

REACH ePlatform Quick Reference Guide – Team Visit

First, you need to identify **members on your accreditation “team.”** In order to do that, someone must send the name, e-mail address and role at the school to the accreditation specialist at the ACSI regional office. They will set up your accreditation team.

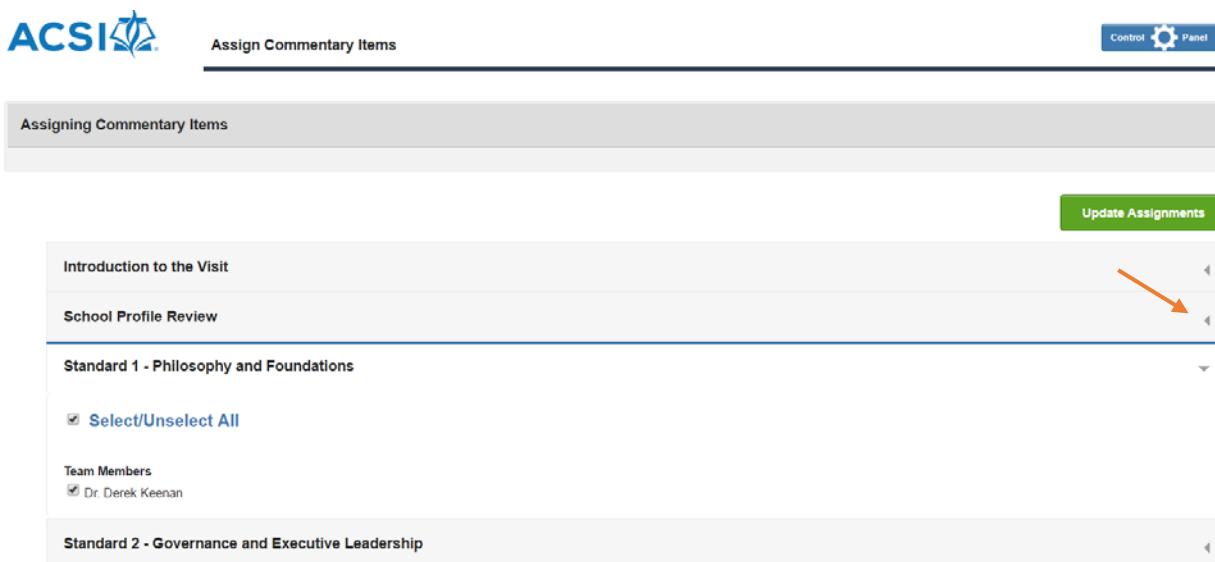
As you begin the process of the team visit, you have some decisions to make. Will you be the only one using the ePlatform? Will you allow your assistant chair or other team members to access the ePlatform as well? If you trust everyone to stay in their areas only, you can just show them what sections to work in. If you want to **limit their access**, you may do that. If so, choose the Control Panel icon.



Once you have clicked on the blue text “Assign Commentary Items” you will see all the sections that area available to assign to team members. Click on the triangles next to each section to expand them. You will be able to **assign or un-assign sections** to individuals that have already been identified as members of your team. Be sure to click on “Update Assignments.”



The screenshot shows the ACSI Accreditation Control Panel. At the top, there's a header with the ACSI logo and a "Control Panel" button. Below the header, a message says "Welcome to the Accreditation Control Panel". There are two main sections: "Assign Commentary Items" (with a pencil icon) and "Coming Soon" (with a truck icon). An orange arrow points from the text above to the "Assign Commentary Items" section.



The screenshot shows the "Assign Commentary Items" page. At the top, there's a header with the ACSI logo and a "Control Panel" button. Below the header, a message says "Assigning Commentary Items". On the right, there's a green "Update Assignments" button. The main area contains a list of sections with expandable arrows: "Introduction to the Visit", "School Profile Review", "Standard 1 - Philosophy and Foundations" (which has a "Select/Unselect All" checkbox), "Team Members" (with a checkbox for "Dr. Derek Keenan"), and "Standard 2 - Governance and Executive Leadership". An orange arrow points from the text above to the "Standard 1 - Philosophy and Foundations" section.

Let's clear up some terms. In some places, the ePlatform calls the school's self-study "**Profiles and Standards.**" The general information about the school is sometimes referred to as the "**School Snapshot.**" Knowing those terms may help.

To the right of the main page, you will see important people listed. If you want to [e-mail those people](#) or lists of those people, choose the icon that looks like an envelope. You will see that it allows you to select everyone or just the visiting team.

On the main page, you will see several major sections of the visit. The top section allows you to [look at the school's self-study](#), called "Profile and Standards." The next section actually allows you, as the chair, to upload files you want to share with your team.

The next section is labeled "Accreditation Visit Report." First you will see "Click here for Visit Report Instructions." That will cause more [instructions to drop down](#). Next is a link for the ePlatform's Quick Reference Guide (Team Visit). That is this document. After that, there are some general guidelines and then two more sets of links to important files for the team to have access to while working or when near completion.

Finally, the section with the blue buttons starts. Those are the [visiting team report sections](#).

View	Item	Last Edit	Status
Open	Introduction to the Visit	08-24-2016 3:51pm	Mark Complete
Open	School Profile Review	08-24-2016 3:16pm	Mark Complete

To begin a section, click the blue "Open" button. You can see [when someone last edited](#) each individual section. There is no need to click the "Mark Complete" button until you are nearly ready to submit the entire report.

Many of the sections are answered with a narrative response in a textbox. A good rule of thumb is that is works best if only [one person from the team works on the section at one time](#). If a second person tries to work on the same section, the platform will tell you that it is unavailable because someone (a name will be supplied) is using it. A second person can see the changes but may not edit at the same time. (The program will tell you the name of the individual so you can ask that person to close out.

As you look at a textbox, you will also notice that it says "[View archived versions \(2\)](#)." The number in the parentheses shows you how many versions have been saved. If you would like to see previous versions, click on that blue text and you will be able to copy and paste from an earlier version into the current textbox.

Brief Narrative:

Provide a 2-3 paragraph (600 words or less) explanation of how the school is meeting the standard or what factors are hindering meeting the standard with excellence. Use the indicator ratings (from above), data/documentation, supporting evidence, and other sources such as surveys to validate your explanation. Identify what data most relevant to mission attainment the school regularly collects in this standard area and what systems are in place to analyze the data and ensure implementation of improvement strategies.

335 words | [View archived versions \(1\)](#)

Formats 

SCS sees its leadership team as one of its major strengths. The governing body takes its role seriously and self-sacrificially. The character of these leaders has ensured the distinctive of a biblical worldview in all areas of operation. The school board holds itself accountable by a set of policies which delineate its responsibilities and practices systematic self-evaluation. They meet twice monthly, once for board business and once for prayer.

The school board and head of school enjoy a professional and balanced relationship. They each know their roles and stay within the scope of their respective job descriptions. The school board functions as a governing board and empowers the superintendent with the operation of the school. A regular evaluation of the superintendent is conducted by the board. It is a thorough evaluation with input from those who report to her on a rotating bi-annual basis. The addition of input from the staff is something that was added within the past two years.

Professional policies and practices by the school leadership team ensure financial stability within the school. The controller and board finance committee monitor the financial condition and regularly provide

The ePlatform does NOT save as you go. There are buttons at the top and bottom of the page to “Save Responses.” Those are important! We suggest that you work on original drafts in WORD so that you will be primarily copying to the ePlatform. We found that if we were composing in the ePlatform, we often got “timed out” and we lost the work we had written in a textbox. You can however, edit, correct, add to, etc. in the textboxes. Just be sure to watch your time and save frequently.

In the various sections, you will see that there is a **suggested length** in pages and in words. That helps you know what is expected. However, the document will not cut you off so you don’t have to worry. The textbox shows you the word count as you go. Please feel that you can adequately cover the subject but don’t go too much beyond the suggested length. We don’t want reports so long that the commissioners or school won’t want to read the final report!

There are a number of **formatting options** on the top of a textbox. We suggest that you only use the following styles...Bold, Italics, Underline, bullets, and numbering. If you need to insert a webpage as evidence, then use the symbol that looks like a chain and it will allow you to add a webpage link.

In the Introduction to the Visit section, there are sections to update the school’s progress on **Significant Changes and the Major Recommendations**. See the Sample Team Report. If the school is going through accreditation for the first time, you do not need to enter anything in these textboxes.

The general sections and Standards and Indicators sections are in **chronological order** of how they will appear in the report. You can complete them in whatever order you need to. Each of the standards sections show the standard first and then each indicator. These indicators should only be marked after those responsible have reviewed all the evidence and come to consensus on what rating best represents the school on that indicator. There is a spreadsheet that is very useful for the team to use to enter their individual scores and come up with a group average. See the documents on **ACSI’s webpage** under School Services, Accreditation, Accreditation, EE-12, Visiting Team Accreditation Documents, and then choose *Team Indicator Ratings Spreadsheet* (several versions are available).

When you have finished marking a few indicators or writing in a textbox, **be sure to save!** When you have edited a textbox or changed a few indicators, be sure to save!

If you have finished with a section and want to return to the home page, look at the upper left and you will see “**Report Home**.” Clicking that will return you to the main page. It is NOT a save button.



Sections 5 and 6 were so long that they didn’t fit into one section. Just note that you will find the standard overview, commendations, recommendations, and adherence to the standard on the second section for each of those standards. (5.11-5.18)

The school’s self-study for Standard 5 has a **Part A for the Overall Instructional Program and a Part B for each individual subject area**. The team must read over all of that but they do not have to comment on each of those subjects. If they want to comment on one or more, they may. They should include that in the standard overview.

Standard 8 is all about the **Continuous School Improvement Plan**. The prompt has some specific information that it requires of the team to reflect on.

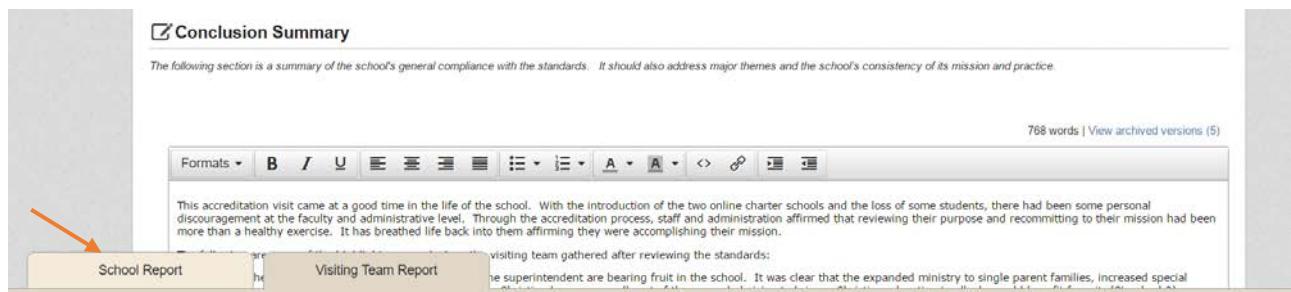
If your school has an **Early Education** program, the discussion of the program belongs in the standard overview, commendations, recommendations, and adherence to the standard in the regular standard

sections. However, the indicators with the actual ratings will appear after each standard. This is true for any additional standards/indicators that might be added to the accreditation protocol (online, boarding, etc.) Make sure that the discussion of all standards, commendations, and recommendations are the in the regular narrative sections.

Back at the main page...if at any point along the way, you want to see what the report looks like, you can do that. In the upper right hand corner, you will see a button that says "HTML." That will give you a real quick look. If you click on the button that says "PDF" that will let you see the report in a format that has been prepared for a printer. It takes a little longer but that may be what you want to see.



When you are working in a section of the report, you can look at the bottom of the screen and see tabs that say "School Report" and "Visiting Team Report." (See below) These are HTML copies of the reports that you can open and read or copy from. Click into the report first and you will get a scroll bar. This makes it easy to check something for consistency or use similar or exact wording, if needed.



The following section is a summary of the school's general compliance with the standards. It should also address major themes and the school's consistency of its mission and practice.

768 words | View archived versions (5)

This accreditation visit came at a good time in the life of the school. With the introduction of the two online charter schools and the loss of some students, there had been some personal discouragement at the faculty and administrative level. Through the accreditation process, staff and administration affirmed that reviewing their purpose and recommitting to their mission had been more than a healthy exercise. It has breathed life back into them affirming they were accomplishing their mission.

School Report Visiting Team Report

When the report is ready for completion, we suggest that you print out a copy in pdf and give it to at least two people to edit. That will help with consistency in wording and style and they will probably be able to spot inconsistencies in the report from one section to another. There is a document labeled *Guide to Formatting a Team Report*. Please check that for the formatting/editing requirements.

As was mentioned earlier, editing can be done in the ePlatform. Just remember to save frequently.

After sections have been edited by at least two people, that would be a good time to use the "Mark Complete" buttons. If you find you have to Re-Open them, you can.

Once all sections are marked "Complete" and the final copy (pdf) looks as good as you want it to, then it is time to click on the "Submit for Final Review." THAT IS NOT ABLE TO BE RE-OPENED BY YOU. You would have to contact your ACSI regional accreditation specialist to have the whole report re-opened. So, only click on that once you are sure you are finished. Please note that you need to submit the final, edited report to the ACSI regional office no more than three weeks after the visit.