

**Glossary of Terms**

**and**

**Definitions of Indefinite Rubric Terms**



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| 1 | Accreditation | A voluntary, peer review method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools, and designed primarily to distinguish schools adhering to a set of educational standards; founded upon the root word “credibility,” it is a Biblical concept related to validating as credible an institution’s claims to quality |
| 2 | Accreditation Status | A designation provided by ICAA that helps further define the institution’s standing relative to the results of an institution’s Engagement Review (aka, External Review |
| 3 | Active engagement, actively engaged | Learning that allows students to generate knowledge or make meaning via such behaviors as clarifying, asking questions, comparing, and applying new knowledge |
| 4 | Alternative delivery methods and sources | Grade- and/or credit-earning courses in which the content and/or instruction are provided by 3rd party sources; this can include, but is not limited to, concurrent course, dual enrollment courses, online instruction, etc. |
| 5 | Artifact | A piece of evidence providing proof/verification of or support for an assertion; an artifact may be a written document, photo, audio/video recording, information on a website, or other object |
| 6 | Axiology | Defines philosophical beliefs about value and what is good and right. Subdivisions include ethics (moral values and conduct) and aesthetics (beauty) |
| 7 | Best practices | Classroom instructional and organizational strategies that have been demonstrated and accepted by the professional community to be effective in improving student learning and performance |
| 8 | Biblical worldview | A set of beliefs that integrates all of life into a meaningful, God-honoring whole; it grounds life in Biblical certainty, relates life to the universal order, and gives life an interpretive framework for value, conduct, decision-making, and success; shaping a Biblical worldview involves the effective integration of faith and learning and includes, at a minimum acquisition of Biblical knowledge, Christian character development, and service learning |
| 9 | Christian philosophy of education | A practical and systematic description of one’s beliefs about reality and the universe, human relationship to that universe, and the role education plays in defining and providing understanding of those beliefs within the context of the authority of and truths found in the Word of God; at a minimum, a Christian philosophy of education addresses metaphysics (nature of reality), epistemology (nature of knowing and knowledge) and axiology (nature of values and moral conduct) articulated through a logical line of reasoning |
| 10 | Clearly communicated | Information disseminated to stakeholders using a method and format(s) that is coherent and appropriate to specific stakeholder groups |
| 11 | Climate | The quality and character of a school or institution that is reflective of its norms, goals, values, relationships, practices, and structures; the climate of an institution is typically subjective whereas the culture of the school refers to the actual state or condition of the institution. |
| 12 | Coaching (program) | A formal and informal structure for staff members to examine and reflect about the instructional practices for the purpose of improving student learning and student results |
| 13 | Comprehensive system | A process whereby the institution has established strategies for data collection, analysis, and dissemination from multiple measures and/or sources that act to inform an institution’s decisions |
| 14 | Community or community representatives | People who have an affiliation with and interest in the institution’s success, such as representatives from churches, businesses, civic organizations, universities, etc. |
| 15 | Continuous improvement system | A research-based, on-going process in which institutions engage for the purpose of increasing its overall effectiveness and making positive, measurable impact on all stakeholders, primarily students, by focusing on and implementing three essential elements: learn and share, examine and plan, and act and evaluate |
| 16 | Contextually based research | Information gathered from local data sources and analyzed to inform programmatic decisions at the local level |
| 17 | Culture | Generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how an institution operates |
| 18 | Current research | An investigation into and analysis of internal and external materials and data points to establish facts and reach relevant conclusions (e.g. review of current *foundational documents* of similar organizations, Stakeholder Survey data, review of relevant literature, current demographic data and trends, etc.) |
| 19 | Curriculum (pl. curricula) | The selection and organization of a series of planned experiences for the purpose of teaching and learning; curriculum as used in this context refers to all aspects of the instructional process such as material inclusive of all types of media (e.g. printed material, technology, online learning, etc.), methodologies, classroom management, etc. |
| 20 | Domain | Organizational superstructure for aligning the Standards; each domain is defined by a statement describing a broad concept related to an organization or institution; ICAA defines four domains: Cultural Context, Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity; each domain is further defined by standards, which in turn, are defined by performance rubrics |
| 21 | Educators | Professional staff who are responsible for all aspects of the instructional program, including, but not limited to, content delivery, assessment, and academic intervention |
| 22 | Engagement Review (aka, External Review) | A process that is conducted on-site by a team of qualified and trained educational professionals to 1) evaluate an institution’s adherence to the Standards; 2) assess the efficacy and impact of its continuous improvement process; 3) assess the effectiveness of the institution’s methods for quality assurance; 4) identify strengths deserving of commendations and provide required actions for improvement and; 5) make an accreditation recommendation for national or international approval by an independent commission |
| 23 | Engagement Team (aka External Review Team or ER Team) | A selected group of qualified and trained educational professionals who serve as informed experts to assess an institution’s adherence to the Standards and provide recommendations for its continuous improvement journey |
| 24 | Epistemology | Defines philosophical beliefs about knowledge and knowing. It seeks to answer the questions, “’How do we know what we know?’ ‘On what process of knowing do we base our knowledge of the world and society?’ ‘ What is the authority on which we base our claims to truth?’ ‘Do our knowledge claims derive from divine revelation, empirical evidence, personal and subjective experience, [or a combination of those]?’” (*Philosophical and Ideological Perspectives on Education,* Gerald L. Gutek) |
| 25 | Equitable/equity | Access to resources and support based on individual need |
| 26 | External financial reviewer/auditor | A CPA or other person qualified by training/experience to examine the financial records, business transactions, and accounting procedures of the school, and who has no direct affiliation with the school |
| 27 | Formal program or structure | Experiences provided by an institution that are consistently implemented, process-oriented, and made known to appropriate stakeholder groups |
| 28 | Foundational documents | a set of documents that, at a foundational level, establishes the basis for the school’s existence, delineates the school’s current direction and guides the school’s future. A school’s foundational documents should inform all the school’s operations, policies and *school practices*. Foundational documents include, at a minimum:* 1. Statement of Faith
	2. Vision Statement
	3. Mission/purpose Statement
	4. Christian Philosophy of Education
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| 29 | Governing authority | The person or group of people with the highest level of control over an institution that generally has the responsibility for oversight and policy setting |
| 30 | Healthy dialogue | An exchange of opinions or discussion in which members demonstrate trust, respect, and understanding |
| 31 | Healthy relationship(s) | Connections and interactions between people that are respectful and trusting |
| 32 | Induction (program) | A formal and informal structure provided for new staff members to receive support, guidance, and institutional knowledge during their transition to their new position or place of employment |
| 33 | Innovative practices | New or revised interventions, actions, or strategies taken to improve the institution and/or student engagement and achievement |
| 34 | Inquiry-based practices | A multi-step instructional process in which students define, explore, and discover possible solutions to a problem where the focus is on the process rather than the outcome |
| 35 | Institution | An educational unit including any public, private, proprietary, not-for-profit, pre-K to 12, high school, middle school/junior high, elementary, special purposes, distance, or international entity |
| 36 | Inventory | A diagnostic that captures how an individual perceives his/her experiences at an institution |
| 37 | Job embedded | Professional learning that is integrated into the workday; connects the learning and the application of the learning |
| 38 | Learner engagement | The willingness of a student to fully participate in the learning process or instructional activity |
| 39 | Learning communities | Structures, formal and informal, that exist and function for the purpose of increasing educator effectiveness and learner results |
| 40 | Learning culture | Generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence the classroom environment; a learning culture should have high expectations that focuses on the educational needs of all students |
| 41 | Learning environment | The context in which student learning occurs within a classroom setting |
| 42 | Learning expectation(s) | A competency or skill level students should demonstrate after instruction |
| 43 | Learning opportunities | Planned or spontaneous circumstances that can deepen one’s understanding or introduce new information or knowledge |
| 44 | Learning results | Information on student(s) attainment of knowledge, skills, and/or abilities |
| 45 | Major content areas | Generally regarded as the academic or non-elective courses, such as mathematics, language arts/reading/English, science, social studies, and Bible/religious courses |
| 46 | Metaphysics | Defines philosophical beliefs about reality and existence. It seeks to answer the questions, “What is genuinely real?” “Is there a spiritual realm of reality or is reality only in the natural realm?” “What is the origin of the universe and life?” “Are we born with an inherent purpose or do we create our own purposes? |
| 47 | Mission/purpose | A brief description of a school’s core purpose communicating a sense of the intended direction of the entire school; a mission statement communicates what the school expects to achieve |
| 48 | Modeling program | A structure that provides an exemplary demonstration through the use of words and actions pertaining to the way in which a certain strategy is applied, discussion is led, classroom behavior is managed, problems are solved, etc. |
| 49 | Needs assessment | A process used to 1) analyze current condition of a desired outcome; 2) compare to an agreed upon standard; and 3) identify gaps between the two |
| 50 | Next levels | The subsequent course, grade, or program determined by an institution’s structure or criteria |
| 51 | Pedagogy, pedagogical | Generally refers to strategies of instruction, a style of instruction, or the process of using one’s beliefs about teaching to formulate his/her teaching style |
| 52 | Performance rubric | For ICAA Standards, a scoring guide consisting of four performance levels that contain evaluative criteria related to concepts contained within the standard statement |
| 53 | Personalized learning, personalized | Custom tailoring of information, instruction, or the curriculum to the individual student |
| 54 | Professional practice | An accepted and understood skill, expectation, and body of knowledge that are used to make decisions and execute actions within an institution or learning environment |
| 55 | Reliable sources | Sources of information that are deemed honest and accurate by the institution through an accepted method of validation |
| 56 | Research based | Practice that is based on the results or outcomes of current educational research |
| 57 | Resources | Assets and capacity to fulfill the needs of and support for the learning environment; generally, resources are categorized as financial, human, and physical materials |
| 58 | School improvement plan | A formalized set of goals and objectives that a school has developed with input from multiple *stakeholders* to guide its efforts to improve its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission; a school improvement plan should be data-driven and may address multiple areas of the school including student performance, organizational effectiveness, financial strength, facilities, technology, curriculum and instruction, etc. The plan should include such elements as goals, objectives, strategies, action steps, cost projections, timelines and evaluation methods |
| 59 | School practices | All aspects of school operations including governance, business/financial management, instructional program, student and family services, etc. |
| 60 | School Quality Factors (SQF) | A set of research-based components that provide educational institutions with conditions, processes, practices, and actions to focus their improvement efforts |
| 61 | Stakeholders | Individuals and groups with a vested interest in the school; stakeholders include, but are not necessarily limited to: board members, administration, faculty and staff, parents and students |
| 62 | Standards | Research-based statements that describe conditions necessary for institutions to support organizational effectiveness and improve student performance |
| 63 | Statement of Faith | A list of basic doctrinal beliefs that an organization interprets as taught as truth in the Bible; while not an inclusive list, most Statements of Faith include statements of belief about the Bible, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Salvation, the Afterlife, and/or the Church |
| 64 | Systematic, systematically | An organized method or process that is consistently implemented |
| 65 | Systemic | The impact a method or process has on all levels and facets of an institution |
| 66 | Vision | An aspirational statement of what the school wants to achieve or accomplish with regard to its students; a vision statement is future-focused and describes what is pursued |

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|  | Terms and Phrases | Definitions |
| 1 | Adequate | Satisfactory or acceptable, enough to meet the standard or what is necessary |
| 2 | All, always | Including more than 75 percent of (e.g., learners, educators, programs, policies) |
| 3 | Almost always | Occurring more than 75 percent of the time |
| 4 | Ample | Plenty, more than enough to meet the standard or what is necessary or required |
| 5 | Complete, completely | More than 75% of (e.g., programs, actions, content, etc.) |
| 6 | Consistency | With regularity (i.e., at equal intervals) and uniformity (i.e., in a similar manner), usually 75 percent of the time or more |
| 7 | Excellent quality | The highest standard or value |
| 8 | Fair quality | A minimal standard or value |
| 9 | Few, few to none | Less than 25 percent of a specific stakeholder group or any quantifiable factor |
| 10 | Frequently | Occurring many times or constantly, occurring about 50 to 75 percent of the time |
| 11 | Fully embedded | Complete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place |
| 12 | Good quality | An acceptable standard or value |
| 13 | Limited, little | Having some restrictions or confinements; a small amount |
| 14 | Many | Including approximately 50 to 75 percent of a specific stakeholder group or any other quantifiable factor |
| 15 | Most | Approximately 75 percent or more of a specific stakeholder group; occurring approximately 75 percent of the time |
| 16 | Mostly embedded | Almost complete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; about 75 percent or more complete |
| 17 | Not embedded | Minimal or no scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; less than 25 percent complete |
| 18 | Often | Occurring many times or constantly; occurring about 50 to 75 percent of the time |
| 19 | Partially embedded | Incomplete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; about 50 to 25 percent completed |
| 20 | Poor quality | Not an acceptable standard or value |
| 21 | Rarely, never, seldom | Occurring infrequently; occurring less than 25 percent of the time |
| 22 | Regularly | Occurring at predicted times or intervals |
| 23 | Some | About 25 to 50 percent of a specific stakeholder group, documents, policies, etc. |
| 24 | Sometimes | Occurring at various intervals but without consistency; occurring 25 to 50 percent of the time |
| 25 | Sporadically | Occurring at irregular intervals; without a pattern or order or time |
| 26 | Sufficient | Satisfactory or acceptable, enough to meet the standard or what is necessary |