upon the recommendation of the panel when the committee cannot find sufficient contrary evidence to the program faculty’s claims that *Quality Principles I and II* are warranted and justified, nor to the panel’s finding that there was insufficient of evidence to support *Quality Principle III* or the capacity standards.

*Provisional accreditation* indicates, on the strength of the evidence, that the program faculty can remedy the weaknesses in the *Inquiry Brief* and become fully accredited within two years.

**Denied accreditation.** A decision to deny accreditation is made upon the recommendation of the panel when the committee cannot find sufficient evidence to support the program faculty’s claims, nor evidence to indicate that additional evidence and analysis would support the faculty’s claims about the quality principles and capacity standards.

A *denied* decision usually indicates a weak quality control system and a program faculty that has not been able to react productively at the current time to the weaknesses uncovered in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. Accreditation must be denied in these circumstances. The program has the option of terminating its bid for accreditation in TEAC or returning to candidate status and the eventual formulation of plan that would lead to accreditation.

---

**Program’s acceptance or appeal of the accreditation decision**

The program has 30 days in which to accept or appeal TEAC’s action.

If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report.

**Next steps for accreditation decisions with weaknesses or stipulations**

If either a weakness or stipulation is cited in the accreditation decision, the program takes the following steps:

**Weakness.** If the accreditation decision includes a finding of a weakness in the program’s compliance, the program must then address the weakness in its annual reports to TEAC and remedy the weakness before its next *Inquiry Brief*.

**Stipulation.** If the accreditation decision is made with a stipulation, the program must address the stipulation within two years to remain fully compliant with its accreditation status in TEAC.

Stipulations must be removed no later than the second annual report. In the annual report, the program faculty makes its case that the program is no longer weak in the area stipulated by the panel and committee. TEAC’s director of audits verifies that the new evidence in the case is trustworthy. The verification may require a site visit, but it may also be accomplished from TEAC’s offices. Once the evidence is verified, the director of the Accreditation Panel places the case on the agenda of the next Accreditation Panel meeting for the panel’s consideration. The panel, following its regular procedures, makes a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee that the stipulation be removed. The Accreditation Committee either accepts or rejects the recommendation.

If the panel does not make a recommendation for removal of the stipulation, or if the Accreditation Committee rejects the panel’s recommendation for removal, TEAC will implement its adverse action policy.
Appeals process
If the decision is not to accredit, the program may appeal the decision if it has evidence to support its claim. A program has grounds for appeal if it has any or all of the following evidence:

1. Evidence of errors or omissions in prescribed procedures on the part of the auditors, any reviewers, members of the Accreditation Panel, the TEAC staff, or the Accreditation Committee.

2. Evidence that demonstrable bias, conflict of interest, or prejudice on the part of a member the TEAC staff or board, an auditor, a reviewer, or member of the Accreditation Panel or Accreditation Committee influenced the Accreditation Committee’s accreditation decision.

3. Evidence that TEAC’s decision was not supported adequately or was contrary to the facts presented and known at the time of the decision.

If a program seeks to appeal an accreditation decision, it must do so within 30 days of being notified of the accreditation decision. The program must file in writing its intent for appeal and grounds for appeal. The program must submit relevant documentation along with the written appeal. A program may also elect to make an oral presentation at the appeal hearing and may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing. Until the appeal process is completed, the accreditation status of the program will remain in effect. The program must pay all expenses associated with the appeal.

The appeals panel. The chair of the TEAC board of directors will appoint a five-member appeals panel to adjudicate appeals. No member of the appeals panel may participate in an appeal by a program about which he or she has voted an accreditation determination. Members of the appeals panel will select a chair from among themselves.

The TEAC president will forward the program’s intent to appeal and its written grounds for appeal to the chair of the appeals panel within 30 days of submission. In determining if the appeal has merit, the appeals panel will consider the record before the TEAC Accreditation Committee at the time of its decision. The record includes the Brief, the final audit report, any reviewer’s evaluation, the accreditation report, the Accreditation Committee’s decision and report, and any institutional responses made during the accreditation process. The record considered by the appeals panel also includes the written grounds for appeal with any attached documents, and the record of any complaints. The appeals panel will not consider evidence that was not reviewed or considered by the TEAC Accreditation Committee at the time of its decision and cannot take into account evidence of corrective action that occurred after the date of the decision by the TEAC Accreditation Committee.

The appeal hearing will be held within 60 days of the filing of the appeal. The program will be provided with an opportunity to provide a verbal statement and to respond to questions of the appeals panel. The appeals panel meets in closed session to deliberate on the merits of the program’s appeal.

In consultation with the members of the panel, the chair prepares a written report of the panel’s findings, which includes a proposed action by TEAC based on the appeals panel’s review.

Within 15 days of the appeal hearing, the appeals panel’s report is sent to the chair of the Accreditation Committee, who will consider the report and recommend to the executive committee of the board whether TEAC should sustain its original decision, grant a new category of accreditation (including denial), or take administrative action to redress the grievances in the appeal. The executive committee will consider the results of the appeal within 30 days of the appeal hearing.

Notification. Within 45 days of the appeal hearing, the TEAC president will provide written notification to the program of the executive committee’s decision that details the basis for the committee’s decision.
At the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the members will review the program’s responses and decide whether the program should submit additional information regarding the complaint and its compliance with TEAC standards or whether the program’s accreditation status should be changed. A written response that details the basis for the Accreditation Committee’s decision will be sent within thirty days of this meeting to the program head.

The Accreditation Committee will then inform the complainant and the program of the actions it has taken with regard to the complaint in writing within 30 days.

Accreditation Committee’s role in the review of standards
Under TEAC’s Review of Standards Policy, once every five years, TEAC engages a third party to survey its clients with regard to the continuing validity of TEAC’s regulations and standards. The Accreditation Committee reviews the results of the survey and determines if modifications should be proposed for further consideration by TEAC in accordance with TEAC’s policy.

Accreditation Committee’s role in the revision of standards
Under TEAC’s Revision of Standards Policy, the Accreditation Committee, in response to the review of standards, will draft revisions for TEAC’s consideration.
PART EIGHT: MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION STATUS

Maintaining accreditation status .............................. 119
Annual reports .................................................... 119
Avoiding adverse action ........................................ 121
Public statements of TEAC affiliation and accreditation .... 121
PART EIGHT: MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION STATUS
Maintaining accreditation status

Programs maintain their accreditation status by keeping their membership in TEAC current. The program must continue to meet TEAC’s eligibility criteria, must continue to meet TEAC’s quality principles and standards, and must submit annual membership dues to TEAC. In addition, the program must submit an annual report, due on the anniversary of its accreditation decision. The annual report is typically no more than ten pages.

### Annual reports

The number of annual reports between Briefs, and the focus of these reports, varies according to the program’s accreditation status:

- Once the program has received initial accreditation status, preaccreditation, or new program accreditation status, the program faculty is required to file four annual reports before a new Inquiry Brief is submitted to TEAC in the fifth year.

- Programs that hold continuing accreditation status are required to submit eight annual reports before submitting the next Inquiry Brief in the tenth year. The eighth annual report is a more substantive report that follows the content and format of the Inquiry Brief Proposal.

- Programs that have received provisional accreditation, or were accredited with stipulations, submit a report in the second year that targets the areas that were found to be below standard in their Brief and provides evidence to support the claim that the program is no longer below standard and has remedied the deficiency.

Attending to weaknesses or stipulations

Programs have five years to satisfactorily address weaknesses and two years to satisfactorily address stipulations.

#### Weakness

If the accreditation decision includes a finding of a weakness in the program’s compliance, the program must then address the weakness in its annual reports to TEAC and remedy the weakness before its next Inquiry Brief.

#### Stipulation

If the accreditation decision is made with a stipulation, the program must address the stipulation within two years in order to remain fully compliant with its accreditation status in TEAC.

Stipulations must be removed no later than the second annual report. In the annual report, the program faculty makes case that the program is no longer weak in the area stipulated by the panel and committee. TEAC’s director of audits verifies that the new evidence in the case is trustworthy. The verification may require a site visit, but it may also be accomplished from TEAC’s offices. Once the evidence is verified, the director of the Accreditation Panel places the case on the agenda of the next Accreditation Panel meeting for the panel’s consideration. The panel, following its regular procedures, makes a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee that the stipulation be removed. The Accreditation Committee either accepts or rejects the recommendation.

If at that time the panel does not make a recommendation for removal of the stipulation, or if the Accreditation Committee rejects the panel’s recommendation for removal, TEAC will implement its adverse action policy.

#### Reporting substantive change

TEAC respects institutional autonomy, but requires that programs communicate with TEAC about substantive change that might require an alteration in the accreditation status.

Because substantive change can affect the nature of the institution and the quality of its educational programs, programs holding TEAC accreditation must
bring any significant alterations in their institutions or programs to the attention of TEAC prior to making those changes. TEAC has the responsibility to determine what effect, if any, these changes would have on a program’s accreditation.

Types of substantive change include

- Any change in the published mission or objectives of the institution or education program;
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in terms of either content or delivery, from those that were offered when TEAC most recently accredited the program;
- A change in legal status or form of control of the program;
- A contract with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach-out agreements.

Submit the annual report
The annual report should be submitted online to TEAC, by the anniversary of the program’s accreditation decision.

Content and focus for the annual report: an internal audit and audit report
TEAC believes that the most effective way for a program faculty to assure itself and TEAC that the program continues to meet the TEAC quality principles and standards is to conduct an annual internal audit of the program’s quality control system. The annual report is an update of Appendix A of the Brief, the internal audit and internal audit report. (See Part Four above, for a complete description of Appendix A of the Brief.)

The internal audit enables the faculty to be confident that the evidence in the Brief continues to hold, that improvements have actually been implemented, that changes in capacity are uncovered, and that parity between the program and the institution continues. A series of annual internal audits also provides persuasive evidence for Quality Principle III in the subsequent Inquiry Brief.

The program faculty should organize the internal audit report as it did in its Brief:

**Introduction:** The introduction to the annual report explains who conducted the audit, how the plan for the audit was approved by faculty, and how the internal audit complemented the evidence presented for Quality Principle III in the Inquiry Brief.

**Description of the quality control system (QCS):**
The program faculty provides both a narrative and a schematic of the quality control system.

**Audit procedures:** In this section, the faculty members describe how they conducted the audit, what evidence they collected, what trail they followed, how many elements (students, courses, and faculty members) they audited, and who participated in organizing and interpreting the findings. The faculty should also provide a visual representation.

**Findings:** What did the faculty discover about each part of its QCS? The faculty may organize the findings by either the various elements of the program’s quality control system or the TEAC components 4.1–4.7.

**Conclusions:** What are the internal auditors’ summative judgments? Here the faculty addresses two key questions:

- How well is the quality control system working for our program?
- Is there evidence of student learning that is attributable to any capacity dimension?

**Discussion:** In this section, the faculty addresses several questions:

- What are the implications of the evidence?
- What are the faculty’s conclusions for further action?
- What modifications, for example, will the faculty make in its QCS as a result of the findings and conclusions of the internal audit?
- What investigations will the faculty undertake to test whether the system is enhancing the quality of the program and the quality of student learning in particular?

In the discussion section, the faculty will also recommend ways to conduct the internal audit in subsequent years.
Avoiding adverse action

If TEAC receives confirmed complaints that the institution does not continue to adhere to the TEAC quality principles and standards; discovers substantive changes in the program’s professional education programs that were not reported to TEAC; or learns through the program’s annual report or a complaint that the program no longer has the evidence to support the claims made in its Brief, then TEAC has proper reasons to believe that the institution or program may no longer have the evidence to support or justify its accreditation status.

In such cases, TEAC may require the program to provide a report showing corrective action regarding unmet claims or promptly repeat the accreditation process for initial accreditation. Or TEAC may take adverse action against the program.

TEAC may also take adverse action if a program fails to pay dues and fees or fails to otherwise comply with the obligations of membership in TEAC.

The question to be considered in an adverse action proceeding is whether to withdraw the program’s accreditation status.

In this procedure, TEAC will provide to the program, in writing, its complaint; the program head must respond in 30 days. TEAC then reviews the program’s response.

TEAC’s president then places the matter before the TEAC Accreditation Committee for consideration. If the Accreditation Committee determines that the program fails to comply with TEAC’s principles, standards, or requirements for continued accreditation, the program will be notified of the Accreditation Committee’s decision to consider the complaint and be permitted to provide additional evidence concerning the matter. At the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the members will review the program’s responses and decide whether the program should submit additional information regarding the complaint and its compliance with TEAC standards or whether the program’s accreditation status should be changed.

A written response that details the basis for the Accreditation Committee’s decision will be sent to the program head within 30 days of this meeting.

Adverse action is also taken against programs holding accreditation whose subsequent Inquiry Brief fails to meet the quality principles and standards (when the decision is “accreditation denied”), but this kind of adverse action is taken by the Accreditation Committee.

In adverse action cases, provided the program still meets TEAC’s eligibility requirements, the program may continue to hold candidate status if it so desires.

Public statements of TEAC affiliation and accreditation

A program that has earned TEAC accreditation and wishes to state this affiliation in its published materials should use one of the two following official statements:

• The [name of the institution]’s [name of the program], which is designed to [statement of the goal or mission of the program] is accredited by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council for a period of [number] years, from [date] to [date].

• The [name of the institution]’s [name of the program], which is designed to [statement of the goal or mission of the program] is accredited by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) for a period of [number] years, from [date] to [date]. This accreditation certifies that the [name of program] has provided evidence that it adheres to TEAC’s quality principles.

Upon petition, variants of these statements of affiliation and accreditation may be authorized by TEAC. TEAC reserves the right to review institutional statements of affiliation and accreditation to ensure the accuracy of the information and representation.

In its disclosure of its status, the institution or program must report that status accurately, including the specific academic or instructional programs covered by the status and the name, address, and telephone number of the Teacher Educational Accreditation Council (One Dupont Circle, Suite 320, Washington, DC, 20036, phone 202-466-7236).
APPENDIX 1: FOR EASY REFERENCE

TEAC’s principles and standards ............................................. 123
TEAC’s accreditation process at a glance ............................... 124
Required elements of the Inquiry Brief and Inquiry Brief Proposal . 125
Guidelines for producing the Brief .......................................... 127
Inventory of available measures (form for Appendix E) ............. 129
Program checklist for the Inquiry Brief or the Inquiry Brief Proposal . 131
Checklist for formative evaluators: areas of concern ................. 132
Accreditation categories and terms ........................................... 133
Audit schedule: 2005–2009 ....................................................... 134
TEAC’s accreditation principles and standards

0.0 Requirements for candidate status

0.1 Commitment to comply with TEAC’s standards for the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators
0.2 Agreement to disclose the program’s accreditation status
0.3 Willingness to cooperate and provide information to TEAC
0.4 Regional accreditation or equivalent
0.5 Graduates’ eligibility for a professional license

1.0 Quality Principle I: Evidence of student learning

1.1 Evidence of students’ subject matter knowledge
1.2 Evidence of students’ pedagogical knowledge
1.3 Evidence of students’ caring and teaching skill

Each component of element 1.0 includes three cross-cutting liberal education themes: learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, and technology.

2.0 Quality Principle II: Valid assessment of student learning

2.1 Statements explaining links between assessments and the program goal, claims, and requirements
2.2 Evidence of valid interpretations on the assessments

3.0 Quality Principle III: Institutional learning

3.1 The program faculty’s decisions and planning are based on evidence of student learning
3.2 The program has an influential quality control system

4.0 Standards of Capacity for Program Quality

4.1 Curriculum
4.1.1 Quality Principle I components
4.1.2 Professional license requirements
4.1.3 Institutional degree requirements

4.2 Program faculty
4.2.1 Accept TEAC goal and program’s Inquiry Brief/Inquiry Brief Proposal
4.2.2 Have an accurate and balanced understanding of the field
4.2.3 Are qualified for their teaching assignments
4.2.4 Have parity with their counterparts across the institution

4.3 Facilities, equipment, and supplies
4.3.1 Program has adequate resources for Quality Principle I outcomes
4.3.2 Program has a quality control system that monitors and enhances resources
4.3.3 The program has parity with the rest of the institution regarding its facilities

4.4 Fiscal and administrative capacity
4.4.1 Evidence that the institution is financially sound
4.4.2 Evidence of adequate resources for faculty development
4.4.3 Quality control system that monitors financial and administrative resources
4.4.4 Evidence of adequate resources for Quality Principle I outcomes and parity with the institution

4.5 Student support services
4.5.1 The program has adequate student support services for Quality Principle I outcomes
4.5.2 The program has a quality control system that monitors student support services
4.5.3 There is parity with institutional student support service

4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising
4.6.1 Admissions: policies encourage diversity and service in high-demand areas
4.6.2 The academic calendar is accurate and complete
4.6.3 Advertising is accurate and consistent with information and claims in Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal
4.6.4 The program promotes fair grading policies

4.7 Student feedback
4.7.1 Evidence that student opinion and complaints are sought and resolved
4.7.2 Evidence of parity with respect to complaints in other programs

State standards: When appropriate because of TEAC’s protocol agreement with a state, an eighth component to the TEAC capacity standards (4.8) is added, with subcomponents (4.8.1, etc.) in accordance to the state’s particular requirements.
## TEAC’s accreditation process at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Program faculty actions</th>
<th>TEAC actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Application</td>
<td>Program faculty prepares and submits eligibility application and fee</td>
<td>TEAC staff consults with the institution and program faculty; TEAC accepts or rejects application (on eligibility requirements) and accepts or returns fee accordingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Formative evaluation</td>
<td>1. Program faculty attends TEAC workshop on writing the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal (optional) 2. Program faculty submits drafts of the Brief* with checklist</td>
<td>1. TEA staff reviews draft Brief* or sections for coverage, clarity, and auditability and returns drafts for revisions and resubmission as needed 2. If appropriate, TEAC solicits outside reviews on technical matters, claims, and rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal</td>
<td>1. Program faculty responds to TEAC staff and reviewers’ comments* 2. Program submits final Brief with checklist</td>
<td>1. TEA declares Brief auditable and instructs program to submit final version of Brief 2. TEA accepts Brief for audit and submits it to the Accreditation Panel chair for instructions to auditors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Call for comment</td>
<td></td>
<td>TEAC places program on TEAC Web site’s call-for-comment page and circulates call-for-comment letter to program faculty and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Audit</td>
<td>1. Program faculty submits data for audit as requested 2. Program faculty receives and hosts auditors during visit (2–4 days) 3. Program faculty responds to audit report (2 weeks)</td>
<td>1. TEA schedules audit 2. Panel chair formulates questions and instructions for auditors; auditors verify submitted data 3. Auditors complete visit to campus 4. Auditors prepare audit report and send to program faculty, TEAC, and Accreditation Panel chair 5. TEA staff responds to program faculty’s comments about the draft audit report Final audit report prepared and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Staff analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. TEA completes staff analysis and sends to program and panel 2. TEA sends Brief, audit report, staff analysis, and faculty response to panel members; panel members complete worksheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Accreditation Panel</td>
<td>1. Program head attends meeting (optional) 2. Program faculty responds (within 2 weeks)</td>
<td>1. Panel meets and formulates accreditation report; TEA sends report to program faculty; TEA staff responds as needed 2. Call for comment announced via e-mail and Web site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Accreditation Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. TEA sends Brief, reviewers’ comments, audit report, accreditation report and staff analysis, and panel recommendation to Accreditation Committee for decision 2. Accreditation Committee meets; TEA sends Accreditation Committee’s decision to program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Acceptance or appeal</td>
<td>Program faculty accepts or appeals TEAC’s action within 30 days</td>
<td>If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEA announces the decision and schedules the annual report. If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEA initiates its appeal process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Annual report</td>
<td>Program faculty submits annual report and dues to TEAC</td>
<td>TEA reviews annual reports for as many years as required by program’s status with TEAC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: ✭ and ✫ signify program faculty/TEAC staff interaction; ✭ signifies the process continues until there is consensus among the parties.

*TEAC uses “Brief” to refer to both the Inquiry Brief and the Inquiry Brief Proposal.
Required elements of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

As described below, TEAC makes three requirements for the *Brief*.

1. **Verifiable authorship and faculty endorsement**
   The authors of the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must provide their names and roles in the institution and must identify themselves as having taken responsibility for the document.

   In addition, the entire program faculty must formally endorse the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. Typically this is done in a footnote stating that the *Brief* was presented to, discussed, and approved by the faculty, and the date on which this occurred.

2. **Brevity and linguistic precision**
   TEAC also requires that the *Brief*’s authors strive for brevity and linguistic precision:
   - **Brevity** means using no more words than necessary to make the point. The *Brief*, as its name implies, is brief and is about inquiry. It should be no longer than 50 pages.
   - **Precise language.** Producing an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* calls for a kind of writing that is different from the usual self-study or program approval document. The language of the *Brief* must be precise and clear.

   *Why does precise language matter to TEAC?* TEAC requires clear and precise language because of the kinds of claims and supporting evidence that TEAC asks of its candidates for accreditation. The program faculty’s claims and the measures used to support them should be very specific. Vague, ambiguous, imprecise language obscures the goals and accomplishments of the program.

   Checking the precision of the language and evidence is a key task in TEAC’s formative evaluation and the audit of the *Brief*. TEAC staff and auditors focus on language and precision in order to determine the degree to which the *Brief* means exactly what the program faculty intends. To verify the statements in the *Brief*, the auditors must be able to determine precisely what the authors meant; imprecise language complicates the verification process.

3. **Seven required components**
   TEAC requires that the *Brief* include the following seven components (*see following page*):
1. Program overview
Overall logic: guiding philosophy and orientation of the program
Program areas, levels, specialties, options
Brief history of the program
Program demographics
   Table of enrollment trends, numbers and types of students, numbers of faculty and types, etc.

2. Claims and Rationale
Claims
Statement of the claims (consistent with all relevant claims in the program’s literature)
Arguments to support the links between the claims and components of Quality Principle I:
   1.1 Subject matter
   1.2 Pedagogy
   1.3 Teaching skill
Cross-cutting themes: learning to learn, multicultural perspectives, technology included in each
Rationale for the assessments:
Rationale for the assessments, justifying that they are reasonably and credibly linked to goals, claims, and program requirements

3. Method
Assessments used for the evidence
Detailed description of the assessments
Criteria for achievement or success
Published information about the reliability and validity of the assessments
Arguments for the content validity of the assessments
Sampling procedure and procurement of evidence

4. Results
Results of the investigation into the reliability and validity of the assessments
   Evidence of stability and consistency of the measures
   Evidence of relationship, convergence, triangulation with other measures or evidence
Results of the assessments
   Presentation of the findings: issues
   Significant digits
   Range of the instrument and variance
   Disaggregation
   Accurate table headings
   Sensitivity to insignificant differences
   Full disclosure of available evidence (all of the program’s cited evidence)

5. Discussion and Plan
Discussion
Meaning of the results: Were the claims supported?
Implications of the results for the program’s design
Plan
Steps to be taken: modifications to the program, quality control system (QCS), new investigations based on the results and evidence of student learning

6. References
A list of any works cited in the Brief.

7. Appendices
Appendix A: Internal audit report
   Introduction: Auditors; faculty approval
   Description: Schematic and mechanisms of QCS
   Procedure: Audit plan and trail
   Findings: Discoveries about 4.1–4.7
   Conclusions: How well does QCS work?
   Discussion: Needed modifications in QCS or future audit procedures
Appendix B: Capacity
   Evidence that the quality control system monitors and promotes the quality of 4.1–4.7
   Evidence that the program is supported on a par with other programs at the institution
   Evidence that the program’s capacity is sufficient and adequate to satisfy 4.1.1–4.7.2
Appendix C: Qualifications of the faculty (table or chart)
   Current academic rank and title
   Terminal degree, institution, field, and date
   Number of years of service
   Scholarly publications (number, type)
   Assigned courses in the program
   Awards, public school teaching, boards
Appendix D: Program requirements (aggregation)
   Admissions requirements
   Course requirements and standards
   Course titles and descriptions
   Program standards and requirements
   Graduation requirements
   State license requirements
Appendix E: Full disclosure of all relevant and available evidence (including any evidence cited elsewhere in support of, or about, the program)
   Grades
   Standardized tests (entrance, exit, and license) about the graduates or the graduates’ own students
   Surveys of students, alumni, employers
   Ratings of portfolios, work samples, cases
   Basis for rates: hiring/promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc.
   Reasons for neglecting or rejecting certain categories of evidence
   Plan for inclusion of new categories of evidence in a subsequent Inquiry Brief.
Guidelines for producing the Brief

The program faculty should produce the Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal Brief together. All faculty members of the programs represented in the Brief should contribute to the process, and they are required to approve the final Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal before it is submitted to TEAC for audit.

Getting started
TEAC recommends that program faculty follow these steps to produce the Brief.

Review. TEAC recommends that the program faculty first take the time to fully understanding the TEAC process of accreditation, the quality principles and standards for capacity, and the required components of the Brief.

Gather information. We urge that program faculty next invest time in examining the program thoroughly. We suggest that the program faculty gather and review all required information about the program, specifically—and in this order, from least to most complex—the information that will eventually appear in the program overview, the program requirements (Appendix D), the faculty qualifications (Appendix C), and the program’s capacity (Appendix B). It would be appropriate to draft these appendices at this time.

Inventory available measures. Continuing the examination of the program, the program faculty should make an inventory of all available evidence to the program (Appendix E), noting what evidence the program relies on, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future. The faculty should also assemble the assessments it uses to gather evidence.

Conduct an internal audit. Next, the program faculty should describe its quality control system, conduct an internal audit, and draft an internal audit report (Appendix A).

Take stock. TEAC suggests that the program faculty meet together to review what they have learned about their program.

Formulate claims. Draft a set of statements to describe how the program meets TEAC’s Quality Principle 1 (graduates know their subject matter, have pedagogical knowledge, and have teaching skills).

Draft the Brief. Assemble a draft Brief. Review the draft using the two checklists for programs and formative evaluators. Submit drafts to TEAC for review.

Taking the time to do this work will yield a comprehensive, detailed picture of the program, its outcomes, and its resources. The program faculty members will then be ready to develop their case that the program meets TEAC’s three quality principles and standards for capacity. In the process, they will also have assembled the original documents needed for writing the Brief and for the TEAC audit.

TEAC’s recommended process for preparing the Brief
Working together, program colleagues should follow these seven steps to produce the Brief (see following page):
1. **Review**
   - TEAC’s principles and standards*
   - State standards, as appropriate for programs in states with agreements with TEAC
   - TEAC’s accreditation process*
   - TEAC’s requirements for content of the *Brief*
   - Sample *Briefs** and audit documents**

*In this volume and also at www.teac.org.
**Available at workshops or by request

2. **Gather information**
   - Program overview
   - Program requirements (Appendix D)
   - Program faculty qualifications (Appendix C)
   - Program capacity (Appendix B)

3. **Inventory available measures**
   - Inventory the program’s available evidence, noting what the faculty relies on, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future (Appendix E*)
   - Assemble a list of the program’s assessments and explain how and why the program uses them

* Inventory form is in this volume and also at www.teac.org

4. **Conduct an internal audit**
   - Describe the program’s quality control system and conduct an internal audit
   - Draft the internal audit report (Appendix A)

5. **Take stock**
   - Review assembled material, study the results of the assessments, and formulate the program’s interpretation of the meaning of the results of the assessments

6. **Formulate claims or use state/national standards, as appropriate**
   - Align claims and evidence
   - Check against public claims

7. **Draft *Brief***
   - Compare drafts against checklists for program and formative evaluators*
   - Submit drafts to TEAC for review and comment

* In this volume and at www.teac.org
### Inventory: status of evidence from measures and indicators for TEAC Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evidence</th>
<th>Available&lt;sup&gt;31&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the Brief</td>
<td>Not in the Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence</td>
<td>Reasons for including the results in the Brief</td>
<td>Reasons for not including the results in the Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location in Brief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Student grades and grade point averages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scores on standardized tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student scores on standardized license or board examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student scores on admission tests of subject matter knowledge for graduate study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Standardized scores and gains of the program graduates’ own pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ratings of portfolios of academic and clinical accomplishments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Third-party rating of program’s students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ratings of in-service, clinical, and PDS teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>31</sup> Assessment results related to TEAC Quality Principle I that the program faculty uses elsewhere must be included in the Brief. Evidence that is reported to the institution or state licensing authorities, or alluded to in publications, Web sites, catalogs, and the like must be included in the Brief. Therefore, Title II results, grades (if they are used for graduation, transfer, and admission), admission test results (if they are used), and hiring rates (if they are reported elsewhere) would all be included in the Brief. Available evidence that is not cited elsewhere or used in decisions, placements and the like, and which the program does not use to support its claims can simply be checked off on the inventory under “Available” and “Not used in the Brief.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evidence</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
<th>For future use</th>
<th>Not for future use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rates of completion of courses and program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Graduates’ career retention rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Graduates’ job placement rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Rates of graduates’ professional advanced study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Rates of graduates’ leadership roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Rates of graduates’ professional service activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies and alumni competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Evaluations of graduates by their own pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Alumni self-assessment of their accomplishments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Third-party professional recognition of graduates (e.g., NBPTS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Employers’ evaluations of the program’s graduates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Graduates’ authoring of textbooks, curriculum materials, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Case studies of graduates’ learning and accomplishment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program checklist for the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

*Program submits this checklist with each draft during formative evaluation. After the Brief has been declared auditable, the program submits a final version of this checklist with the final version of the Brief.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement for the <em>Brief</em></th>
<th>Where in the <em>Brief</em>?</th>
<th>Missing items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. We identify the author(s) of the document.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. We provide evidence that faculty approved the document.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. We give an account of the history of the program and its place within the institution.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. We provide demographics of program faculty and students, broken out by year, by “bundled” programs, and other factors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We state our claims explicitly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. We address all components of <em>QPI</em> (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We address all subcomponents of <em>QPI:</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o learning to learn (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o technology (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o multicultural perspectives (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims are consistent with other program documents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. In the rationale, we link our assessments with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o claims,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o TEAC goal, and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o program requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. We describe the overall design of our assessments, including sampling, controls (if applicable), goodness of fit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. We provide at least two measures for each claim.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Every measure includes reliability and validity information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Our findings are related to every claim, and we offer a conclusion for each claim, explaining how our evidence supports the claim.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. We describe how we have recently used evidence in making program decisions, improvements, and changes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. We provide a plan for making decisions concerning program improvement based on evidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. We meet the conditions of the internal audit: a model of the QCS that addresses 4.1–4.7; and a report approved by faculty.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Our QCS includes a plan for researching links between student learning and 4.1–4.7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. We provide an appendix that describes faculty qualifications.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. We provide an appendix that describes our program requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. We make a case for institutional commitment to the program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. We make a case for sufficient capacity to offer a quality program (4.1–4.7).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. We list all evidence (related to accreditation) available to the program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signed: ____________________________________________________  Date: _________________________
# Checklist for formative evaluators: areas of concern

## 1.0 Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence of student learning</th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Completeness (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td>Some components missing in the analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Consistency</td>
<td>Evidence is inconsistent with the claim that each component was learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sufficiency</td>
<td>Preponderance of evidence is of insufficient magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Precision</td>
<td>Language is imprecise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 2.0 Quality Principle II

### 2.1 Rationale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Completeness</td>
<td>Incomplete coverage of the links between the assessments and goals, claims, and program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Coherence</td>
<td>Disconnections among assessments, goals, claims and program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Grounded in scholarship</td>
<td>Misinterpreted literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Precision</td>
<td>Text is tautological, vague, or ambiguous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.2 Valid assessment system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Design (sampling, validity threats, etc.)</td>
<td>Weak design (inadequate sampling, presence of threats to validity, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Multiple measures</td>
<td>Measures mostly inconsistent with each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sufficiency</td>
<td>Preponderance of reliability and validity measures of insufficient magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Precision</td>
<td>Language imprecise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 3.0 Quality Principle III

### 3.1 Decision-making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Basis for past decisions</td>
<td>Program decisions are episodic, ad hoc, only by consensus, or fiat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Basis for future decisions</td>
<td>No plan for relying on evidence in program improvement decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Precision</td>
<td>Text is tautological, vague, or ambiguous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Quality control system (QCS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Completeness</td>
<td>System fails to attend all components (4.1–4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Problem-finding</td>
<td>Internal audit fails to identify problems in the QCS or in the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Links to student learning</td>
<td>No plan to investigate the links between program capacity and student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Quality improvement</td>
<td>Internal audit reveals a preponderance of components are not monitored adequately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Precision</td>
<td>Language imprecise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 4.0 Capacity for quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Areas of concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Completeness</td>
<td>Some subcomponents of capacity (4.1–4.7) are not addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Commitment</td>
<td>Lack of parity on the preponderance of components (4.1–4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sufficiency</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Precision</td>
<td>Language is imprecise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TEAC’s accreditation categories and terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation category</th>
<th>Term*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is pursuing initial accreditation after having met the membership eligibility requirements</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial accreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is awarded accreditation by TEAC for the first time</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuing accreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program is awarded reaccreditation by TEAC</td>
<td>Ten years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preaccreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Awarded on a one-time basis) Program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal is approved by the Accreditation Panel and Committee; or program’s Inquiry Brief is promising but found to be inconclusive by the Accreditation Panel and Committee</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New program accreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Awarded on a one-time basis) New or revised program’s Inquiry Brief Proposal indicates initial accreditation is likely in the future</td>
<td>Five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provisional accreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Inquiry Brief meets most but not all of TEAC’s quality principles</td>
<td>Two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denied accreditation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program’s Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal does not meet TEAC standards or quality principles</td>
<td>Reverts to candidate status***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Time before a new Inquiry Brief must be submitted. Term is conditional upon submission of an acceptable annual report and no adverse actions due to complaints or substantive changes.

**Candidate status is renewable only if the program continues to meet eligibility requirements and has begun the process of submitting a Brief.

***Provided eligibility requirements are met. If not, the program has no accreditation status with TEAC.
TEAC’s audit schedule: 2005–2009

Only after an Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal is declared auditable will TEAC schedule an audit of the program.

Because TEAC audits programs only while courses are in full session, with most students and faculty on campus, there are two audit periods during each academic year: from September 15 to December 15; and from January 15 to April 15. The table below presents the schedule of actions from the time a Brief is declared auditable through the decision about the program’s accreditation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry Brief declared auditable no later than</th>
<th>Audit period From</th>
<th>Audit period to</th>
<th>Reports and responses completed by</th>
<th>Panel meeting*</th>
<th>Committee meeting*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 2005</td>
<td>September 15, 2005</td>
<td>December 15, 2005</td>
<td>February 2, 2006</td>
<td>late March 2006</td>
<td>late April 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 2008</td>
<td>September 15, 2008</td>
<td>December 15, 2008</td>
<td>February 2, 2009</td>
<td>late March 2009</td>
<td>late April 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The exact dates for the panel and committee meetings will be scheduled at the close of each audit period.
APPENDIX 2: AUDIT TOOLS

TEAC’s quality principles and standards of capacity: annotated template for TEAC auditors .................................. 135
0.0 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND CANDIDATE STATUS

Overview. To be eligible for membership in TEAC and hold candidate status in TEAC the program unit’s administrator (e.g., chair, dean, director, vice president) must attest to the following:

0.1 Commitment to comply with TEAC’s standards
There must be a commitment and intent to comply with TEAC’s standards and requirements (fees, annual reports, etc.).

0.2 Disclosure of any actions regarding the program’s accreditation status
There must be an understanding of, and agreement to, the fact that TEAC, at its discretion, may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the program’s status with TEAC.

0.3 Willingness to cooperate and provide needed information to TEAC
There must be an agreement to disclose to TEAC, at any time, all such information as TEAC may require to carry out its auditing, evaluating and accrediting functions.

0.4 Institutional accreditation
The institution giving the program must be accredited by one of the regional accreditation agencies, or the equivalent. TEAC’s requirement for regional accreditation of the institution offering the program provides additional assurance that the institution is administratively and financially capable.

0.5 Professional licensure
The graduates of the program must have fulfilled the academic requirements for a professional license in education.

1.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE I: EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

Overview. Programs must provide sufficient evidence that candidates have learned and understood the teacher education curriculum. This evidence is verified through audit and evaluated for its consistency and sufficiency. Each component and cross-cutting theme of Quality Principle I must contribute to the overall goal of producing competent, caring and qualified teachers.

Program Content and Outcomes

1.1 Subject matter knowledge
The program candidates must learn and understand the subject matter they will teach.

1.2 Pedagogical knowledge
The program candidates must be able to convert their knowledge of subject matter into compelling lessons that meet the needs of a wide range of pupils and students.

1.3 Teaching skill
The program candidates must be able to teach caringly and effectively and to act on their knowledge in a professional manner.

Cross-cutting liberal education program content themes
In meeting each of TEAC components 1.1–1.3, the program must demonstrate that its candidates have oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking skills, and qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills. For each component of element 1.0, the program must also address three cross-cutting liberal education themes:

- Learning how to learn. Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned how to learn information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new
situations, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills that will support lifelong learning in their field.

- **Multicultural perspectives and accuracy.** Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

- **Technology.** Candidates must be able to use classroom technology (e.g., grade book computer programs, databases, spreadsheets, word processors, e-mail, bulletin boards and networked confer-ences, Internet access, interactive video-discs and instructional software).

**Student learning is the foundation of the TEAC accreditation process. At the core of student learning is the curriculum of the program. TEAC requires that curriculum must include subject matter courses that constitute an academic major or its appropriate equivalent. It also requires the equivalent of an academic minor of pedagogical courses, which cover the topics of methods of teaching, evaluation of student learning, and lesson and unit planning, and courses which provide opportunities for clinical practice. These are only examples of the types of courses that the program is expected to offer. The program may offer evidence of other courses whose content also meets this standard. In assessing whether an institution has met Quality Principle I, auditors will verify evidence through such tasks as reviewing syllabi and course catalogs and observing classes in the required subject areas.**

---

**2.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE II: VALID ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

**Overview.** The program must employ multiple measures and assessment methods that converge on a dependable finding about the candidates’ accomplishments with regard to Quality Principle I. TEAC describes nearly 20 categories of evidence that a program could use in support of its claims with regard to Quality Principle I and the program must report and consider all that are available to it. In doing so, the inferences made from the assessment system must meet the appropriate and accepted research standards for reliability and validity.

**Assessment Methods**

**2.1 Rationale for the assessments**

There must be a rationale for the program’s assessment methods that shows the links between the assessment and (1) the program’s goals, (2) the claims made about student learning, and (3) the program’s requirements.

**2.2 Evidence of valid assessment**

The program must provide evidence regarding the trustworthiness, reliability and validity of the evidence produced from the assessment method or methods that it has adopted.

Many categories of evidence pertaining to student learning are described in TEAC’s accreditation manual. A program is required to present evidence in each of these categories, provided that such evidence is available to the institution. If the program does not present such information as part of its Brief, the auditors must verify that such information was not available. Although the presumption is that the program will submit such evidence, a failure to present convincing evidence in any category (i.e., evidence that does meet the 75 percent heuristic) can be overcome by presenting evidence in other areas that demonstrate student learning. The program must submit evidence of the reliability and validity of evidence it submits to support its claims of student learning.
3.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE III: INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING

Overview. There must be a system of inquiry, review and quality control in place through which the faculty secures evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. Program faculty should be undertaking inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and they should modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from their inquiry.

3.1 Program decisions and planning based on evidence

Where appropriate, the program must base decisions to modify its assessment systems, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum and program requirements on evidence of student learning.

3.2 Influential quality control system

The program must provide evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program faculty, that the quality control system functions as it was designed and that it promotes the program’s continual improvement.

4.0 CAPACITY FOR PROGRAM QUALITY

Overview. The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program, and it does this by bringing forth evidence in the ways described below.

4.1 Curriculum

Overview. The program must show that the curriculum is adequate to support a quality program that meets the student learning requirements of Quality Principle I.

Curriculum attributes

4.1.1 Reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit hour requirements for the components of Quality Principle I. An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).

4.1.2 Meets the state’s program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.

4.1.3 Does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution’s overall standards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

The primary curriculum requirements are set forth in Quality Principle I. The program must be able to demonstrate that the curriculum contains a variety of levels of courses and that it meets the requirements of the state and conforms to institutional norms. In assessing whether these requirements are met, the auditors will review syllabi, course catalogs, applicable state requirements (as provided by the program) and will examine the overall institutional criteria for granting a degree at the levels offered by the program.

4.2 Faculty

Overview. The program must demonstrate that the faculty members associated with the program are qualified for their assigned duties in the program consistent with the goal of preparing competent, caring and qualified educators.

Faculty qualifications.

4.2.1 Faculty members must accept the Brief and that the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators is their own goal for the program.

4.2.2 The Brief must demonstrate the faculty’s accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.

4.2.3 Faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, advanced study,
contributions to the field, and professional experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members must hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors stated above.

4.2.4 Faculty qualifications must be equal to or better than the statistics for the institution as a whole with regard to the attributes of the members of the faculty (e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity). See also 4.4.4.

The program must present evidence that it meets each of the four requirements outlined above. A primary means of demonstrating compliance with these requirements is through the summary of faculty qualifications provided in Appendix C of the Brief. The auditors also will verify faculty teaching and examine faculty handbooks, tenure and promotion policies. Programs should note that although faculty workload, tenure and promotion policies are reviewed as part of Capacity for Program Quality 4.4, such matters directly relate to the quality of faculty and also will be considered by the auditors, the Accreditation Panel, and the Accreditation Committee in assessing whether a program has established compliance with Capacity for Program Quality 4.2.

4.3 Facilities, equipment and supplies

Overview. The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program.

Adequate facilities, equipment and supplies

4.3.1 The program must demonstrate that there are appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in student learning as required by Quality Principle I.

4.3.2 The program must have an adequate quality control system that monitors and seeks to improve the suitability and appropriateness of program facilities, supplies and equipment.

4.3.3 The facilities, equipment, and supplies allocated to the program by the institution, at a minimum, must be proportionate to the overall institutional resources and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program. The program students, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution’s facilities, equipment, and supplies.

In assessing whether a program has demonstrated the existence of adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and supplies, the auditors, Accreditation Panel, and Accreditation Committee consider a variety of factors, most notably whether the program’s facilities, equipment and supplies are proportionate to the overall institutional resources. Factors such as the number of students and the types of courses offered also will influence whether the facilities, equipment and supplies meet TEAC standards. The auditors will closely examine the facilities to ensure that there are an appropriate number of classrooms, space for faculty and other educational resources necessary for delivery of the program. The auditors also will review any plans or internal assessments prepared by the program that address the issues of facilities, equipment and supplies.

4.4 Fiscal and administrative capacity

Overview. The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring and qualified educators.

Financial viability and administrative capacity

4.4.1 The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, and the institution must be financially viable.

4.4.2 The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a
minimum, be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in student learning as required by Quality Principle I.

4.4.3 The program must have a sufficient quality monitoring and control system to ensure that the program has adequate financial and administrative resources.

4.4.4 The program must demonstrate that there is an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. Faculty workload obligations must be commensurate with the institution’s expectations for promotion, tenure, and other program obligations.

In assessing whether the administrative and financial resources allocated to the program are appropriate, the auditors, Accreditation Panel, and Accreditation Committee will focus on the issue of whether the program’s financial and administrative resources are proportionate to the overall institutional resources. The auditors, panel, and committee will also review the budget for the program as well as financial information relating to the overall institution. In addition, the auditors, panel, and committee will review the qualifications and workload of the program’s administrators. The adequacy of administrative and financial resources will depend, in large part, upon the size and scope of the program and will vary among programs.

4.5 Student support services

Overview. The program must make available to students regular and sufficient student services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

Adequate student support services

4.5.1 Student services available to students in the program must be sufficient to support successful completion of the program and success in student learning. In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that students have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.

4.5.2 The program must monitor the quality of the support services provided to students to ensure that student services contribute to student success in learning as required by Quality Principle I.

4.5.3 Student support services available to students in the program must, at a minimum, be equal to the level of support services provided by the institution as a whole and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program.

Because TEAC accredited programs are one component of the overall institution, TEAC recognizes that in most cases, the institution and not the program itself is responsible for the delivery of student services. Even so, the program must ensure that student services are made available to its students and that those services contribute to success in student learning.

4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising

Overview. The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog or other appropriate documents distributed to students accurate information that fairly describes the program, policies and procedures directly affecting admitted students in the program, charges and refund policies, grading policies and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

4.6.1 Admissions and mentoring policies must encourage the recruitment and retention of diverse students with demonstrated potential as professional educators, and must respond to the nation’s need for qualified individuals to serve in high demand areas and locations.
4.6.2 The program must distribute an academic calendar to students. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods. If the program’s academic calendar coincides with the institution’s academic calendar, it may distribute the institution’s academic calendar.

4.6.3 Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the Inquiry Brief regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, the claims made about the program that appear in the institution’s catalog, mission statements, and other promotional literature.

4.6.4 The program must have a fair and equitable published grading policy, which may be the institution’s grading policy.

In order to verify compliance with this standard, the auditors will review the program catalog, Web pages, or other descriptive publications (including those that contain the program’s academic calendar, a listing of faculty that teach in the program and a description of the program’s history and guiding philosophy).

4.7 Student feedback

Overview. The quality of a program depends on its ability to meet the needs of its students. One effective way to determine if those needs are met is to encourage students to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of student views about the program and responds to student feedback and complaints.

4.7.1 The institution is required to keep a file of complaints from its students about the program’s quality and must provide TEAC with access to all complaints regarding the program and their resolution.

4.7.2 Complaints about the program’s quality must be proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints made by students in the institution’s other programs.

In order to verify compliance with this standard, the auditors will identify the program’s procedures for dealing with student complaints, verify that there is a program record file of student complaints and their resolution, verify that the policy for administering student course evaluations was followed, verify parity across the institution regarding policies for soliciting and responding to feedback, and verify parity across the institution regarding amount and significance of complaints.

State standards
When appropriate because of TEAC’s protocol agreement with a state, an eighth component to the TEAC capacity standards (4.8) is added, with subcomponents (4.8.1, etc.) in accordance to the state’s particular requirements.

Nonspecific concerns
If the Brief contains inaccuracies that are not clearly related to any feature of the TEAC accreditation framework, but which nevertheless speak to the overall reliability and trustworthiness of the Brief, the auditors will list them as nonspecific concerns about the accuracy of the Brief, and the tasks that probe these concerns will be counted in the overall audit opinion.
APPENDIX 3: HEURISTICS FOR THE ACCREDITATION DECISION

Heuristics table 1: Guidelines for Quality Principle I ............... 141
Heuristics table 2: Guidelines for Quality Principle II .................. 142
Heuristics table 3: Guidelines for Quality Principle III ............... 143
Heuristics table 4: Guidelines for Standards of Capacity for Program Quality ........................................ 144
Heuristics table 5: Heuristics for the accreditation decision .......... 146
Heuristics table 6: Role of capacity in the accreditation decision .... 146
## Heuristic Table 1

### Guidelines for Quality Principle I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of student learning</td>
<td>All components are analyzed (1.1–1.3)</td>
<td>Some components missing in the analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>Evidence is consistent with the claim that each component was learned</td>
<td>Evidence is inconsistent with the claim that each component was learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Preponderance of evidence is of sufficient magnitude</td>
<td>Preponderance of evidence is of insufficient magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Guidelines for Quality Principle II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1 Rationale</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>Credible links between the assessments and the goals, claims, and program requirements</td>
<td>Incomplete coverage of the links between the assessments and goals, claims, and program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>Coherence among assessments, goals, claims, and program requirements</td>
<td>Disconnections among assessments, goals, claims, and program requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounded in scholarship</td>
<td>Accurate and balanced interpretation of the scholarly literature</td>
<td>Misinterpreted literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Text is clear and precise</td>
<td>Text is tautological, vague, or ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2 Valid assessment system</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design (sampling, validity threats, etc.)</td>
<td>Sound evaluation design</td>
<td>Weak design (inadequate sampling, presence of threats to validity, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple measures</td>
<td>Measures mostly consistent with each other</td>
<td>Measures mostly inconsistent with each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>Preponderance of reliability and validity measures of sufficient magnitude</td>
<td>Preponderance of reliability and validity measures of insufficient magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Guidelines for Quality Principle III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1 Decision making</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis for past decisions</td>
<td>Some program decisions informed by evidence</td>
<td>Program decisions are episodic, ad hoc, only by consensus, or fiat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis for future decisions</td>
<td>QCS plan to base decisions for program improvement on evidence where possible</td>
<td>No plan for relying on-evidence in program improvement decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Text is clear and precise</td>
<td>Text is tautological, vague, or ambiguous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2 Quality Control System</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>System attends to all components (4.1–4.7)</td>
<td>System fails to attend all components (4.1–4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-finding</td>
<td>Internal audit identifies areas in the QCS or program for improvement</td>
<td>Internal audit fails to identify problems in the QCS or in the program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to student learning</td>
<td>Plan to investigate the links between program capacity and student learning</td>
<td>No plan to investigate the links between program capacity and student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality improvement</td>
<td>Internal audit provides evidence that each component is monitored adequately</td>
<td>Internal audit reveals a preponderance of components are not monitored adequately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Guidelines for Capacity (4.0)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.0 Factors</th>
<th>Above standard</th>
<th>Below standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completeness</td>
<td>All subcomponents of capacity (4.1–4.7) are addressed</td>
<td>Some subcomponents of capacity (4.1–4.7) are not addressed in the Inquiry Brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment*</td>
<td>Parity on the preponderance of components (4.1–4.7)</td>
<td>Lack of parity on the preponderance of components (4.1–4.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency</td>
<td>Sufficient evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents</td>
<td>Insufficient evidence for the preponderance of subcomponents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Clean or qualified audit opinion</td>
<td>Adverse or disclaimer audit opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In their audit report, the auditors render the judgment of whether or not the institution is committed to the program seeking accreditation. In accepting the report, the panel does not make a separate decision about commitment.
# Heuristic Table 5

## Heuristics for the Accreditation Decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale &amp; methods 2.0</th>
<th>Results 1.0</th>
<th>Quality control system 3.0</th>
<th>Accreditation decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Preaccredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard 2.1 only*</td>
<td>Absent*</td>
<td>Above standard*</td>
<td>New Program or preaccredit*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Inquiry Brief Proposal only*
Heuristic Table 6

(If a program is below the capacity standards for program quality in the final accreditation recommendation and decision)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation decision in heuristic table 5</th>
<th>Capacity for quality (4.0)*</th>
<th>Accreditation decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accredit</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisionally accredit</td>
<td>Below standard</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaccredit or New program accredit</td>
<td>Below standard (above on commitment)</td>
<td>Preaccredit (with stipulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preaccredit* or New program accredit</td>
<td>Below standard (below on commitment)</td>
<td>Deny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If capacity is above standard there is no change in the decision portrayed in heuristic table 5.
**TEAC glossary**

**Accreditation**: A process for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. The status of public recognition that TEAC grants to an educational program that has evidence that it meets TEAC’s standards, quality principles, and requirements.

**Accreditation Committee**: A decision-making subcommittee of TEAC’s board of directors, appointed for the purpose of acting on the accreditation recommendations of the Accreditation Panel.

The Accreditation Committee has at least five members of the board and includes a member of the public, a teacher, and a higher education faculty member. The Accreditation Committee has the authority to make the accreditation decision.

**Accreditation Panel**: The Accreditation Panel is appointed by the president of TEAC for the purpose of making a recommendation for an appropriate accreditation status.

The seven members of the panel are skilled in evaluating evidence. Selected to represent the field of professional education, the panel members include teacher educators, higher education faculty, P–12 educators, the public, education policy makers, education policy scholars, and the TEAC auditors who visited the program under review.

**Accreditation recommendation**: The recommendation that the Accreditation Panel makes to the Accreditation Committee after giving due consideration to the Brief, the audit report, any response from the program faculty to the audit report, reports from consulting reviewers, and a staff analysis of the program’s case.

The Accreditation Panel makes one of the following recommendations about a program: (1) it meets the standards for initial or continuing accreditation; (2) it meets the standards for new program accreditation, preaccreditation, provisional accreditation; or (3) it should return to candidate status.

**Accreditation report**: A report from the Accreditation Panel to the TEAC Accreditation Committee and the program faculty, which includes its evaluation of the program and its justification for the accreditation recommendation.

It also includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses found in the Brief or identified in the audit report.

**Adverse opinion**: An unsatisfactory audit rating, reflecting the finding that the auditors were not able to confirm at least 75 percent of the targets assigned to an element or component.

**Affiliate membership**: A form of membership available to institutions supportive of the TEAC agenda but that do not wish to undertake candidate membership status. Affiliate membership is also available to individuals and professional associations and agencies.

**Annual report**: Accredited programs must submit an annual report to TEAC. Typically no more than 10 pages, the annual report is an updated Appendix A of the Brief (the program faculty conducts an internal audit and writes an internal audit report). In the annual report, the faculty also addresses any weaknesses or stipulations cited in the accreditation decision; notes any substantive changes in the program.

**Appeal**: A request by the program that TEAC reconsider an action or decision. An appeal is warranted when there may be

1. Evidence of errors or omissions in carrying out prescribed procedures by the auditors, any reviewers, members of the Accreditation Committee, the TEAC staff, or the board of directors.
2. Evidence that demonstrable bias, conflict of interest, or prejudice by a member of the TEAC staff or board, an auditor, a reviewer, or member of the Accreditation Committee influenced the board’s accreditation decision.
3. Evidence that TEAC’s decision was not supported adequately or was contrary to the facts presented and known at the time of the decision.

---

32 TEAC uses Brief to refer to both the Inquiry Brief and the Inquiry Brief Proposal.
Audit: The on-site examination and verification of the evidence presented in the program’s Brief.

The audit is not concerned with an evaluation of the success of the program or even with the significance of the evidence. The audit does not address the quality of the program, only whether the evidence presented in the Brief is in fact as it is presented.

Audit report: A document informing the program faculty about the results of the audit.

The TEAC audit report generally includes four major sections:

1. Abstract: the auditors’ overall opinion about the trustworthiness of the Brief and summary of the principal findings of the audit.
2. Methods: what the auditors did: with whom they met, what they examined, the schedule of the audit, and so forth.
3. Findings: a full report of the findings from the auditors’ probes.
4. Judgment: the auditors’ judgments about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of each element was in fact verified and a determination (if the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient) to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

Audit task: One of a series of tasks, each assigned to an aspect of a Brief that is associated with one of the principles or standards of the TEAC system.

An audit task is composed of a target and a probe (see below for their definitions).

Caring: A particular kind of relationship between the teacher and the student that is defined by the teacher’s unconditional acceptance of the student, the teacher’s intention to address the student’s educational needs, the teacher’s competence to meet those needs, and also by the student’s recognition that the teacher cares.

It is one of TEAC’s core beliefs that these attributes must be addressed in the evaluation of teaching skill through selection, screening, or even direct instruction including modeling on the part of faculty.

Certification (see Licensing)

Claims: The statements that a program faculty makes to describe how its program meets the TEAC standards in preparing competent, caring, and qualified teachers.

Clean audit opinion: The most confident rating TEAC gives pertaining to the verification or trustworthiness of the Brief and its parts.

Component: One of the major parts of each element of the TEAC system of principles and standards.

The components are represented by a single decimal point. For example, 2.2, Evidence of valid assessment is a component of element 2.0, Quality Principle II. In the accreditation process, components may be awarded stipulations if the evidence for them is sufficiently weak and below standard.

Confirming probe: A probe is said to be confirming if the auditor determines that the evidence (e.g., statistic, claim) representing the target is accurate.

This judgment can be made even if there are slight and inconsequential inaccuracies in the targeted text of the Brief.

Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), a nonprofit organization of the nation’s colleges and universities, CHEA recognizes accreditors. Established in 1996, CHEA also acts as the national policy center and clearinghouse on accreditation. CHEA recognized TEAC in 2001.

Denied accreditation: Accreditation is denied when the Brief, coupled with the auditors’ findings, fails to support the program faculty’s claims, and there is little likelihood that additional evidence and analysis would indicate the faculty’s claims about the quality principles could be warranted.

Disclaimer opinion: A rating by the auditors that indicates that the evidence could not be audited because it was not available for auditing or that the TEAC auditors were not given access to the evidence related to more than 75 percent of the targets assigned to an element or component.

Element: In the TEAC system, an element (0.0 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, or 4.0) describes the criteria for candidacy, Quality Principle I, Quality Principle II, Quality Principle III, and to the components of Capacity for Quality.

Evidence: The body of fact and analysis that meets the standards of contemporary scholarship and warrants the claims and assertions made by the program faculty about each of the quality principles.

TEAC requires that programs provide evidence that their students have learned (1) the subject matter they will teach, (2) the subject matters of the field of education, and (3) how to teach. In addition, programs must show that the way they warrant student learning is valid. The faculty must show that they use what they learn about their students’ learning to improve the program and the system they have in place for ensuring the quality of the program.
**Initial audit task:** The auditors start audit tasks with a line of verification.

Before the auditors arrive at a campus, the TEAC staff and the auditors will have created a set of *initial* audit tasks that focus on the parts of the *Brief* that are relevant for one or another of the TEAC principles and standards. They are called *initial* tasks because the auditors may also employ follow-up tasks and new tasks that they have created on the spot or that they draw from the large set of potential audit tasks the TEAC staff has created.

**Inquiry Brief:** An analogue to a research report or monograph, the *Inquiry Brief* includes the claims a faculty makes for its graduates, a rationale for the assessment of those claims, a description of the psychometric properties of the evidence that is presented to support the claims, the findings related to the claims, and a discussion of what has been learned from the data. In addition, the *Inquiry Brief* reports on the faculty’s efforts to evaluate the rigor of its own quality control system.

**Inquiry Brief Proposal:** A program faculty that does not yet have convincing evidence for its claims of student learning but has evidence of its capacity of its program for quality may submit an *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The program must, however, have evidence of a sound quality control system, evidence that the institution is committed to the program, and a plan and rationale for acquiring evidence over time to support its claims that it will meet the requirements of the TEAC system.

**Inquiry committees:** For the purpose of their participation in the governance and activities of TEAC, the members of the program faculty, or faculties, are encouraged to form inquiry committees, composed of representatives of all groups that play a role in the programs.

**Institutional learning:** One of TEAC’s quality principles, institutional learning suggests that every program has in place a quality control system that responds to data about the program, from student outcomes to faculty competence. According to this principle, it is not enough for faculty to collect data about all aspects of the program; the program faculty must also learn something about its program as a result of this process and demonstrate learning by making appropriate accommodations.

**Learning how to learn:** The state of subject matters taught in school is in constant flux, as are the expectations of what should be taught in the public schools. However, because teachers must be ready to teach content in their fields, even content about which they are initially quite unfamiliar, it is important that all teacher candidates learn how to acquire new knowledge and new understanding on their own. Teacher education programs must pay attention to meta-cognitive knowledge that gives teacher candidates insights into their own learning practices.

**Liberal education:** As part of *Quality Principle I*, TEAC requires that the programs it accredits provide evidence that their graduates have the cross-cutting skills and habits of mind that come from liberal education: learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, and an understanding of the use of technology in learning.

**Licensing:** The official recognition by a state governmental agency that a person has met state requirements and is, therefore, approved to practice as a certified or licensed professional.

The term *certification* is still used to mean licensing in some states.

**Multicultural perspectives:** The accuracy of the curriculum with respect to sound scholarship on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspective.

TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the degree understand the qualifications that must be made in their knowledge with respect to confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

**National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is a coalition of 33 specialty professional associations of teachers, teacher educators, content specialists, and local and state policy makers. Like TEAC, it has established standards and procedures for accrediting colleges and schools of education.**
**New program accreditation**: New program accreditation status signifies that the program faculty has proposed a valid way of measuring its students’ learning, has a sound rationale for the program, has a quality control system in place to monitor and improve program quality, and has evidence of institutional commitment to the program.

When a program is new, for example, or has been substantially modified recently, it may have had no opportunity to acquire evidence for its claims, but it still could have evidence of a sound quality control system, institutional commitment, and a plan and rationale for acquiring the evidence to support its claims that TEAC requires for accreditation. Or, it may be that a program has a respectable reputation for quality and success, but the evidence that presumably supports and corroborates the reputation has not been systematically collected and examined recently to see if it continues to support the program’s exemplary reputation.

**Pedagogical knowledge**: The subject matter that is taught is different from the subject matter of the academic major that teachers learned from their professors and their own study. It is transformed into something else: a school subject that has its own structure and logic that helps the student make sense of the subject matter. The knowledge that supports this conversion of the academic major into a school subject is called pedagogical knowledge (sometimes called pedagogical content knowledge).

Someone who has pedagogical knowledge knows what is a telling example; a good analogy, algorithm, or heuristic; a provocative question; a compelling theme; a different way of representing a subject matter; and more than one example, metaphor, or mode of explanation. Typically the content of methods courses and clinically based courses in the teacher education program show the prospective teacher the methods of instructing, motivating, and evaluating students. TEAC expects that a program devote the equivalent of an academic minor to developing students’ pedagogical knowledge.

**Preaccreditation**: A recognized USDE status that TEAC grants to a program for five years, indicating that the evidence in the Inquiry Brief, while inconclusive, is promising and that accreditation is likely within five years. It is also a program accreditation status that indicates that the standards for the Inquiry Brief Proposal have been met.

**Preponderance**: The amount or degree of evidence that is sufficient to satisfy a TEAC principle or standard.

As a general guideline, TEAC uses preponderance to connote that 75 percent of whatever is being modified by “preponderance” is sufficient for a claim.

**Probe**: A specific action taken by the auditor to establish whether a target is accurate.

In cases where the outcomes of a probe are variable or uncertain with regard to the accuracy of the target, the auditors probe further until a stable pattern is uncovered or until a probe’s result is unambiguous (see confirming probe). An acceptable pattern for the verification of a target has at least 75 percent of the probes yielding verification or confirmation.

**Program**: A planned sequence of academic courses and experiences leading to a degree, state license (or certificate), or some other credential that entitles the holder to perform professional education services in schools.

In cases where the institution offers more than one program, or where graduates are eligible for different professional licenses, the institution determines how it wishes to represent and organize the evidence about its programs. It may submit one Brief that treats all the programs as one coherent program with special license options or tracks. Or it may submit several Briefs, as many as one for each of its distinct programs.

The number of programs and Briefs has no bearing on the program’s annual fees to TEAC, but it will affect the fee levied in the audit year.

**Program approval**: The process by which a state governmental agency reviews a professional education program to determine if it meets the state’s standards for the preparation of school personnel.

Program approval can be coordinated with TEAC program accreditation through a state-TEAC accreditation agreement; in certain cases, TEAC accreditation can replace program approval.

**Program faculty**: The individuals who are assigned responsibility for the program and are held accountable by the institution for the quality of the program.

The program faculty is often lead by a dean, director, chair officially designated to represent the professional education program.

**Provisional accreditation**: An indication that there is sufficient evidence in the Inquiry Brief that the program faculty can remedy the weaknesses in the Inquiry Brief and become fully accredited within two years.
Qualified opinion: An audit rating that signifies that although there are significant errors, overall, the Brief can be trusted. It signifies that at least 75 percent (but less than 90 percent) of the targets were verified or confirmed.

Quality control system: The system the institution and program faculty have to yield the evidence they need to ensure that they have identified the right faculty, students, administrators, courses, standards, and policies for the program.

TEAC requires evidence that the system functions as intended and that it addresses each of TEAC’s standards for program capacity.

Recognition: The United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognize accrediting organizations. Both bodies recognize TEAC.

The USDE recognition process is governed by federal law and regulation and is restricted to accreditors whose accreditation provides eligibility for federal funding for a program or institution. The purpose is to assure that federal funds purchase quality courses and programs. The CHEA recognition process is governed by the policies of its board, a private entity, and is designed to assure and strengthen academic quality (see above, Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

Staff analysis: A document prepared by the TEAC staff to assist the Accreditation Panel. This document takes into consideration the panelists’ individual analysis of the program’s case for accreditation and the staff’s own analysis. The staff analysis considers whether or not there are credible rival hypotheses for the claims in the Brief and whether or not the evidence for the claims is sufficient.

State accreditation agreement: A formal agreement between a state and TEAC that defines the state’s recognition of TEAC’s accreditation of programs, its relationship with state program approval, and guides any joint or concurrent state-TEAC site visits.

State approval: A governmental activity requiring specific professional education programs within a state to meet standards of quality so that their graduates will be eligible for a state license (same as program approval or program registration).

Stipulation: If the program’s evidence for a component is deficient, the program is accredited with a stipulation in the quality principle or standard. The principle or standard is considered to be supported, but the program must remedy and provide sufficient evidence for the component within two years.

Subcomponent: Subcomponents (only in element 4.0) and are designated by a second decimal. (For example, 4.2.4, Parity with the institution, is a subcomponent of component 4.2, Faculty, of element 4.0, Program’s Capacity for Quality.

Subject matter knowledge: TEAC requires that the teacher education programs it accredits offer the traditional academic college major of approximately 30 credit hours of graduated study, or its equivalent.

Because the major is geared toward graduate study or entry level employment in the discipline, however, the program faculty should carefully examine each major to insure that it is appropriate for the future teacher because it leads students to the kind of basic understanding necessary to be an effective educator.

Those seeking some teaching assignments (for example, elementary school teaching or secondary school teaching in social studies or general science) are required to have the equivalent of the academic major because there is often no appropriate formal major for these fields.

Substantive change: Any change in the published mission or objectives of the institution or education program; the addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure in terms of either content or delivery from those that were offered when TEAC most recently accredited the programs; a change in legal status or form of control of the program; or a change from contracting with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach out agreements.

Target: What the auditors are seeking to verify in the Brief.

A target can be a particular sentence, claim, statistic, or piece of evidence. Each target is linked to an element, component, or subcomponent of the TEAC system. For example, if the target is the sentence all faculty teach in their areas of competence, the purpose of choosing the target is its link to subcomponent 4.2.3, the faculty’s qualifications.

Teach-out agreement: An agreement between accredited institutions, which provides equitable treatment of students if one of the institutions stops offering an educational program before all enrolled students have completed the program.
**Teacher competence:** A teacher’s competence is a reflection of the repertoire of skills, understandings, and dispositions he or she possesses. The particular set of skills, understandings, and dispositions that a program faculty takes to represent competence is reflected in the claims made about the program’s candidates and in the literature and evidence cited in the Inquiry Brief to justify the claims. The Inquiry Brief must provide evidence about teaching skill that indicates that the candidates for the degree know how to teach and can show their skill in clinical settings.

**Teacher qualifications:** TEAC expects that program graduates will receive a state license to teach.

In the past, earning a license was tantamount to successfully completing an approved program and receiving a recommendation for licensure from the faculty. But in most states, graduating from an approved program is now necessary but not sufficient to receive a state license. Many states require candidates in addition to pass criminal background checks, take and pass examinations, and meet health standards.

TEAC requires that a program that merits accreditation should select, screen, and prepare its candidates to meet all of the state licensure requirements. The significant data bearing on this claim are twofold: (1) the number of teacher education candidates who graduate from a program each year; and (2) the proportion of those graduates who earn a state teaching license.

**Teacher skill:** TEAC expects that all teacher candidates at the close of their teacher education programs can perform in rudimentary ways in the classroom. In an independent manner, candidates are expected to plan lessons effectively, implement them well, and assess their impact with rigor. In their performances, it is expected that teacher candidates will meet standard problems facing teachers and address them successfully. It is TEAC’s perspective that no teacher candidate should be recommended for licensure in the profession without demonstrating teacher competence as defined.

**Valid assessment of learning:** The Inquiry Brief conveys to TEAC and to the field how faculty has substantiated the aims it has made about the candidates. In a quantitative design, an assessment is valid to the extent that the credibility of rival explanations for the findings is low and the likelihood that the program itself is responsible for the findings is high.

A key to any analysis of an assessment is the validity of the interpretations made of the data. In a qualitative design, validity is a function of triangulation where multiple sources of data suggest converging interpretations of the extent to which the faculty claims are substantiated.

**Validity of interpretations of data:** In modern psychometric views, validity is not a property of a data set. Instead, validity refers to the propriety of the interpretations that are made concerning the findings of a measurement effort.

For example, if SAT scores are taken to measure teacher competence, and the scores are interpreted in that fashion, faculty would need to present an argument including related findings and research to substantiate the credibility of this claim. If college grade-point averages are taken as measures of pedagogical content knowledge, again, the interpretation would need to be defended by some sort of analysis of the procedures used to assign course grades. And if measures of the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory are taken as measures of teachers’ caring, the faculty would need to present arguments to make such a claim seem credible.

**Verified target:** A target, whether an element, component, sub-component, or item of text, is said to be verified when at least 75 percent of the probes assigned to it are confirmed, or when, in the case of text, there is a clear, unambiguous confirmation by a probe.

TEAC also speaks of targets that are verified as being confirmed.

**Weakness:** If the evidence for a subcomponent is insufficient, the program can be accredited, but with a weakness in the principle or standard. If accredited with a weakness, the program must address the weakness within five years.
## Index

### A
- Accreditation Committee 34, 91, 110–116
  - other roles of 118
  - scrutiny of accreditation report 112–113
- Accreditation decision 34, 91
  - Accreditation Committee’s decision 115–116
  - program’s acceptance or appeal of 116–117
- Accreditation Panel 34, 91, 92–109
  - accreditation recommendation 108–109
  - accreditation report 95–96
  - composition and responsibilities of 92–93
  - guidelines for deliberations 96–101
  - heuristics, for accreditation recommendation 101–107
  - heuristics, for capacity standards 106
  - heuristics, for Quality Principle I 102
  - heuristics, for Quality Principle II 103
  - heuristics, for Quality Principle III 104
  - heuristics tables for 141–146
  - process 93–96
  - role of 92
- Accreditation principles and standards defined 2
- Accreditation process
  - at a glance 124
  - length of time to accreditation 11
  - overview 5
- Accreditation status
  - accreditation categories and terms 6, 115, 133
  - eligibility for 1, 14
  - maintaining 12, 119–121
- Annual report 120
  - due to TEAC 12
  - internal audit and internal audit report 119–120
- Audit 5, 73–89
  - auditors’ responsibilities for 74–75
  - audit report 84
  - audit schedule 12, 134
  - costs to program 11
  - on-site activities 82–83
  - overview of 73
  - pre-audit activities 78–81
  - process, details of 78–84
  - program’s responsibilities for 73–74

### summary of
- 34
- of the case for 78–79
- tasks 79–81
- TEAC’s responsibilities for 74

### Auditors
- additional guidelines for 85–89
- annotated template of TEAC quality principles and standards of capacity, for TEAC auditors 140
- decision-making process 85
- guidelines for audit strategy 87
- heuristics for judgment 89
- judgments of 84
- what to expect of 76–77

### Audit opinion. See Auditors, judgments of

### C
- Caring teaching skill. See Quality Principle I
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) 1, 9, 105
- Cross-cutting dimensions of Quality Principle I. See Quality Principle I

### D
- Dues and fees. See Membership

### E
- Educational leadership. See Quality principles and standards of capacity for educational leadership programs
- Evidence of institution’s commitment and standards of capacity for program quality 19

### F
- Formative evaluation 11, 33, 78
  - checklist for evaluators 132

### H
- Heuristics. See Accreditation Panel and Auditors
Inquiry Brief

appendices, overview 53
claims 38–41
discussion and plan 51
evidence of capacity for program quality (appendix B) 61–63
faculty qualifications (appendix C) 64
internal audit (appendix A) 54–60
inventory of evidence (appendix E) 65–67
methods of assessment 45–49
program requirements (appendix D) 64
rationale for assessments 42–44
references 52
results 50
Inquiry Brief and Inquiry Brief Proposal 5, 27–36
authorship of 11
checklist for program 131
content 28–29
declared auditable 33
evaluation of 33–34
format for 32
producing, guidelines for 35–36, 127–128
program faculty endorsement of 30, 125
requirements 30–31, 125–126
summative evaluation of 34, 91
Inquiry Brief Proposal 69–72
and TEAC’s accreditation standards and principles 70
appendices 72
claims and rationale 71
discussion and plan 72
methods of assessment 72
program overview 71
references 72
results 72
Internal audit 54–60
internal audit report 57

L

Learning how to learn. See Quality Principle I, cross-cutting dimensions of

M

Membership
affiliate 1, 11
application process 11
dues and fees 11
eligibility for accreditation 1
Multicultural perspectives and understanding. See Quality Principle I, cross-cutting dimensions of

P

Pedagogical knowledge. See Quality Principle I
Program
defined, for accreditation and Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal 7
Public statements of TEAC affiliation and accreditation 121

Q

Quality control system 18
and Quality Principle III 57
and standards of capacity for program quality 18
and student learning 57
defined 54
Quality principles and standards of capacity 14–26
annotated template for TEAC auditors 135–140
curriculum, standards of capacity for 19
educational leadership programs, quality principles and standards of capacity for 22–26
facilities, equipment, and supplies, standards of capacity for 20
faculty, standards of capacity for 20
fiscal and administrative, standards of capacity for 20
for educational leadership programs 13, 26
outline of 123
Quality Principle I 2, 14–16
Quality Principle I, cross-cutting dimensions of 14–16
Quality Principle I, for educational leadership programs 22–24
Quality Principle II 2, 16–17
Quality Principle II, for educational leadership programs 24
Quality Principle III 2, 17–18
Quality Principle III, for educational leadership programs 25
recruiting, admissions, catalog, academic calendar, advertising, and grading policy, standards of capacity for 21
standards of capacity for educational leadership programs 25–26
standards of capacity for program quality 2, 18–21
student feedback, standards of capacity for 21
student support services, standards of capacity for 20
S
State-mandated accreditation of education programs. See TEAC and state agreements
State program approval. See TEAC and state agreements
Subject matter knowledge. See Quality Principle I

T
TEAC
  and other accreditors 8–10
  and professional associations 10
  and state agreements 9
  and state and national standards 38–39
  and state and national standards, for educational leadership programs 26
  and state protocol agreements 7, 9
glossary 147–152
overall goal, acceptance as a requirement of accreditation 13

overall standards of quality 2
overview of 1
philosophy of accreditation 3–4
Web site 12
Technology. See Quality Principle I, cross-cutting dimensions of

U
U.S. Department of Education (USDE) 1, 9, 61, 71, 105
  and standards of capacity for quality 18

W
Weaknesses and stipulations 93, 94, 95, 96, 108, 109, 111, 116
  addressing, in annual report 119
TEAC’s accreditation principles and standards

0.0 Requirements for candidate status
   0.1 Commitment to comply with TEAC’s standards for the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators
   0.2 Agreement to disclose the program’s accreditation status
   0.3 Willingness to cooperate and provide information to TEAC
   0.4 Regional accreditation or equivalent
   0.5 Graduates’ eligibility for a professional license

1.0 Quality Principle I: Evidence of student learning
   1.1 Evidence of students’ subject matter knowledge
   1.2 Evidence of students’ pedagogical knowledge
   1.3 Evidence of students’ caring and teaching skill

   Each component of element 1.0 includes three cross-cutting liberal education themes: learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, and technology.

2.0 Quality Principle II: Valid assessment of student learning
   2.1 Statements explaining links between assessments and the program goal, claims, and requirements
   2.2 Evidence of valid interpretations on the assessments

3.0 Quality Principle III: Institutional learning
   3.1 The program faculty’s decisions and planning are based on evidence of student learning
   3.2 The program has an influential quality control system

4.0 Standards of Capacity for Program Quality
   4.1 Curriculum
      4.1.1 Quality Principle I components
      4.1.2 Professional license requirements
      4.1.3 Institutional degree requirements
   4.2 Program faculty
      4.2.1 Accept TEAC goal and program’s Inquiry Brief/Inquiry Brief Proposal
      4.2.2 Have an accurate and balanced understanding of the field
      4.2.3 Are qualified for their teaching assignments
      4.2.4 Have parity with their counterparts across the institution
   4.3 Facilities, equipment, and supplies
      4.3.1 Program has adequate resources for Quality Principle I outcomes
      4.3.2 Program has a quality control system that monitors and enhances resources
      4.3.3 The program has parity with the rest of the institution regarding its facilities
   4.4 Fiscal and administrative capacity
      4.4.1 Evidence that the institution is financially sound
      4.4.2 Evidence of adequate resources for faculty development
      4.4.3 Quality control system that monitors financial and administrative resources
      4.4.4 Evidence of adequate resources for Quality Principle I outcomes and parity with the institution
   4.5 Student support services
      4.5.1 The program has adequate student support services for Quality Principle I outcomes
      4.5.2 The program has a quality control system that monitors student support services
      4.5.3 There is parity with institutional student support service
   4.6 Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising
      4.6.1 Admissions: policies encourage diversity and service in high-demand areas
      4.6.2 The academic calendar is accurate and complete
      4.6.3 Advertising is accurate and consistent with information and claims in Inquiry Brief or Inquiry Brief Proposal
      4.6.4 The program promotes fair grading policies
   4.7 Student feedback
      4.7.1 Evidence that student opinion and complaints are sought and resolved
      4.7.2 Evidence of parity with respect to complaints in other programs

State standards: When appropriate because of TEAC’s protocol agreement with a state, an eighth component to the TEAC capacity standards (4.8) is added, with subcomponents (4.8.1, etc.) in accordance to the state’s particular requirements.
Teacher Education Accreditation Council
Frank B. Murray, President
frank@teac.org

Offices:
One Dupont Circle
Suite 320
Washington, DC 20036
202-466-7236
tead@teac.org

Willard Hall Education Building
Suite 101
Newark, DE 19716
302-831-0400
302-831-3013 (fax)
tead@teac.org

Membership information:
Sue Fuhrmann
Director of Member Services
Willard Hall Education Building
Suite 105
Newark, DE 19716
302-831-6072
302-831-3013 (fax)
sue@teac.org

For more information about TEAC, see
www.teac.org