



AAQEP was founded by educators in 2017 to promote the preparation of effective educators in innovative, outcome-focused programs that engage education’s toughest challenges directly and in context. AAQEP’s comprehensive standards specify aspects of completer performance and program practice that distinguish effective programs. Its system leverages collaboration in quality assurance to foster improvement and support innovation. Download the complete *Guide to AAQEP Accreditation* at aaqep.org.

Standard 1: Candidate/Completer Performance

Program completers perform as professional educators with the capacity to support success for all learners.

Candidates and completers exhibit the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of competent, caring, and effective professional educators. Successful candidate performance requires knowledge of learners, context, and content. Candidates demonstrate the ability to plan for and enact and/or support instruction and assessment that is differentiated and culturally responsive. Evidence shows¹ that, by the time of program completion, candidates exhibit knowledge, skills, and abilities of professional educators appropriate to their target credential or degree, including:

- Content, pedagogical, and/or professional knowledge relevant to the credential or degree sought
- Learners, learning theory including social, emotional, and academic dimensions, and application of learning theory
- Culturally responsive practice, including intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, and the impact of language acquisition and literacy development on learning
- Assessment of and for student learning, assessment and data literacy, and use of data to inform practice
- Creation and development of positive learning and work environments
- Dispositions and behaviors required for successful professional practice

Evidence will include multiple measures, multiple perspectives (from program faculty, P-12 partners, program completers, graduates’ employers), and direct measures and evidence of performance in a field/clinical setting appropriate to the program.

Standard 2: Completer Professional Competence and Growth

Program completers adapt to working in a variety of contexts and grow as professionals.

Program completers engage in professional practice in educational settings and show that they have the skills and abilities to do so in a variety of *additional* settings and community/cultural contexts. For example, candidates must have broad and general knowledge of the impact of culture and language on learning, yet they cannot, within the context of any given program, experience working with the entire diversity of student identities, or in all types of school environments. Candidate preparation includes first-hand professional experience accompanied by reflection that prepares candidates to engage effectively in different contexts they may encounter throughout their careers. Evidence shows that completers:

- Understand and engage local school and cultural communities, and communicate and foster relationships with families/guardians/caregivers in a variety of communities
- Engage in culturally responsive educational practices with diverse learners and do so in diverse cultural and socioeconomic community contexts
- Create productive learning environments and use strategies to develop productive learning environments in a variety of school contexts
- Support students’ growth in international and global perspectives
- Establish goals for their own professional growth and engage in self-assessment, goal setting, and reflection
- Collaborate with colleagues to support professional learning

Evidence for this standard will show both that program completers have engaged successfully in relevant professional practice and that they are equipped with strategies and reflective habits that will enable them to serve effectively in a variety of school placements and educational settings appropriate to the credential or degree sought.

¹ The bulleted lists in each standard represent aspects of the overall *evidence package* for the standard; each bullet is *not* a “substandard” to be considered apart from the whole standard. Evidence for each standard is evaluated holistically.

Standard 3: Quality Program Practices

The program has the capacity to ensure that its completers meet Standards 1 and 2.

Preparation programs ensure that candidates, upon completion, are ready to engage in professional practice, to adapt to a variety of professional settings, and to grow throughout their careers. Effective program practices include consistent offering of coherent curricula; high-quality, diverse clinical experiences; dynamic, mutually beneficial partnerships with stakeholders; and comprehensive and transparent quality assurance processes informed by trustworthy evidence. Each aspect of the program is appropriate to its context and to the credential or degree sought. Evidence shows the program:

- Offers coherent curricula with clear expectations that are aligned with state and national standards, as applicable
- Develops and implements quality clinical experiences, where appropriate, in the context of documented and effective partnerships with P-12 schools and districts
- Engages multiple stakeholders, including completers, local educators, schools, and districts, in data collection, analysis, planning, improvement, and innovation
- Enacts admission and monitoring processes linked to candidate success as part of a quality assurance system aligned to state requirements and professional standards
- Engages in continuous improvement of programs and program components, and investigates opportunities for innovation, through an effective quality assurance system
- Maintains capacity for quality reflected in staffing, resources, operational processes, and institutional commitment

Evidence related to this standard will include documentation of program practices and resources as well as the program's rationale for its structure and operation.

Standard 4: Program Engagement in System Improvement

Program practices strengthen the P-20 education system in light of local needs and in keeping with the program's mission.

The program is committed to and invests in strengthening and improving the education profession and the P-20 education system. Each program's context (or multiple contexts) provides particular opportunities to engage the field's shared challenges and to foster and support innovation. Engagement with critical issues is essential and must be contextualized. Sharing results of contextualized engagement and innovation supports the field's collective effort to address education's most pressing challenges through improvement and innovation. The program provides evidence that it:

- Engages with local partners and stakeholders to support high-need schools and participates in efforts to reduce disparities in educational outcomes
- Seeks to meet state and local educator workforce needs and to diversify participation in the educator workforce through candidate recruitment and support
- Supports completer entry into and/or continuation in their professional role, as appropriate to the credential or degree being earned
- Investigates available and trustworthy evidence regarding completer placement, effectiveness, and retention in the profession and uses that information to improve programs
- Meets obligations and mandates established by the state, states, or jurisdiction within which it operates
- Investigates its own effectiveness relative to its institutional and/or programmatic mission and commitments

Evidence for this standard will address identified issues in light of local and institutional context.

Scope of AAQEP Standards

The AAQEP standards apply to all types of preparation programs, including initial preparation of teachers, preparation of school building and district leaders, and advanced preparation of educators who are adding credentials or preparing for new professional roles.

AAQEP's quality assurance system is grounded in collaboration, consistent with established accreditation practice, and respectful of context and innovation in its standards and processes. The system supports inquiry and improvement as it provides assurance of quality to stakeholders and the public.

AAQEP's mission: To promote and recognize quality educator preparation that strengthens the education system's ability to serve all students, schools, and communities.

For more information, visit aaqep.org or email questions to aaqep@aaqep.org.