Questions & Answers: 2021 Annual Report

This document provides answers to several questions from members regarding the 2021 AAQEP Annual Report, supplementing the guidance published earlier in the year (see PDF). Thanks to everyone who participated in the recent webinars and especially to those who raised the helpful questions that are addressed below.

Q: Why is this report completed in the fall?

A: The working group that framed the Annual Report template and timeline hoped that the fall reporting period would encourage timely examination of prior-year's data for the aim of maintaining successful practices and planning for improvement. Other reporting cycles for educator preparation look back up to 2 years and facilitate archiving of data rather than data use. AAQEP's timeframe is oriented around reflection on recently collected evidence and planning for improvement.

Q: The title of Table 1 (Program Specification Table) says “for Academic Year 2020-2021,” but the Number of Candidates column is labeled “currently enrolled.” Can you clarify which year’s candidate numbers belong in that column?

A: You’re right! The Number of Candidates column was mislabeled. In fact, both candidate enrollment and completer numbers should be for the 2020-21 academic year, so the table’s title is correct. We apologize for the error.

Q: If my institution already had some programs accredited and is working toward a separate accreditation review for other programs, how should I report their enrollment and completer numbers in the Program Specification Table and the cover sheet?

A: For the cover sheet, please aggregate all 2020-21 completers for accredited and not-yet-accredited programs and report a single number (which only determines your AAQEP membership dues). For the Annual Report, remember that each Quality Assurance Report needs its own Annual Report, so the already-accredited programs will be reported on their own (and completing a separate report for the not-yet-accredited ones is optional). AAQEP understands that the numbers in your Program Specification Table sometimes do not add up to the total entered in the cover sheet.
Q: In Table 2 (Program Performance Indicators), should I report disaggregated data, including license test data, for small numbers of completers?

A: Because Part I of the report will be posted publicly, please follow institutional and state practices regarding disaggregation. While AAQEP encourages disaggregation of data in self-study reports, for the Annual Report, it’s better to follow the Title II reporting protocols regarding small ns.

Q: How should I report completion rates when programs have different expected timeframes? In particular, how should I report on advanced programs that are, by design, part-time?

A: Your response to the question regarding completion rates can be disaggregated in whatever way gives the clearest information to readers, including prospective students. The format of the report also allows for brief commentary to help readers understand the context. Note that this field (and others) are included in Part I, for public posting, because of CHEA requirements; AAQEP has framed the reporting template to allow for contextual information to be included so that readers will have an accurate understanding of the provider.

Q: When reporting employment data in Table 2, should I include program completers who are employed in positions that are not connected to the specific program they completed? (e.g., if they were already working professionals who held a position while enrolling in a program for an additional certification area, but after completion they are still working in their original position)

A: Yes, we suggest that you include all completers in your reporting on employment rates. It is common for working professionals to seek additional certifications or endorsements, but to wait for a desirable position to become open before using the new credential. So to avoid the perception that candidates are unsuccessful in gaining employment, it’s useful to include all employed completers, even if their current employment is not directly related to the newly earned credential. You can also explain any rationale for how you “count” employment rates in this indicator of Table 2.

Q: Could you elaborate on what I should include in Table 5 (Provider Self-Assessment and Continuous Improvement)?

A: Table 5 aims to capture, at a very high level, your ongoing improvement efforts related to each of the four AAQEP standards. The idea is to briefly note strengths (what’s working well in connection to the goals and plans set forth in the Quality Assurance Report), areas that could be strengthened, and any goals you have relative to the standard.

In subsequent years, the right-most columns would provide space to comment on progress. Some cells may include a simple statement that nothing is underway at the current time. You may elect to identify either across-the-board efforts or to highlight program-specific efforts, and responses are expected to be indicative and not exhaustive. Commentary may also be added in
the section. Expanded guidance will be developed based on this year’s conversations and will be posted as part of next year’s guidance.

In summary, please view this table as a tool for planning and reflection in connection with the goals and plans you have in your most recent Quality Assurance Report. Because it is in Part II of the Annual Report, this section will not be publicly available unless you choose to post it.