



# Pacific Union Conference Office of Education School Accreditation Manual

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## Rationale

Accreditation fosters excellence and ongoing improvement in schools. The accreditation process ensures a school constituency that the school's philosophy and expected learning results are appropriate and being accomplished through a viable educational program.

Accreditation empowers the school in its endeavor to provide a quality educational experience for all students. The accreditation process validates the integrity of a school's program and student progress reports. It fosters excellence and ongoing improvement in schools.

Accreditation helps a school to establish its priority areas for improvement. Through the self-study, the school site visit, and ongoing follow-up, the school community determines areas of strength and areas for improvement based upon its vision of schoolwide learner outcomes. The accreditation process enables a school to establish and implement an ongoing improvement plan.

## Policy (Pacific Union Education Code A15)

### Denominational Accreditation

All schools in the Pacific Union Conference shall seek and maintain accreditation from the Accrediting Association (AAA) of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, College, and Universities, Inc. Schools will utilize the approved denominational evaluation instruments and cooperate with the NAD Commission on Accreditation, the Pacific Union Conference, and the local conference office of education which oversees denominational accreditation for Seventh-day Adventist schools in the Pacific Union Conference.

### Regional Accreditation

In addition to denominational accreditation, all secondary schools shall seek and maintain regional accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC/AAA). Secondary schools in California must also obtain University of California approval for their courses of study. The current version of the document, Focus on Learning, WASC/SDA is to be used as the basis for development of the self-study for joint WASC/AAA accreditation. On-site accreditation visits are to be determined in counsel in the local conference and union offices of education.

Elementary schools and junior academies may also seek regional accreditation after consultation with the local conference office of education and the union office of education.

	Denominational Accreditation	Regional Accreditation
Accreditation Instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>NAD Evaluative Criteria for Seventh-day Adventist Schools</i> (version appropriate to the school size and configuration)</li> <li>• <i>NAD Standards of Accreditation for Seventh-day Adventist Schools</i> (utilizing Accreditrak online program)</li> <li>• <i>Focus on Learning/SDA</i> (available at Pacific Union Conference Office of Education website)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Focus on Learning/WASC</i> (available at Pacific Union Conference Office of Education website)</li> </ul>
<p>Visiting Committee Chair</p> <p>Visiting committee chair must have had successful experience as a visiting committee member prior to serving as a chair. Visiting committee chairs should receive specific chair training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-8 visiting committee chairs will be appointed by the local conference office of education. The chair should not have a regular supervisory role at the school being visited.</li> <li>• K-10 visiting committee chairs will be appointed by the local conference office of education in consultation with the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education. The chair should not have a regular supervisory role at the school being visited.</li> <li>• The expenses of the visiting committee chair will be responsibility of the local conference office of education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pacific Union Conference Office of Education will appoint a visiting committee chair. The expenses of the visiting committee chair will be the responsibility of the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education.</li> </ul>

<p>Visiting Committee</p> <p>Visiting committees will be composed of individuals that are qualified and trained. The committee may include professional educators and others with a knowledge of education. Consider including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School administrators</li> <li>• Classroom teachers</li> <li>• School board members from other schools</li> <li>• Higher ed representative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-8 visiting committees will be selected by the local conference office of education.</li> <li>• K-10 visiting committees will be selected by the local conference office of education in consultation with the Pacific Union Conference Office of Education.</li> <li>• The expenses of the visiting committee members will be the responsibility of the local conference office of education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pacific Union Conference Office of Education will appoint one member from a Seventh-day Adventist school.</li> <li>• WASC will appoint one or two members.</li> <li>• The expenses of the visiting committee members will be the responsibility of the local school.</li> </ul>
<p>Guidelines for Size of Visiting Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Self Study Visits: 3 members, 2 days. Conference will consider increasing the number of members to offset the length of the visit.</li> <li>• Mid-cycle Visits: 2 members, 1 day</li> <li>• Probation Visits: 2 members (one of whom was a member of the previous full visit committee), 1 day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Self Study Visits: 4 members, 3 ½ days (schools with less than 150 students). 1 additional committee member for each additional 350 students.</li> <li>• Mid-cycle Visits: 2 members. Length of visit determined by previous visiting committee.</li> <li>• Probation Visits: 2 members (one of whom was a member of the previous full visit committee). Length of visit determined by previous visiting committee</li> <li>• Initial Visit: 2 Members</li> </ul>
<p>Types of Visits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Self-Study</li> <li>• Mid-cycle</li> <li>• Probation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Self-Study</li> <li>• Mid-Cycle</li> <li>• Probation</li> <li>• Initial</li> </ul>

Procedures		
<p>Reporting to AAA/WASC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer: Conferences will be notified of which schools are scheduled for visits during the coming year.</li> <li>• Summer: Conferences should notify Pacific Union Conference with information about the date of each visit and the protocol being used.</li> <li>• As soon as Board of Ed approves the recommendation of the visiting committee, (BUT NO LATER THAN MAY 15) forward to the Pacific Union Conference: (a) the completed AAA Status Recommendation and (b) copy of the visiting committee report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pacific Union Conference will make contact with schools to be visited by WASC to determine potential visit dates.</li> <li>• Pacific Union Conference will arrange with WASC for the visit dates and visiting committee.</li> <li>• The Visiting Committee Chair will submit to the Pacific Union the Status Recommendation for AAA and WASC.</li> <li>• The Visiting Committee will submit a copy of the Visiting Committee Report to the Pacific Union.</li> <li>• The Pacific Union will ensure that the Status Recommendations and Visiting Committee Reports are forwarded to AAA and WASC.</li> </ul>
<p>Extension of Visit</p> <p>There are circumstances when a visit needs to be postponed. These instances should be considered unusual and are not based solely on changes in personnel. Approval of an extension will be rare for a school that did not have a mid-cycle/interim visit.</p> <p>Extensions will reduce the next accreditation cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conference should contact the Union Director as soon as it is recognized that an extension may be needed.</li> <li>• If, after consultation, it is determined that an extension would be in the best interest of the school, the Conference Board of Education will make a recommendation to the Pacific Union Conference for an extension.</li> <li>• The final decision will rest with the Pacific Union Conference.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The conference, on behalf of the school, should contact the Pacific Union Conference Secondary Associate as soon as it is recognized that an extension may be needed.</li> <li>• If, after consultation, it is determined that an extension would be in the best interest of the school, the Pacific Union Conference will make request to WASC on behalf of the school.</li> </ul>