



Guidelines for Selecting a Local Practitioner

Six months prior to your AAQEP site visit, you have the opportunity to select a local practitioner to serve on your Quality Review Team (QRT). This individual serves as a full member of the review team and provides the team with valuable knowledge regarding the local and state context of your program, helping the rest of the team understand your context and program features.

Qualifications and Considerations

The local practitioner nominee should be a current or recently retired P-20 educator with experience in a role appropriate to the programs seeking accreditation (e.g., teacher, administrator, counselor, etc.). You'll want to select someone who has:

- Knowledge about your program(s), local schools, and/or your state education context
- Sufficient time to serve as a full member of the AAQEP team, including training (see time estimates under *Local Practitioner Commitments* below)
- No full-time employment relationship with your institution/program (although an adjunct who teaches occasionally for your program would be appropriate if their main employment is elsewhere, such as in a local school)

In addition, providers that have gone through an AAQEP quality assurance review recommend selecting a local practitioner who:

- Is familiar with the program's context, mission, organization, and terminology well enough to "translate" and answer questions for the other reviewers
- Has a mindset compatible with the AAQEP philosophy (i.e., asset-based, collegial, and context-aware with a focus on improvement and innovation)
- Understands continuous improvement
- Appreciates the value and purpose of various forms of data (quantitative and qualitative)
- Will follow through and complete the online professional learning modules
- Can set aside their own personal bias (positive or otherwise) about the program during the review process

Finally, you may need to consider your own ability to support the local practitioner's participation in the AAQEP review by:

- Securing release days—approximately 3 days for virtual and on-site meetings—and even funding a stipend or substitute to enable the local practitioner to fully participate in

the QRT's work (if selecting a P-12 partner to serve in this capacity, approach school administration first to secure agreement on release dates)

- Offering a letter or other documentation that recognizes the practitioner's service for his/her professional file

Commonly Asked Questions About Local Practitioners

Can the local practitioner be a program graduate?

Yes, but this is not a requirement.

Can the local practitioner be a retiree from the institution or program?

Yes, provided the person has current knowledge of school practices as appropriate to the programs under review.

What if the local practitioner is currently teaching a course as an adjunct or serving as a candidate supervisor?

Local practitioners who are working with program candidates at the time of the site visit (e.g., as an adjunct instructor or supervising interns) will limit their participation during interviews with these stakeholder groups.

How many local practitioners do I need?

You need only one local practitioner unless you have written more than one Quality Assurance Report (QAR); each QAR will have its own Quality Review Team with its own local practitioner. If you'll need multiple teams, please select one local practitioner for each team, with experiences and qualifications related to the particular programs under review.

How much time should the local practitioner be prepared to commit for this role?

The role entails online training, reading, and documentation that can be completed at a time of the practitioner's choosing (generally 11-15 hours overall). In addition, the practitioner participates in a sequence of off-site review meetings and 2-3 days of on-site review activities. See time estimates under *Local Practitioner Commitments* below.

What happens if my local practitioner can't complete the assigned work?

Sometimes after agreeing to serve on a team, a local practitioner may encounter an unforeseen situation that prevents them from continuing on the team. It is always helpful for providers to keep a backup list with a few potential names in case of such circumstances.

Local Practitioner Commitments

Provider: Please share the following commitments and responsibilities with your local practitioner and discuss what supports you can offer so that they can make a fully informed decision about this commitment.

A local practitioner is an essential and fully participating member of an AAQEP Quality Review Team (QRT). The team lead will support the local practitioner in the role, starting by making contact prior to their first assignment to help address any questions or concerns.

The local practitioner commits to performing the following activities (estimated time requirements are listed in parentheses):

1. Complete AAQEP Professional Learning Modules 1 and 3 (online training) before beginning service on the QRT (3-5 hours)
2. Prepare for the Off-Site Review Meetings—read the provider’s Quality Assurance Report and document notes for discussion (8-10 hours)
3. Participate in the team Welcome Meeting and Off-Site Review Meetings (4-6 hours)
4. Attend full site visit (generally 2½ days)
5. Complete reporting (3-5 hours)

Serving as an AAQEP reviewer represents a considerable time commitment, but local practitioners say it is a meaningful service experience, citing the deeper understanding they gained of the educator preparation process and new avenues of collaboration that opened as a result.

Next Steps

*Provider: Please contact the Director of Accreditation Services at s.hiller@aaqep.org with your local practitioner’s name, email, and phone number **at least 6 months prior** to your site visit.*