

A decorative graphic consisting of two overlapping, wavy bands of blue color. The top band is a lighter shade of blue, and the bottom band is a darker shade. They flow from the left side of the page towards the right, creating a sense of movement and depth.

# **SITE VISIT INSTRUCTIONS**

EFFECTIVE BEGINNING WITH FALL 2026 SITE VISITS

## PRE SITE VISIT

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The following outlines responsibilities of the Program and Site Visit Team (SVT) in the weeks leading up to the site visit. Effective Fall 2026, the self-study submission deadline has moved to 12 weeks prior to the site visit.

### 1 Year Prior to the Visit

#### Program:

- Completes and submits the LMS Agreement Form to CAHME staff, documenting the program's planned LMS access arrangement for the site visit team. CAHME will not schedule a site visit until this form is received. LMS access by the site visit team is not new; however, we have introduced new options to provide programs with flexibility on providing the site visit team with access to required documentation. (See LMS Access Policy in the Handbook of Policies and Accreditation Procedures Article 15b Section 1)
- Review the Site Visit Instructions schedule to begin coordinating with all the required attendees such as students, stakeholders, and program leadership.

#### CAHME Staff:

- Email program to request site visit date options and completion of LMS Agreement form and the Site Visit Instructions with schedule.
- Upon confirmation of site visit date, send program the Site Visit Logistics Form

### 12 Weeks Prior to the Visit

#### Self-Study, Evidence & Site Visit Logistics Form

#### Program:

- Self-Study:
  - o Submits the complete Self-Study online within the CAHME Accreditation Management Portal (CAMP)/Weave.
  - o Submits all evidence (exhibits and supporting documents) files at the same time as the self-study submission within CAMP/Weave.
  - o The required format for some evidence file submissions will vary based on the LMS access option selected in the LMS Agreement Form.
- **Site Visit Logistics form:** Complete and send to CAHME staff.
- **Introductions:** Initiate introduction communication with the SVT Chair and Coordinator using contact details provided in the SVT introduction email from CAHME staff.

#### CAHME Staff:

- **Self-Study:** Performs a completeness check once the self-study is submitted. The self-study becomes available to the site visit team no later than 10 weeks prior to the visit.

#### Site Visit Team:

- **Introductory Call:** Schedules call with the site visit team and program leadership to get to know the team and answer any questions, begin logistics and process for the site visit.

## 10 Weeks Prior to the Visit

### Confirmation of Site Visit Schedule and Logistics

#### Program:

- Sends the Coordinator a draft site visit schedule (using the “Events at Site Visit” template below as a guide).

#### Site Visit Team:

- **Schedule Review:** Collaborates with the Chair to review the draft site visit schedule; returns to seek revisions or sets as approved. Contacts the Program Director regarding any changes.
- **Travel Logistics:** Discusses travel logistics and hotel accommodations for the SVT with the Program (airport to hotel, hotel to campus for all days, and return to airport).

### Review of Self-Study

#### CAHME Staff:

- The CAO will complete an initial review for content of the submitted self-study. Any additional materials needed for submission will be communicated to the program director 10 weeks prior to the site visit. The CAO will open affected criterion within CAMP/Weave for additional materials to be added.

#### Site Visit Team:

- The CAO will make the self-study available to the site visit team after initial content review and gathering any additional materials from the program director.

## Starting at 10 weeks prior to visit

### Site Visit Team Reviews Self-Study

#### Site Visit Team:

- Communicates any document needs to the program based on the SVT’s review of the self-study. The SVT will open affected criterion within CAMP/Weave for additional materials to be added.

## 30 Days Prior to the Visit

### LMS Access

#### Program:

- Standard LMS access must be made available to all members of the site visit team no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled site visit and must remain active through the conclusion of the visit.
- Programs that cannot meet the standard 30-day requirement must have already notified CAHME and submitted an LMS Agreement Form with an approved alternative arrangement (see LMS Access Summary table in the Preparation for the Visit section).

*FERPA Exclusion for Accreditation Activities: See Appendix 1 “Guidelines for Access to Student and Faculty Records.”*

## 2 Weeks Prior to the Visit

### Finalize Site Visit Logistics Conference Call

#### Program and Site Visit Team:

- Attend the pre-site visit conference call meeting.
  - Program to ask questions and work on any final logistics.
  - Finalize site visit schedule and arrangements.
  - Finalize any questions the team may have after their review of the self-study.

## Prior to Site Visit – LMS Records Review

#### Program:

- Document review is completed virtually by the entire site visit team prior to the on-site visit. The Program Director must be available for virtual communications during the records review period.

#### Site Visit Team:

- Schedule and finalize times for program director to be responsive during records review;
  - One eight-hour block or
  - Two four-hour blocks

### LMS Access Requirements Summary

Programs must complete and return the LMS Agreement Form to CAHME staff when submitting proposed site visit dates. The table below summarizes the access scenarios and associated requirements. The LMS Access Policy can be found in the Handbook of Policies and Accreditation Procedures Article 15b Section 1 Learning Management System (LMS) Access for Site Visitors.

The purpose of the virtual LMS review is to complete the majority of document and records review prior to arrival on campus, allowing the on-site visit to focus on validation, clarification, triangulation, and stakeholder engagement.

#### Program Leadership Availability During LMS Review

The site visit team will coordinate with program leadership if a specific timeframe is necessary to be available for the LMS review. The Program Director must be available by email, phone, or video conference during the scheduled LMS review period that was agreed upon by both the site visit team and Program Director. Programs should expect requests for clarification and additional documentation and should respond within a reasonable timeframe during the review block.

**Important: Programs must complete and submit the LMS Agreement Form to CAHME staff when submitting proposed site visit dates. CAHME will not schedule a site visit until the completed form has been received.**

LMS ACCESS SCENARIOS			
Scenario	Program Responsibilities	Operational Adjustments	Program Financial Responsibilities
<b>30 Days Prior:</b> Standard Access (Preferred) 30 calendar days prior	Provide LMS access to all SVT members no later than 30 days prior to the site visit. Access must cover all courses and students enrolled during the self-study year and remain active through conclusion of the visit.	No additional adjustments required.	No additional financial responsibilities.
<b>Less than 30 Days:</b> Shortened Access Less than 30 calendars days; minimum 1 week prior	LMS access must be granted at least one week prior to the site visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An additional Coordinator will be assigned to ensure LMS materials can be thoroughly reviewed within the shortened timeframe.</li> <li>On-site document review day, taking site visit from two days to three days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All travel and meeting expenses associated with the additional on-site document review day and additional Coordinator</li> </ul>
<b>Limited LMS Access:</b> Less than full access per the CAHME LMS Data and Access Needs Memorandum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program must supplement LMS access with external documentation repositories containing all materials necessary for accreditation review as defined in the CAHME LMS Data and Access Needs Memorandum</li> <li>Materials will be labeled with CAHME standard and criterion to support efficient review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An additional Coordinator will be assigned to ensure LMS materials can be thoroughly reviewed within the shortened timeframe.</li> <li>On-site document review day, taking site visit from two days to three days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All travel and meeting expenses associated with the additional on-site document review day and additional Coordinator</li> <li>Any additional review required to verify evidence may result in additional fees.</li> </ul>
<b>No LMS Access Available</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program must provide all LMS-based instructional materials externally via a secure repository (e.g., Dropbox, Google Drive, SharePoint).</li> <li>Materials must include all LMS evidence required for review as outlined in the CAHME Accreditation Site Visitor LMS Data and Access Need Memorandum.</li> <li>Materials must be organized by CAHME standard and criterion to facilitate review by the site visit team</li> <li>Materials due 12 weeks prior to the site visit (to align with self-study submission)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An additional Coordinator will be assigned to ensure LMS materials can be thoroughly reviewed within the shortened timeframe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All travel and meeting expenses associated with the additional Coordinator</li> <li>Any additional review required to verify evidence may result in additional fees.</li> </ul>

## EVENTS AT SITE VISIT

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### Virtual Record Review

Effective Fall 2026, a standard site visit consists of a virtual LMS records review period followed by two on-site days. On occasion, the survey may be scheduled for a longer period if there is agreement that more time is needed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the program due to the requirement to examine multiple programs, degrees, or tracks. The Site Visit Chair and Program should notify the CAO of any adjustments to the site visit schedule via email prior to making an adjustment to the schedule.

*Note: This schedule should serve as a guideline and all times are estimated. It may be modified to suit the specific situation at the discretion of the site visit Chair. The Program Director should use this as a guide when creating the draft site visit schedule 10 weeks prior to the visit. All activities are required but times might be adjusted.*

### Site Visit Schedule

#### Participation Flexibility for Online and Hybrid Programs

##### Faculty Participation

- Faculty participation may occur in person or virtually. Programs with geographically dispersed faculty should ensure meaningful participation by faculty regardless of location.

##### Student Participation

- Student participation may occur in person, virtually, or through a combination of both formats. Programs should ensure representation from students across program modalities, locations, and stages of progression.

##### Stakeholder Participation

- Stakeholders may participate in person or virtually. Programs should seek representation from employers, alumni, preceptors, advisory board members, and other stakeholders who reflect the diversity of the program's constituencies.

#### Representation Across Program Variants

- When a program includes multiple program variants, concentrations, tracks, campuses, delivery modalities, or degree levels, the site visit schedule should provide opportunities for the site visit team to engage with individuals representing each variant included within the accreditation review.

## Arrival Evening (Evening Before Day 1)

Time	Location	Activity	Participants	Description
~4:00 PM	Hotel / Restaurant	Arrival, Hotel Check-In & Dinner	SVT (SVT will coordinate dinner plans)	All site visit team members required to arrive and be in attendance. Executive session to prepare and identify priorities for Day 1.

## Day 1 (On-Site) – Confirmation of Standards Compliance

Time	Location	Activity	Participants	Description
7:30–8:30 AM	Hotel (preferred) or Campus	Breakfast	SVT & PD *May be executive session or may include Program Director.	The site visit team meets over breakfast to go over the day's plan, touch base on priorities, and prepare for the day's meetings.
8:30–9:00 AM		Transition		
9:00–11:15 AM	Campus	Faculty Sessions – Criteria Review	SVT and Faculty: All full-time and adjunct teaching faculty. Faculty from other departments whose courses are taken by program students should be invited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty = any faculty member who teaches courses in the program: full time, from other departments/colleges, and non-full time (virtual option needs should be discussed with the site visit team).</li> <li>Faculty sessions validate and triangulate data in the self-study with questions and examples.</li> <li>Faculty may elaborate, provide additional examples, and clarify what was provided in the self-study.</li> <li><b>Strengths:</b> Programs may identify areas they wish to self-proclaim as a Strength for review by the site visit team.</li> </ul>
11:15 – 11:30 AM		Transition		
11:30 - 12:30 PM	Please reserve 2 rooms	Lunch with Students (2 groups)	SVT and Students from all stages in the program (beginning, middle, near graduation). Program will ensure adequate representative participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Students</b> (~ 15-20, as many students as possible) who represent the program should attend, including those early, mid, and near end of the program.</li> <li>SVT asks students for examples to support self-study materials. Program leadership, faculty, and staff do not attend</li> <li>Program should notify students early to ensure attendance. Over inviting often helps with any last-minute changes.</li> </ul>

Time	Location	Activity	Participants	Description
12:30–1:00 PM		Transition		
1:00 - 2:30 PM	Campus	Faculty Sessions – Criteria Review (Afternoon Block 1)	SVT and Faculty: All full-time and adjunct teaching faculty; faculty from other departments whose courses are taken by program students should also attend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued faculty criterion sessions.</li> <li>Focus on peer-to-peer feedback, brainstorming, and opportunities for programs to discuss areas of improvement and to pitch their value proposition to chairs and deans.</li> </ul>
2:30 - 2:45 PM		Break		
2:45 - 4:30 PM	Campus	Faculty Sessions – Criteria Review	SVT and Faculty: All full-time and adjunct teaching faculty; faculty from other departments whose courses are taken by program students should be invited.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SVT continues faculty criterion sessions.</li> </ul>
4:30 - 4:45 PM		Transition		
4:45 - 5:30 PM	Campus	Stakeholder Meeting	SVT Advisory Board Alumni Preceptors. Program will ensure adequate and representative participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders: Program faculty and leadership need not attend this session even if they are also an alumni, board member, or preceptor.</li> <li>~10-20 representative stakeholders. Over inviting often helps with any last-minute changes.</li> <li>SVT asks the advisory board, alumni, and preceptors to provide examples of how the program meets the criteria.</li> <li>Students, faculty, staff, or program leadership should not attend. Program should ensure transportation for SVT back to the hotel.</li> </ul>
5:30–5:45 PM		Transition		
5:45 PM	Return to Hotel	Executive Session & Dinner	SVT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site visit team returns to the hotel and holds a closed executive session. The site visit team will coordinate dinner plans.</li> </ul>

## Day 2 (On-Site) – Report Out

Time	Location	Activity	Participants	Description
7:30 – 9:00 AM	Hotel (preferred) or Campus	Breakfast	SVT *Executive session unless otherwise determined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SVT makes any last-minute requests for information, finalizes site visit findings, and prepares the final report out.</li> </ul>
9:00 – 9:30 AM		Transition		
9:30 – 10:15 AM	Campus	Meeting with University Leadership	SVT and Provost/President/Dean/Associate or Assistant Deans/Department Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants should include individuals with decision-making authority and responsibility for program oversight, resources, and strategic direction.</li> <li>Program leadership need not attend this session.</li> <li>This session focuses on how the Program aligns with University/College mission and vision, sustainability, program vision, and any other topics.</li> </ul>
10:15 – 10:45 AM		Transition		
10:45 – 11:45 AM	Campus	Informal PD & Faculty Discussion	SVT, PD, Faculty (optional) & Program Leadership (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal discussion, brainstorming, and/or resourcing.</li> <li>Opportunity for peer-to-peer feedback on program strengths and areas for improvement. SVT provides the PD and invited guests with an overview of findings in more detail than the Formal Report Out.</li> </ul>
11:45 - 12:00 PM		Transition		
12:00 - 1:00 PM		Formal Exit Session (Report Out)	SVT; Program can invite whomever they wish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The exit session consists of a summary report by the Chair of the site visit team.</li> <li>This verbal report is open to the entire program faculty, students, preceptors, and other relevant observers at the discretion of the program.</li> <li>Discussion is limited to clarification of content (not discussion of findings).</li> </ul>

## EVENTS AFTER THE SITE VISIT

### Within 7 Weeks After the Visit – Draft Site Visit Report Submission

- **0-7 weeks:**
  - o The Site Visit Team will finalize their report after leaving the site visit. The SVT enters their report into CAMP/Weave and submits it to CAHME for final review.
  - o CAHME staff assigns a reader (outside of the site visit team) to review the site visit report.
- **7 Weeks:**
  - o CAHME staff will provide the findings to the Program for review. The program should expect to receive the draft site visit report within seven weeks of the site visit. If the program would like further clarification or has questions regarding the report, they may request a meeting with the Chair of the site visit team.

### Within 30 Days After Draft Report – Program Response

The program has 30 days to respond to the draft site visit report regarding its accuracy and content. For further clarification, see Article 16b, section B “Guidelines For Program Response To The Draft Site Visit Report” within the Handbook of Policies and Accreditation Procedures document on the CAHME website under CAHME Processes and Governance Documents. A lack of response after 30 days will be considered acceptance of the draft report as-is.

### Semester Following the Site Visit – Accreditation Decision

The Accreditation Council formally meets in the Spring and Fall of each year. Any site visit conducted during the Fall is acted upon at the Spring meeting. Any site visit conducted in the Spring is acted upon at the Fall meeting. Adjustments to the meeting timing may be made at the discretion of CAHME.

- The SVT findings are shared with the Accreditation Council at the next regular meeting. The reader also shares the results of their review.
- The Accreditation Council reviews and votes on the accreditation decision and length of accreditation.
- The Accreditation Council recommendation is forwarded to the CAHME Board of Directors for the final decision.
- CAHME staff communicates the Board decision to the Program after the Board Meeting.

## **APPENDIX 1 – GUIDELINES FOR ACCESS TO STUDENT AND FACULTY RECORDS**

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Regardless of approach, the FERPA exception allows access to student and faculty records to accreditors. CAHME is an educational authority designated as a FERPA-permitted entity listed in § 99.31(a)(3)). Rediscovering PII on behalf of the educational agency or institution must be recorded according to the requirements in § 99.32(b)(2). Universities are permitted to release without student written consent and allow the institution the right to disclose education records or identifiable information to third parties (i.e., anyone not a “school official”) without the student’s consent, specifically to accrediting agencies carrying out their functions.

Site visitors operate under the authority of CAHME and are requested to examine the program in relation to CAHME’s Policy and Accreditation Standards. The role of the site visitor is to be an objective gatherer of information, and it is their duty to ensure that student and faculty records are used only for purposes of accreditation. Site visitors must consider the interrelatedness of CAHME’s requirements while evaluating compliance through observations, interviews, visits, and record reviews.

Programs that will not provide access to faculty and student records will not be considered for accreditation. CAHME provides no guidance related to educational institutions outside of the United States. CAHME standards require access to student records.

Reference: United States Department of Education – Protecting Student Privacy:  
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/may-educational-agency-or-institution-disclose-personally-identifiable-information-students-o>