AAQEP Site Visit Observers - Questions and Answers

AAQEP’s approach to accreditation embraces transparency and collaboration, and observers are welcome at site visits. Commonly asked questions about such participation are answered here.

Who can observe a site visit and why?
Various people are interested in learning more about the AAQEP process. Some site visit observers are AAQEP members preparing for a future visit on their own campus or are AAQEP reviewers-in-training seeking to be better-informed peer reviewers. Other observers, such as state representatives, may be invited by the host provider to help state departments of education learn more about AAQEP’s approach to accreditation or because state partnership agreements with AAQEP call for their attendance. Finally, AAQEP staff members and site visit liaisons may observe site visits to assess AAQEP’s internal policies, process, and procedures.

How do I become a site visit observer?
Interested individuals should contact AAQEP Director of Accreditation Services Sara Hiller at s.hiller@aaqep.org, who will contact the provider to request permission for these observers.

Is there anything I need to do to prepare prior to the visit?
Before the site visit, observers are expected to complete Module 1 of AAQEP’s online training to familiarize themselves with AAQEP’s approach to accreditation. Staff give approved observers access to the training. All observers are also required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to their arrival at the site visit.

What expenses are covered?
Site visit observers are responsible for covering all of their own costs (travel, accommodations, meals) associated with their visit and will need to coordinate payment of any costs internal to the visit with the host provider. No observer expenses are covered by AAQEP or the host provider.

How may I use what I learn as a site visit observer?
Professional judgment and courtesy should direct how you use what you’ve learned at a site visit. If you wish to share any information, it is expected that you will seek permission from the host provider and use appropriate acknowledgment.
What access will I have to documents, interviews, and reviewer meetings?
Observers will have access to the provider’s Quality Assurance Report but not to Quality Review Team materials. During the site visit, observers may attend stakeholder interviews at the discretion of the host provider.

If I want to observe a site visit, do I have to stay for the entire duration?
No. Although there is no requirement to stay for all of the visit, please communicate your intentions with the host provider and the team lead before the visit.

What if I have additional questions about being a site visit observer?
Please contact the director of accreditation services with any additional questions.