



## ABET PROGRAM EVALUATORS: THE FACE OF QUALITY IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION

# PEV Basics

## Volunteering for ABET

ABET's volunteers are the heart of its operations and the face of quality in today's technical higher education. Over 1,500 dedicated technical professionals — deans, department heads, faculty, industry leaders, government representatives, and private practitioners — benefit their professions by donating their time and effort to ABET each and every year.

Most ABET volunteers begin their service as program evaluators (PEVs). Program evaluators play a vital role on ABET's accreditation teams, which visit college campuses and evaluate programs seeking accreditation.

## Minimum Qualifications Required

Prospective program evaluators must meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. Demonstrated interest in improving education.
2. Membership in one or more ABET member societies or willingness to become a member prior to applying to serve as an evaluator. (Computing professionals: Membership in or willingness to join ACM or IEEE/CS fulfills this minimum qualification.)
3. Formal education and recognized distinction in their field.
  - a. Program evaluators with an industry background must possess the following:
    - i. Degree appropriate to the field.
    - ii. Experience in employment of graduates from accredited programs.
  - b. Program evaluators with an academic background must possess the following:
    - i. Degree appropriate to the field.
    - ii. Experience with the accreditation process (desirable).
4. Internet and e-mail access and proficiency in using word processing programs (compatible with Microsoft Word and Word Perfect), spreadsheets, and PDF files.
5. Other minimum qualifications for computing professionals can be found at [www.csab.org/pev/requirements.htm](http://www.csab.org/pev/requirements.htm).

## Additional Qualifications

On the reverse are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes exhibited by a successful program evaluator and against which prospective PEVs are evaluated. If you're up to meeting these challenges and would like to get involved, visit [www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml](http://www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml) today.

## How to Apply

Simply visit [www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml](http://www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml) and follow the instructions.



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## The ABET Program Evaluator Competency Model

Desired Competency	Desired Proficiency	Application During Campus Visit
<b>Technically Current</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates required technical credentials for the position</li> <li>• Engaged in lifelong learning and current in his or her field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to apply technical knowledge to ascertain the level of conformance to program accreditation requirements</li> <li>• Remains current in accreditation procedures and requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Effective at Communicating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily conducts face-to-face interviews</li> <li>• Writes clearly and succinctly</li> <li>• Presents focused, concise oral briefings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews personnel to understand program operations</li> <li>• Writes succinct, criterion-centered statements of program strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>• Develops succinct findings for exit interview</li> <li>• Keeps team chair informed prior to and during the visit</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonally Skilled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly and sets others at ease</li> <li>• Listens and places input into context</li> <li>• Open-minded and avoids personal bias</li> <li>• Forthright, doesn't hold back what needs to be said</li> <li>• Adept at pointing out strengths and weaknesses in a non-confrontational manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews and readily obtains input from faculty, administration, industry advisors, and students</li> <li>• Evaluates program against criteria within the context of the institution</li> <li>• Evaluates and constructively conveys program strengths and weaknesses</li> </ul>
<b>Team-Oriented</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readily accepts input from team members</li> <li>• Works with team members to reach consensus</li> <li>• Values team success over personal success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compares program findings with those of other visitation team members to improve consistency</li> <li>• Looks for and listens to common issues across programs</li> <li>• Assists other team members as needed during the visit</li> </ul>
<b>Professional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conveys professional appearance and demeanor</li> <li>• Committed to contributing and adding value to the evaluation process</li> <li>• Considered a person with high integrity and ethical standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represents ABET and responsible technical society as a practicing professional</li> <li>• Willing to make observations to stimulate innovation and further the program's efforts toward continuous improvement</li> <li>• Shows professional respect for institution faculty and staff</li> <li>• Upholds ABET's code of conduct at all times</li> </ul>
<b>Organized</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on meeting deadlines</li> <li>• Focuses on critical issues and avoids minutia</li> <li>• Displays take-charge initiative</li> <li>• Takes responsibility and works under minimum supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulates preliminary program strengths and weakness assessment based upon review of materials supplied prior to the visit</li> <li>• Focuses on critical findings, effectively cites supportive observations, relates to appropriate criteria, and suggests possible avenues to resolution</li> <li>• Submits high quality documentation to team chair on time</li> <li>• Makes difficult recommendations when appropriate</li> </ul>

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# PEVs Up Close

## What Program Evaluators Do

Program evaluators (PEVs) volunteer through an ABET member society to evaluate postsecondary degree-granting programs in a particular field of applied science, computing, engineering, or technology.

## Who Program Evaluators Are

ABET program evaluators are dedicated technical professionals — deans, department heads, faculty, industry leaders, government representatives, and private practitioners — with an interest in contributing to their professions and improving higher education. Evaluators are team players, respected in their field and among their peers, and are often active within their professional societies. Good communication skills, interpersonal skills, and organizational skills are a must for the successful evaluator.

## The Work of a Program Evaluator

Programs are evaluated against a set of general and program-specific criteria developed by the applied science, computing, engineering, and technology professions through ABET. These criteria outline the requirements for faculty, facilities, curriculum, and other key program areas. It is the program evaluator’s job to determine if these criteria are met.

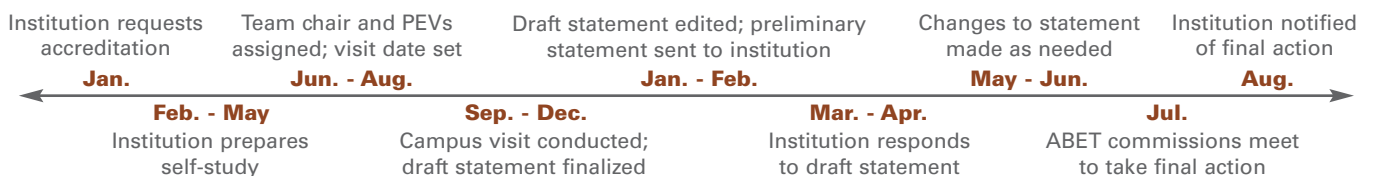
**Step 1:** The work of a program evaluator begins with the receipt of a self-study report, which a program seeking accreditation submits to ABET. The self-study report contains general information about the program and institution and specific details on how the program meets the evaluation criteria. The program evaluator thoroughly reviews this information and, if needed, communicates with the program directly to resolve any ambiguities or answer any questions raised by the report.

**Step 2:** The program evaluator travels to campus with one or more additional program evaluators and an evaluation team leader called a team chair. Once on campus, the program evaluator will spend approximately two days investigating his or her assigned program with the help of the program’s chair and faculty. Activities during these days usually include observing classes, interviewing students and faculty, surveying laboratory facilities, and reviewing course materials and student work.

**Step 3:** Based on a review of the self-study report and observations made on campus, the program evaluator formulates a draft statement on the adherence of the assigned program to the evaluation criteria. This statement is submitted to the team chair and will be incorporated into the exit statement to the program(s) and institution, given at the conclusion of the campus visit.

**Step 4:** The program evaluator travels home from campus and completes expense reports and performance evaluations of his or her visit team members. The program evaluator may also need to respond to questions during the statement-editing period.

## The Accreditation Process Timeline



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# Program Evaluator Job Description

### Prior to Program Assignment

- Complete program evaluator training as assigned.
- Update biographical information.
- Indicate dates available for visit assignments.

### After Assignment and Prior to On-Campus Visit

- Refresh knowledge of evaluation criteria, procedures, etc.
- Receive, review, analyze, and understand institution self-study report and academic processes in specific program area.
- Interface with the team chair (and, in some cases, the institution) prior to visit to get all questions answered. Schedule necessary interviews prior to arrival on campus.
- Download and prepare all materials — forms and statement — prior to on-campus visit.
- Coordinate logistics for on-campus visit, including travel and materials, with the ABET travel agent and the team chair.

### On-Campus Visit

- Participate in on-campus visit.
  - Be an active and involved participant to enable team to reach consensus.
  - Prepare report on a timely basis.
  - Conduct faculty, staff, and administrative interviews and assess/interpret information to corroborate the information provided in the program self-study.
  - Review course materials and student work.
  - Conduct a student focus group and ask questions regarding the self-study.
  - Write succinct, cogent assessment of program.
  - Provide all requested materials to team chair.

### After On-Campus Visit

- Complete team chair and team member evaluations within one week from the visit.
- Submit expense report within two weeks after your return from campus.
- Respond to requests from the team chair during due process response period completely and on a timely basis.
- Provide feedback to ABET member society.
- Participate in program evaluator training as assigned.

**Total Annual Time Commitment = 7 days (approximate)**

## The Road to Becoming an ABET Program Evaluator

1. Begin the application process at [www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml](http://www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml).
2. If your application is accepted, you will be assigned a mentor and asked to complete some online work to prepare for formal program evaluator training.
3. If the online work is completed satisfactorily, you will attend formal, face-to-face program evaluator training.
4. If the training is completed satisfactorily, you will be approved as a program evaluator. In some cases, you will be asked to observe a campus visit prior to approval as an evaluator.
5. Based on your availability and the demand for program evaluators in your field, you will be assigned to evaluate a program.

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# Accreditation Fact Sheet

## The Facts About ABET Accreditation

ABET accreditation ensures the quality of educational programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology.

### Parents and Students . . .

Look to accreditation to choose the right study programs.

### Employers . . .

Rely on accreditation to ensure that employees are qualified to practice.

### Licensing and Certification Boards . . .

Count on accreditation to screen applicants.

### Colleges and Universities . . .

Use accreditation as a structured mechanism to assess, evaluate, and improve the quality of their programs.

### Graduate Schools . . .

Check accreditation to determine the eligibility of applicants.

## The Facts About ABET

ABET was established in 1932. The organization now accredits some 2,700 educational programs at more than 550 colleges and universities. A federation of over 25 professional and technical societies in applied science, computing, engineering, and technology, ABET has more than 1,500 dedicated volunteers working to ensure quality in higher education.

ABET volunteers take the form of program evaluators (PEVs), members of the ABET Board of Directors, and members of the four accreditation commissions — the Applied Science Accreditation Commission (ASAC), Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC), Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC), and Technology Accreditation Commission (TAC). Most volunteers are appointed by ABET's member societies.

**Board of Directors:** The primary responsibilities of the Board of Directors are to set policy, approve accreditation criteria, and strategically guide the organization.

**Commissions:** The commissions implement accreditation procedures and decisions.

**Program Evaluators:** Program evaluators, along with commissioners, make up ABET's accreditation teams, which visit and evaluate programs seeking accreditation.

## Volunteering for ABET

Most ABET volunteers begin their service as program evaluators. Job description, minimum qualifications, the program evaluator competency model, and instructions for applying can all be found online. Visit [www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml](http://www.abet.org/volunteer.shtml) to get started.