



# MULTI-CAMPUS VISIT

## Information for Institutions and Peer Reviewers

HLC reviews an institution's branch campuses in order to ensure (1) the quality of the institution's extended operations and its educational offerings in meeting the needs of its defined constituencies and (2) the capacity to sustain that quality. To do so, HLC requires a multi-campus visit each time it conducts a comprehensive evaluation of an institution with one or more branch campuses (HLC Policy INST.C.10.020, Process Requirements for Each Pathway). In preparation for the multi-campus visit, the institution will submit a report on the branch campuses to be reviewed along with its comprehensive evaluation materials. Members of the peer review team conducting the comprehensive evaluation will review this report and conduct an on-site visit to each branch campus that is selected to be reviewed.

Multi-campus visits are conducted as part of comprehensive evaluations that take place at multiple points in an institution's accreditation relationship with HLC, including when it applies for candidacy and initial accreditation and during the following years of each Pathway for Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

- Standard Pathway: Year 4 and Year 10
- AQIP Pathway: Year 8 and possibly Year 4 (if required by HLC or requested by the institution)
- Open Pathway: Year 10

## BRANCH CAMPUS DEFINITION

(SAME AS THE FEDERAL DEFINITION)

A branch campus is a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main

campus of the institution. HLC considers a branch campus of an institution to be independent of the main campus if the location has all four of the following attributes:

- It is permanent in nature.
- It offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential.
- It has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization.
- It has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

## IDENTIFYING THE CAMPUSES TO REVIEW

If an institution has three or fewer campuses, all are reviewed; if an institution has four or more campuses, HLC determines the sample of campuses to be reviewed. In rare cases, the review of campuses may also include a review of additional locations if an institution has two or fewer additional locations. Additional locations are sites at which an institution offers 50 percent or more of a degree, diploma, or certificate program, but the sites do not meet the definition of a branch campus. HLC provides the institution and the peer review team with the list of branch campuses to be reviewed approximately six months before the comprehensive evaluation visit.

Note: If the institution determines that a branch campus included in the sample has decreased its operations to the point that it no longer meets the definition of a branch campus, the institution may request that HLC reclassify the campus as an

additional location. This request should be made as early as possible. See [hlcommission.org/locations](http://hlcommission.org/locations) for more information.

## INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

In preparation for the multi-campus visit, the institution prepares a report that addresses each campus being reviewed and any additional locations included in the review. The total report should be no longer than 5,000 words and begin with an overview that explains the governance and oversight of the institution's operations, including the processes for assuring and improving educational quality, resource allocation, evaluation and planning, staffing, services, and budget and revenue. The overview should also describe the patterns of administrative structures, resources, instructional delivery methods, and means of access to services and resources at different campuses.

In addition to the overview, the report should provide the following data for each branch campus being reviewed:

- Date of inception.
- Programs offered.
- Actual enrollments for each program.
- Projected enrollments for the next three years.
- Number of full-time and part-time faculty who teach at the facility.
- Number of administrators on site.
- Student services available at the campus.
- Additional locations linked to the campus.
- Campus-specific information for any campus that might function differently than the institution's standard branch campus practices.

## SUBMITTING THE MULTI-CAMPUS REPORT TO HLC

When completed, the institution uploads its multi-campus report on the Forms tab in the Assurance System, unless instructed otherwise by HLC. The institution must upload the report before its Assurance System lock date.

## PEER REVIEW

The multi-campus visit is completed by peer reviewers who are members of the team conducting the institution's comprehensive evaluation. The member(s) of the team who will handle the multi-campus visit is assigned by the team chair in consultation with all team members. The designated team member(s) conducts an electronic review of the institution's multi-campus report, as well as on-site visits to each campus included in the evaluation. During the electronic review and on-site visit, the reviewer(s) will evaluate the following:

- The history, planning, and oversight of the campus, including processes to assure appropriate governance and to sustain the quality of the campus.
- The physical and technological resources dedicated to the campus.
- The human resources dedicated to the campus and their qualifications.
- The management of, access to, and availability of student support services and academic resources;
- The oversight of educational programs and instruction.
- The evaluation and assessment processes that assure the capacity to sustain and improve academic quality, student learning, student persistence and completion.
- The processes to assure continuous improvement of the quality of the campus and equivalency of the offerings and services at the campus to those of the main campus.

## ARRANGING THE CAMPUS VISITS

The assigned team member(s) contacts the institution to schedule the on-site campus visits, which may be held prior to or immediately after the comprehensive evaluation visit. All of the visits must occur before the team report is complete. The individual on-site visits are conducted by one peer reviewer—regardless of how many team members are assigned to review the sample of branch campuses—and are typically half a day in length.

Each on-site visit typically begins with a meeting or conference call with the administrators responsible

for coordinating the educational offerings at the main campus with similar activities at the branch campus. The peer reviewer will also interview the campus administrators, academic leaders, and some faculty and students.

### **MULTI-CAMPUS REVIEWER FORM**

After conducting the electronic review and the on-site visit(s), the assigned peer reviewer(s) completes a Multi-campus Reviewer Form for each campus visited and emails them to the rest of the comprehensive evaluation peer review team. The team discusses and integrates the findings into its final comprehensive evaluation report in the Assurance System, including any concerns or recommended follow-up. The team chair should email a copy of all Multi-campus Reviewer Forms to HLC at [finalreports@hlcommission.org](mailto:finalreports@hlcommission.org).

## **DECISION MAKING**

Any concerns or recommended follow-up regarding the institution's branch campuses will be included in the team report for the comprehensive evaluation. The institution may review the report and the team's recommendations for errors of fact before the team submits its final report to HLC. The institution may also submit a response to the team report. The final team report and institutional response are then sent to the Institutional Actions Council for review and action. The Multi-campus Report from the institution and the Multi-campus Reviewer Forms become part of the institution's permanent file and are shared as appropriate with future evaluation teams.