

How to Write Self-Study Reports for Technical Programs
New England Association of School and Colleges
Committee on Technical and Career Institutions
Revised May 2019

Introduction

This document was developed to assist teachers in drafting Self-Study reports for Technical Programs to be evaluated by Visiting Teams from the New England Association of Schools & Colleges. Use it as a guideline.

Remember that the report you are being asked to write is designed to provide the NEASC Visiting Team with solid, impartial information about your School/Center. Your report must fairly and objectively state what is happening in the Technical Program, highlight program strengths, and include recommendations for program improvement.

If you follow these guidelines, we are confident that your report will be one which provides the Visiting Team with the information it needs to make informed judgments about your Department or Program.

Format of the Report

Your report will consist of three things: (1) a Program Narrative, (2) Strengths, (3) Focus Areas for Improvement, and (4) list of committee members

Upload evidence that supports the judgement statements in the narrative. Examples include: curriculum documents, lesson plans, assessment rubrics, student project design, student work, Advisory Committee members and meeting schedule and agendas and minutes.

Program Narrative

Make your report clear, concise, honest, and well written. The purpose of your narrative is to reflect (dig deep) on your professional practice...to make critical judgements about what works and what needs to be improved so all students can be successful at increasingly higher levels of achievement.

Write short sentences. Support your judgments with facts and evidence.

To the best of your ability, follow the outline below. Do so in the order indicated.

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1. Program Basics. What is the physical layout of the space? Where's it located? How many rooms are there? Where is the equipment located? Are there any obvious safety or health issues? Does the area appear to be clean? Is there proper signage? Is there a clear evacuation route? Are there lockers? Bathrooms? How many student computers? What's the overall appearance to visitors?

2. Student Demographics. How many students are enrolled in each year of the program? Are the numbers going up or down? That is, what are the trends? What are the likely reasons for that? Are students mainly male or female? What are the trends? Why?
Upload: Graphs/charts showing various demographics over the last 3-5 years

3. Curriculum.
 - What is taught? By whom? To whom? Where does the curriculum come from? Is it aligned with the Core Values of the School/Center? [Standard 2, Indicator 1]
 - What is the format of the curriculum? [Standard 2, Indicator 2]
 - What are the performance expectations? Is the curriculum competency-based? [Standard 2, Indicator 3]
 - Is the curriculum aligned from grade 9 through grade 12? [Standard 2, Indicator 5]
 - How often is the curriculum reviewed? What is the review process? [Standard 2, Indicator 7]
 - If applicable to your trade, to what extent is the instructional program designed to prepare students to meet required licenses and certifications? [Standard 2, Indicator 10]

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4. Instruction.

- How often do teachers examine their instructional practices? [Standard 3, Indicator 1]
- How are students being taught? Are lessons student-centered? How is the instruction differentiated for mixed-ability learners? Is technology integrated into the instruction? If so, to what extent? To what extent is curriculum from the Academic Department integrated into CTE programs or vice versa? [Standard 3, Indicator 2]
- Does the program provide competency-based education that identifies duties and tasks? [Standard 2, Indicator 9]
- To what extent is there differentiated instruction in the program? To what extent are students engaged in problem-solving and higher-order thinking? [Standard 3, Indicator 3]
- What classroom management strategies are used? [Standard 3, Indicator 2]
- How do teachers make accommodations for students on IEPs or Section 504 Plans? [Standard 3, Indicator 3]
- How do teachers use student achievement data or feedback from students or other professionals to improve their instructional practices? [Standard 3, Indicator 4]
- What type of safety instruction and safety testing is offered in the program? [Standard 3, Indicator 6]

5. Assessment and Credentialing.

- How does the program assess student progress? [Standard 4, Indicator 1]
- To what extent is assessment data disaggregated and used to inform instruction? [Standard 4, Indicator 2]
- How are assessment results communicated to students and parents? [Standard 4, Indicator 2]
- Are the lesson objectives clearly stated? [Standard 4, Indicator 3]
- Do teachers employ a range of assessment strategies, including both formative and summative assessments? [Standard 4, Indicator 4]
- To what extent are rubrics used to assess student achievement? [Standard 4, Indicator 4]

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- What kind of feedback do teachers provide to ensure that students can revise and improve their work? Is it specific and timely? [Standard 4, Indicator 5]
 - Do teachers regularly use formative assessments to inform and adapt their instruction for the purpose of improving student learning? [Standard 4, Indicator 6]
 - What evidence of student learning do teachers and administrators look at to improve instructional practice in the School/Center? [Standard 4, Indicator 7]
 - To what extent do students earn state or national industry-recognized credentials? [Standard 4, Indicator 7]
 - In career fields that require licensure or certification, does the program adequately prepare students to meet those requirements? [Standard 2, Indicator 10]
 - Identify strategies used/programs enacted in an on-going effort to create a more inclusive culture in which all students feel welcome and validated. (Standard 5, Indicators 1 & 2)
6. Student Clubs and Awards. What is the level of student involvement in co-curricular activities such as SkillsUSA, Honor Society, DECA, Business Professionals of America, FFA, etc.? If students take part in technical or leadership competitions, to what extent have they been successful? [Standard 4, Indicator 7]
7. Student Placement. What is the program's record for student placement in work-based experience such as internships, employment shadowing, or cooperative education? Does the program have school-industry partnerships? Does it have articulation agreements with higher education?
Upload: Graph showing number of students in work-based learning last 3-5 years
Upload: List of companies that partner with your program
Upload: Copies of articulation agreements with higher education
8. Graduation Rates. Does the School/Center keep track of where its graduates go? If so, how? Over the past 3-5 years, what have the graduation rates from the program looked like? What are the actual numbers of students (or percentages of students) who have gone to college; gone directly into the workforce, either in the field or outside of it; pursued a military career; or done something else entirely?
Upload: Copy of graduate follow-up survey

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9. Faculty. How do instructors in the Technical Program keep up-to-date in their field? Do they receive adequate professional development? How do they demonstrate professional leadership and other teacher responsibilities?
[Standard 3, Indicator 5]

10. Adequacy of Department/Program Resources. What is the teacher:student ratio? Is the equipment and technology consistent with current practice? If not, what is missing? Is all the equipment working properly? What is the copyright date of textbooks? Identify on-line resources used. Explain the process of developing the department's annual budget [Standard 2, Indicator 6]
Upload: Department budget last 3-5 years showing allotments and expenditures

11. Production Work. Does the program do any production work, either for the School/Center or for the community? Does it do any work outside the School/Center? Over the past few years, what kind of work has it done? How much production work revenue does the program generate annually?
Upload: List of production jobs completed last 3-5 years
Upload: Photographs of production jobs

12. Climate in the Department/Program. Describe the culture/climate/atmosphere in the Department or Program. Identify explicit strategies used in an on-going effort to create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere. [Standard 1, Indicators 1; Standard 1, Indicator 3; and Standard 3, Indicator 1]

13. Outside Input. Does the program have a Trade Advisory Committee or Program Advisory Committee? What groups are represented on the Committee? How is the committee formed? How long to members serve? What is the schedule of meetings? Explain the role of the TAC/PAC in your program. Explain the extent to which the Trade Advisory Committee/Program Advisory Committee has a positive impact upon program improvement. [Standard 2, Indicator 8]
Upload: Membership lists for the last 3-5 years (names, companies, terms served, role on the committee)
Upload: Meeting Agendas last 3-5 years
Upload: Minutes of meetings last 3-5 years

14. Identify and discuss initiatives for program improvement that are or may be planned for the future.

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Strengths

Part of your work in writing the report is to identify the Program's/Department's "Strengths".

Here are a few examples of Strengths:

1. The Plumbing Department faculty wrote a grant application that secured \$250,000 to enable the school to purchase new equipment to expand training opportunities for students.
2. The automotive technology program enjoys strong support from the community as evidenced by the donation of four vehicles from a past graduate and a member of the advisory committee which has allowed students greater access to training vehicles.
3. Teachers have built a warm and inviting atmosphere in the Biotechnology Department which helps all students feel included as valued members of the school community resulting in a 95% decline in behavioral incidents over the past three years

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Focus Areas for Improvement

Your “Focus Areas for Improvement” must be clear and concise. They must be supported by facts.

- Identify focus areas to improve the quality of the program or opportunities for students.
- Identify only those focus areas that are clearly supported in your self-study narrative. If you cannot identify a focus area, leave the section blank.

Here are examples of “Focus Areas for Improvement”:

1. Create a plan to address the lack of adequate storage for lumber to eliminate a potential safety issue.
2. Seek additional resources to update technology in theory room to provide students with a stronger curriculum.
3. Expand the membership of the Trade Advisory Committee to include more members from business and industry to ensure that the program is getting advice from a wider range of prospective employers.
4. Pursue articulation agreements with additional institutions of higher education to expand opportunities for students to receive college credit.