

Accreditation Peer Review Handbook



Early Childhood Higher Education Programs

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Welcome to the peer reviewer community! NAEYC's accreditation of early childhood higher education programs depends upon the commitment and professionalism of volunteer peer reviewers like you.

Throughout the pages of this handbook, you will find resources to help you on your journey as a reviewer.

Do you have a question that's not addressed in this manual or its linked resources? Is there a new resource you think would help you navigate the peer review process more successfully? Please reach out to us at any time with questions or resource requests by email at highered@naeyc.org or by telephone at (800) 424-2460 (choose option 3 for accreditation, then option 2 for higher education).

We are honored that you have made a commitment to help us recognize high-quality programs and to serve as an advocate for early childhood professional development. We thank you for your service to the field, your colleagues, early childhood professionals, and young children.



Policies and Procedures

Higher Education Peer Reviewer Qualifications

All peer reviewers must have

- › Experience teaching early childhood courses as a current or former full- or part-time faculty member at a college or university
- › A graduate degree in early childhood education, child development, or a closely related field
- › Familiarity with the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs ([NAEYC.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/higher-ed/NAEYC-Professional-Preparation-Standards.pdf](https://naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/higher-ed/NAEYC-Professional-Preparation-Standards.pdf))
- › An understanding of candidate assessment in higher education programs
- › Willingness and ability to commit to at least one site visit per academic year for at least three consecutive years (exceptions may be made due to extenuating circumstances)

The Application Process

A call for applications is open twice per year, generally once throughout January and February and again throughout August and September. Interested applicants who meet the above qualifications are encouraged to submit an online application located on the NAEYC website during these windows.

Applicants are asked to provide demographic information and details regarding their current or past work as early childhood faculty members. They are also asked to supply contact information for three professional references who can attest to the applicant's professionalism, written and verbal communication skills, demonstrated ability to maintain confidentiality, and punctuality.

If an applicant does not appear to meet the required qualifications based on their submitted information, NAEYC Higher Education Accreditation staff will contact the applicant to inform them of this status and provide an opportunity for the applicant to provide further evidence of qualification. If further evidence is not provided within 30 days of NAEYC's request, the application will be denied.

If the applicant meets the required qualifications, the applicant's references will be contacted by email. If reference responses received are positive, the application will be approved; the applicant will then be invited to participate in part one of the training online. If the provided references do not respond to the reference request within 30 days, the applicant will be contacted to request additional names.

If concerns emerge during the reference check process, or if NAEYC is unable to obtain reference responses within 30 days of a second attempt, the application may be denied.

If an applicant has a previous history of negative evaluations as an NAEYC peer reviewer, the applicant may be disqualified from serving as a peer reviewer again.



Approved applicants are invited to participate in a multipart training process. Applicants who successfully complete each part are considered fully trained peer reviewers. NAEYC staff, peer reviewer training facilitators, fellow site visit team members, or site visit hosts may identify a need for further targeted training if concerns emerge during any of these phases of training or during the evaluation process following the trainee's first visit.

Part One: Online Training

Part one of peer reviewer training takes place online. For the January–February application cohort, the online training will generally take place in March. For the August–September cohort, the online training will generally take place in October. Applicants who are unavailable for their scheduled training will be invited to participate in the following round. Applicants must participate in the first or second round of training to which they are invited (exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances provided there is clear communication). Lack of availability or lack of response to two consecutive training invitations will result in removal of the applicant from the trainee list; applicants who have been removed may need to reapply if interested in the future.

The online training occurs asynchronously over the course of approximately one week, facilitated by NAEYC staff and experienced peer reviewers or members of the Commission. Trainees complete activity and discussion modules throughout the week at their convenience. Trainees must complete each module activity and contribute thoughtfully to each discussion question to be eligible for subsequent portions of training.

Trainees who have successfully completed the online modules without identified need for further targeted training will be asked to sign a Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality, and Code of Conduct agreement (see Appendix). NAEYC staff will follow up to clarify any common misconceptions or address minor cohort-wide concerns.

Trainees whose responses to training activities indicate a need for further targeted training prior to moving forward will be contacted with additional instructions.

Part Two: Peer Review Team Virtual Observation

Part two of training also takes place online. Trainees who have successfully completed part one in March will be assigned to observe a fall site visit team virtually through the team's online community space, generally throughout the months of May–November. Trainees who complete part one in October will be assigned to observe a spring site visit team's online community space during the months of November–April. Adjustments to this schedule may be made based on the number of site visits available to which observers can be assigned. Applicants who are unavailable for their scheduled observation will be invited to participate in the following round. Applicants must participate in the first or second observation to which they are invited (exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances provided there is clear communication). Lack of availability or lack of response to two consecutive observation invitations will result in removal of the applicant from the trainee list; trainees who have been removed will need to reapply and repeat part one of training if interested in the future.

Trainees and programs being observed will be asked to confirm that there are no conflicts of interest. Trainees will act as silent observers of team interactions, documentation submissions, and site visit preparations; they will submit any questions they have throughout the observation to NAEYC staff via an online form.

If questions are submitted, NAEYC staff will host a question-and-answer webinar toward the end of the observation period to address submitted questions and prepare trainees for their first real visit. This webinar will be recorded for future viewing by those with scheduling conflicts.

Part Three: The First Site Visit

The training culminates with assignment to a peer review team in part three. Trainees who observed a fall site visit team will typically be assigned to their first visit the following spring. Trainees who observed a spring site visit team will typically be assigned to their first visit in the fall. Adjustments to this schedule may be made based on the number of site visits available to which reviewers can be assigned. Pending reviewer availability, NAEYC staff will make every attempt to schedule trainees for their first visit no more than one year after completion of their virtual observation. In the event that more than a year passes before a trainee has been assigned to their first site visit, online refresher training may be required.

Trainees will be assigned to a team with an experienced team member and team chair. While the first visit is considered part of training, trainees are expected to participate as full members of the team and share team responsibilities fully.

If no targeted training needs are identified by either team members or the site visit host after the conclusion of the visit, the trainee will be notified of successful training completion status and will be invited to join the list of fully trained reviewers for their first three-year term.

If a need for further targeted training is identified based on concerns with performance before, during, or after the first site visit, NAEYC staff will contact the trainee for further instructions. Trainees in need of additional targeted training are given one year to complete this additional component; they are not assigned to further visits until it has been completed. Upon successful completion of targeted training, the trainee will be invited to join the list of fully trained reviewers for their first three-year term. Unavailability or inability to successfully complete requested targeted training will result in the trainee's removal from list of reviewers.

Maintaining Good Standing as an Active Reviewer

Following each site visit, NAEYC staff will send an evaluation form to all members of the team and to the site visit host; the form asks participants to evaluate reviewers' professionalism, written and verbal communication skills, familiarity with the NAEYC standards, and other factors. Completion of this evaluation is a required component of serving as a peer reviewer. Staff reserve the right to discontinue scheduling a reviewer if evaluations are repeatedly not submitted in a timely manner.

The results of these evaluations are used in aggregate for the continuous growth and improvement of NAEYC's higher education accreditation system. Typically, individual evaluations are not shared with reviewers. Reviewers who are not notified of a concern within the semester following a site visit may assume that they remain in good standing.

Occasionally, individuals or all reviewers may be required to complete refresher training. This requirement may occur in the following circumstances:

- › Two negative evaluations (from teammates or program contacts) are received within a two-year period
- › More than two years have passed since a reviewer's last visit
- › Policies or procedures in the accreditation system change
- › Noticeable patterns emerge collectively across evaluations or Commission review of Peer Review Reports that suggest common misconceptions or misapplication of policies/procedures across the peer reviewer pool

NAEYC staff reserve the right to remove reviewers from the active reviewer list if egregious violations of policy, procedure, or the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct occur that cannot be addressed by further training.

Active reviewers with no concerns will be invited to renew their commitment for an additional term every three years; those with concerns that are not resolved through additional targeted training will be notified by NAEYC staff that their term as a reviewer has ended.

Serving as a Team Chair or Mentor Chair

Experienced reviewers who have demonstrated capacity for leadership may be invited to serve as a team chair. When possible, new chairs are paired with an experienced mentor chair during their first visit serving in this role. Active, experienced reviewers who are interested in serving in this capacity are encouraged to reach out to NAEYC staff to express interest.

Experienced team chairs may also be asked occasionally to serve as a mentor for first-time team chairs.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Team Chair

Typical activities for the team chair, one month prior to the site visit:

- › Confirm that the Site Visit Details chart includes complete travel and hotel arrangements for team members
- › Write a preliminary list of questions for team meetings with faculty, students, administrators, and stakeholders
- › Guide the site visit team through deciding on roles: Who will visit field sites? Who will do the campus tour? Who will view online sites? Who will lead which meeting(s)?
- › Encourage team members to download and read the Self-Study Report and to post their individual Peer Reviewer Worksheets in the online discussion space.
- › Verify that the program's key assessments
 - are completed by all candidates (not in elective courses)
 - are the same for all degrees being accredited
 - are based on individual student performance (no group assignments)
 - meet the requirements for using a portfolio as a key assessment if applicable (see page 29 of this handbook for portfolio guidance)

Typical activities for the team chair, one week prior to the site visit:

- › When reading the report, break down comments by criteria groupings in the final Peer Review Report (Criteria 1–5, Criteria 6–7, Criteria 8–10, Criteria 11–12), keeping in mind that you will need comments on strengths and concerns for each grouping
- › Review the program’s Overview of Alignment chart to determine whether each key element is measured at least once
- › Double-check airport pickup information. Get the phone numbers of the people meeting the team at the airport and make sure the site visit team has them
- › Begin filling in the final Peer Review Report template with details you already know, such as the names of team members, which key elements are associated with which key assessments, etc. This will save you time at nightly meetings.

Typical activities for the team chair during and after the site visit:

- › Lead the team through discussions of the distinction and relationship between key elements, standards, and learning opportunities
- › Lead the team through review of questions for meetings with faculty, administrators, candidates, and other stakeholders
- › Assume a leadership role during these meetings (e.g., make sure the conversation stays on topic and the meeting begins and ends on time), while ensuring that all members of the peer review team participate actively
- › Serve as a role model for less experienced team members who may be new to reviewing or may be building their skills to assume a team chair role in the future; ensure that all team members can contribute actively to a positive site visit experience for the program
- › Serve as liaison between the full team and the program so that there is one point of contact for any requests the team may have and/or any last minute adjustments to the schedule or other arrangements that the program may request
- › Work with peer review team members to begin writing the strengths and areas of concern for the final Peer Review Report after discussions with the program chair
- › Prepare the Exit Report and work with team members to determine what roles they will play
- › Work with team members to complete (or discuss) as much of the final Peer Review Report as possible before leaving the campus
- › Submit the final draft of Peer Review Report to NAEYC within two weeks of the visit and remain engaged throughout the staff review process in case additional information is requested

Roles and Responsibilities of a Mentor Chair

Prior to the site visit, the mentor may

- › Offer suggestions to the team chair for content in writing a welcome letter to the program contact
- › Advise the team chair to
 - Have team members subscribe to the online community
 - Have reviewers fill out contact and travel information on the Site Visit Details chart

During the site visit, the mentor may

- › Provide support and suggestions about handling issues that arise during the site visit
- › Assist the chair in keeping the group focused and on-task, with progress made each night on the Peer Review Report

After the site visit, the mentor may

- › Provide support for the team chair in leading the team's efforts to finalize the Peer Review Report

Site Visit Assignment and Reimbursement Process

Site visits are usually conducted only during the spring and fall semesters and most often take place from Sunday through Wednesday. Reviewers typically travel from their home to the visit site on Sunday, arriving in time for a late-afternoon team meeting, and visits typically conclude by late morning on Wednesday to accommodate reviewers' travel home.

Each spring and fall, NAEYC staff contact programs awaiting site visits the following semester and all active peer reviewers to identify possible dates for upcoming site visits. Programs select the dates they are available to host a visit, and peer reviewers select the dates they are available to travel. After NAEYC and the program mutually agree upon site visit dates, NAEYC assigns the peer review team, considering indicated dates of availability; potential conflicts of interest; and diversity of geography, areas of expertise, and demographic factors.

The program and assigned reviewers identify (or confirm the absence of) any potential conflicts of interest immediately after receiving the assignment.

Conflicts of interest include but are not limited to

- › residing or working in the same state as the institution under review
- › being a current or pending employee, student, or consultant to the institution under review
- › being a former employee, student, or consultant to the institution under review (within the past 10 years)
- › having family members employed at or attending the institution under review
- › having a personal relationship with faculty at the program under review
- › having applied for a position at the program under review (within the past 10 years)

In the event that an assigned reviewer can no longer commit to an assigned site visit due to a personal emergency and is able to give sufficient notice, NAEYC will attempt to find a replacement. The program will be notified of the change and given the opportunity to identify any potential conflict of interest with the replacement reviewer. If the assigned peer review team member is not able to give sufficient notice or if a replacement cannot be found, decisions about how to proceed will be made on a case-by-case basis. Options include but are not limited to proceeding with a smaller team (but with no fewer than two people), arranging for the non-traveling team member to be available for consultation by telephone, extending the visit if team member arrivals are delayed, or rescheduling the visit. The team chair and the program's primary contact, in consultation with NAEYC staff, have the right to postpone a visit on the basis of their consultation and mutual agreement.

After teams have been assigned, reviewers work with NAEYC staff and the program's representative to make logistical arrangements. First-time reviewers will need to set up their online profile with NAEYC's contracted travel vendor and complete documentation to enable direct deposit of their reimbursable expenses (these steps do not need to be repeated for subsequent visits).



Reimbursement of Expenses

Costs associated with travel to a site visit are covered by a site visit fee the program pays to NAEYC. Any costs that can be prepaid, such as airfare and hotel, are paid for up front by NAEYC when reviewers book using NAEYC's contracted travel booking site. (Please note that while hotel room and tax are prepaid, hotels still require reviewers to present a credit or debit card at check-in to cover incidental expenses, even if the traveler does not plan to charge any incidental expenses to the room. In some cases, the hotel may put a hold on the card for a particular deposit amount that may be different for debit cards than for credit cards. Reviewers generally have their hotel information at least 30 days prior to the visit, so any questions in this area should be addressed by the hotel directly, by NAEYC's contracted travel vendor, or by NAEYC staff.)

Costs that cannot be prepaid, such as rental cars, taxis, baggage fees, meals, and mileage, are reimbursed to reviewers. Reviewers must complete a form available from NAEYC staff and attach receipts for all reimbursable expenses in order to be reimbursed. (See the peer reviewer travel policy in the appendix for more information.) Reviewers with questions in this area are encouraged to contact NAEYC staff as early as possible during visit preparations.

Guidance On Using The Private Online Community Review Team Space

All review preparations take place in the NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation online community (currently operated through Basecamp). Approved peer reviewer applicants will be invited to join this community during the training process.

To access the online community after initial account registration:

- › Go to <https://basecamp.com/2478530/>
- › Enter your username (your email address)
- › Enter your password (self-selected during the registration process)

Note: NAEYC does not have access to users' passwords. If you have forgotten your password, you can request to reset it using the "reset my password" link on the login page.

Please note that if you have multiple roles with NAEYC's Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation system (e.g., peer reviewer and program primary contact), you will still have only one login procedure. All members belong to specific groups within the community and have access to varying content, depending on their role(s). Because of this overlapping of roles, **we ask that you please not share your login information with others at your institution to avoid the accidental sharing of confidential information.**

Please also exercise caution when replying to any online community messages through email to avoid inadvertently sharing confidential information with others outside your review team.

Inside the online community, you will find a resource library (available to all community members) and a private team space only visible to your current peer review team, training observers, and NAEYC staff. Reviewers should conduct all team communications using this official channel rather than other methods of communication, such as email. All of the resources needed to conduct the program review are available inside this private team space, including visit planning documents, guidance resources, and report templates.

Please note, not all discussion threads will show up automatically within each space. Please look for the "[#] more discussions" link underneath each space's discussion section to pull up the full list of discussions and resources sorted by type and topic.



Reviewing the Self-Study Report

Summary of the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs

Standard 1. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

Key Elements of Standard 1

- a** Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8
- b** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning
- c** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children

Standard 2. Building Family and Community Relationships

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.

Key Elements of Standard 2

- a** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics
- b** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships
- c** Involving families and communities in young children’s development and learning

Standard 3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

Key Elements of Standard 3

- a** Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment— including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children
- b** Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of technology in documentation, assessment, and data collection
- c** Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child, including the use of assistive technology for children with disabilities
- d** Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments

Standard 4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

Key Elements of Standard 4

- a** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children
- b** Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education, including appropriate uses of technology
- c** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches
- d** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

Standard 5. Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

Key Elements of Standard 5

- a** Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines: language and literacy; the arts—music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts; mathematics; science, physical activity, physical education, health and safety; and social studies
- b** Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines
- c** Using own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child

Standard 6. Becoming a Professional

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

Key Elements of Standard 6

- a** Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field
- b** Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines
- c** Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; using technology effectively with young children, with peers, and as a professional resource
- d** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education
- e** Engaging in informed advocacy for young children and the early childhood profession

Standard 7. Early Childhood Field Experiences

Field experiences and clinical practice are planned and sequenced so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood—in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth to age 3, 3 to 5, 5 through 8 years) and in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

Key Elements of Standard 7

- a** Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth to age 3, 3 to 5, 5 to 8)
- b** Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the four main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers, home-based centers, Head Start programs)



Key Features of Assessments Aligned with the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs

When reviewing a program’s key assessments for alignment with the standards, here are five things reviewers should look for.

1. The standards and key elements that are the primary focus of the assessment are easily identifiable and labeled in the candidate instructions (embedded in the content, not just at the top of the instructions page), rubrics, and data tables. For example:

“Question 5: What informal and formal observation, documentation, and assessment strategies and tools did you use in order to better understand the child’s development and learning needs? In your response to this question, make sure that you explain why you selected each observation, documentation, and assessment approach that you used, and why you elected not to use other tools or approaches (NAEYC Standard 3b).”

2. Assessment tasks are congruent with the full depth and breadth of the cognitive demands and skill requirements described in the standards (use the full standards document, not just the summary). For example:



Standard	Meets Expectations (1 point) 	Meets Expectations (1 point) 
Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment (3a)	Candidates select at least three assessment strategies/tools. For each assessment, candidates provide a rationale that shows knowledge of important goals of assessment and explains benefits and potential harm of assessments considered and selected.	Candidates select at least three good assessment strategies/tools

3. The collection of assessments supports efficient data collection processes by focusing on quality of alignment (a few of the program’s strongest examples of meeting each standard or key element) over quantity of alignment (trying to align everything but the kitchen sink or putting all your eggs in one basket). For example:

Standard	Assessments Indicated as Best Measuring these Standards	Assessments Indicated as Best Measuring these Standards
Std. 1a	<div style="text-align: center;">✓</div> Assessments 1, 2, and 5	<div style="text-align: center;">✗</div> Assessments 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6
Std. 1b	Assessments 2 and 5	Assessment 2



4. Rubrics provide objective and qualitative descriptions of differentiated expectations at each level of performance the program has chosen to measure. (Program must make clear which levels of performance are considered to have met vs. not met the standard). Avoid vague/ subjective language that could be interpreted differently by different candidates and/or faculty, or solely quantitative performance indicators (six ineffective examples are not better than three effective examples just because there are more of them). For example:

Standard	Does Not Meet Expectations (0 points)	Progressing Toward Expectations (1 point)	Meets Expectations (2 points)	Exceeds Expectations (3 points)
 Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships (2b)	Candidate has not documented efforts to create respectful, reciprocal relationships.	Candidate has documented efforts to create respectful, reciprocal relationships. However, these efforts do not reflect candidate's knowledge of family/ community, include varied communication strategies, or link families to community resources.	Candidate uses knowledge of family/ community to build relationships; uses varied communication strategies; links family to at least one community resource.	...and reflects extensive knowledge of family's goals, language/ culture, and characteristics to deepen relationships; links family with multiple resources for specific purposes.
 Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics (2a)	Not Good (0–20 points)** Has significant errors and includes poor examples of family characteristics.	Sort of Good (20–40 points) Has a few errors and includes some examples of family characteristics.	Good (40–70 points) Has minor errors and includes good examples of family characteristics.	Very Good (70–100 points) Has no errors and includes excellent examples of family characteristics.

***If using point ranges, candidates and other faculty using the rubric should know how points are decided upon within each range.*

5. Rubrics produce data that provide meaningful information on candidate performance in relation to the standards and that highlight opportunities to improve teaching and learning related to the standards. Clustering two or more standards within a single rubric row or a single piece of candidate instructions will not lead to meaningful data, since it is not possible to determine which standard the performance data is truly representing. For example:

Candidate instructions (Content simplified for training purposes. Do not use as a model.)



Develop and teach a lesson plan covering two or more academic disciplines with a group of young children. After teaching the lesson, write a brief reflection of what went well and what you would do differently next time **(NAEYC Standards 5c and 4d)**.

vs.



Develop and teach a lesson plan covering two or more academic disciplines with a group of young children **(NAEYC Standard 5c)**. After teaching the lesson, write a brief reflection of what went well and what you would do differently next time **(NAEYC Standard 4d)**.

Rubric

<p>5c: Using own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child</p> <p>4d: Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that meets standards 5c and 4d]</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that does not meet standards 5c and 4d]</p>
<p>5c: Using own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that meets standard 5c]</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that does not meet standard 5c]</p>
<p>4d: Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that meets standard 4d]</p>	<p>[description of candidate performance that does not meet standard 4d]</p>

Guidance on Reviewing Key Assessment Rubrics for Alignment with the Standards

Below is a sample rubric with common challenges peer reviewers may encounter, followed by annotations that describe some of the characteristics to look for when reviewing a key assessment rubric for alignment with the standards. Use this sample and its annotations as a resource to help your team prepare its findings.

	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
1	Pre-interview preparation	Candidate prepared six or fewer interview questions	Candidate prepared at least seven interview questions	Candidate prepared 10 or more interview questions

1. Look for qualitative versus quantitative distinctions between levels of candidate performance. Simply submitting 10 examples versus 6 examples does not necessarily demonstrate a candidate’s mastery of the standard—the 10 examples might be incorrect or inappropriate, while the 6 examples might show true understanding of the content. Quantitative distinctions are not prohibited, but they need to be accompanied by qualitative distinctions as well.



	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
2	Interview	Candidate's attempt at creating a relationship with the family was disrespectful, one-directional, and/or unsupportive	Candidate's attempt at creating a relationship with the family was based on knowledge of family's characteristics and included varied communication styles	...AND linked the family with several community resources based on their unique goals and needs

2. There are two potential concerns with this example. First, there is a lack of consistency in expectations across cells. For example, it's possible a candidate's attempt at creating a relationship with a family could both be based on the family's characteristics (met) AND be disrespectful or one-directional (not met), which would make it difficult to decide how to rate that candidate's work. A more parallel example might read "was not based on family's characteristics, included only one communication style, and/or was disrespectful" (not met) and "was based on family's characteristics, included varied communication styles, and was respectful" (met). Second, labeling which standard a rubric row is intended to assess is required, as it makes it much easier for the peer review team, the Commissioners, other faculty members, and candidates to clearly see the alignment.

	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
3	Written report (Standard 6b)	Contained many grammatical errors and/or was submitted late	Contained few grammatical errors and was submitted on time	Contained no grammatical errors and was submitted early

3. ...that being said, simply labeling a rubric row with a standard does not automatically guarantee the content will be deemed to meet the standard. In this example, we can see that this program has indicated that simply submitting a paper on time with limited errors is aligned with Standard 6b, which actually calls for demonstrating knowledge and upholding of ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines.

	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
4	Follow up with family (Standards 2c, 3d, and 6e)	Candidate did not request or allow for family feedback or questions; did not direct family to relevant assessment resources, and/or did not advocate for the needs of the child	Candidate encouraged family feedback and questions; directed family to at least one appropriate assessment resource, and advocated for the needs of the child	...AND worked with the family to identify additional assessment resources and potential partnerships based on the needs of the child

4. When this program attempts to collect data on how their candidates performed in relation to the standards, how will they be able to tell based on row 4 how candidates have performed on Standard 3? Because this program has grouped multiple standards in a single row of their rubric, they will have no way of determining which standard their candidates' performance on this row actually reflects. In order for an assessment's alignment to be determined, each row of performance indicators should be related to only one standard. This program could measure the same content by separating Standards 2c, 3d, and 6e into three distinct rows, with distinct performance expectations related specifically to each standard.

	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
5	Application to the classroom (Standard 1c)	Candidate's changes to the classroom to accommodate child's needs were weak	Candidate's changes to the classroom to accommodate child's needs were adequate	Candidate's changes to the classroom to accommodate child's needs were strong

5. One faculty member’s or one candidate’s definition of *weak*, *adequate*, and *strong* may vary widely from another’s. The most effective rubrics avoid subjective and non-descriptive language that may have inconsistent interpretations from person to person.

	Task	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-4 points)	Meets Expectations (5-10 points)	Exceeds Expectations (11-15 points)
6	Written repo (Standard 2a)	Family study report includes limited and/or biased information, illustrating that the candidate did not conduct in-depth research	Family study report includes unbiased and meaningful information about the family and their community, illustrating that the candidate conducted in-depth research	...AND references ways the family’s characteristics could be reflected in a classroom/curriculum

6. While there is no one perfect sample rubric, this example comes the closest to what an aligned rubric row might look like. The standard being measured is clearly identifiable, and the content is related to the standard with which it is intended to align. The row addresses one specific standard and includes qualitative descriptors that can be consistently identified among the various people who use the rubric.

Additional Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Rubrics

Q: This program’s rubric uses point ranges. Is that allowed?

A. Point ranges are not prohibited in the accreditation system. However, if using a point range within a single column, candidates and other faculty should easily be able to distinguish what a 5-point submission looks like versus a 10-point submission, for example, in order to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness. While reviewers may include comments related to point ranges for the Commission and program to consider, the use of point ranges should not affect a team’s evaluation of an assessment’s alignment with the standards.

Q: Some programs have chosen to use the rubrics submitted in their Self-Study Report solely as a way to demonstrate candidate performance in relation to NAEYC standards, but not as a grading tool. Is this okay, or do they need to go back and assign point values to their rubrics?

A. Rubrics used for accreditation do not need to double as grading tools unless a program chooses to use them in that way. Rubrics need only to allow for programs to collect and report data from each assessment about candidate performance in relation to the standards.

Q: This sample rubric has three columns, but my program uses five columns to align with the letter grading scale. Whose is right?

A. Programs are free to design rubrics to fit their unique contexts. The only requirement for accreditation related to number of columns is that the rubric needs to differentiate between candidate performance that meets the standard(s) being assessed and candidate performance that does not meet the standard(s).

Q: This program's rubric doesn't use the exact language of the standards. Is this okay?

A. Yes. While using language pulled directly from the standards is allowed and can often make alignment more clearly visible, it is not required. Just be sure the language the program uses can clearly be identified by others as being aligned with the full depth and breadth of the standard(s) being assessed (and remember to refer to the entire standard, not just the summary, when considering depth and breadth). However, for programs that do choose to use the exact language of the standards, it is important that they include more than just the standards language alone. Rubrics should describe performance related to the specific task being evaluated as a means of demonstrating the candidate understands and/or can apply the standard.

Guidance on Reviewing Portfolios Submitted as Key Assessments

Portfolios may be used in a variety of ways in early childhood higher education programs. Some portfolios may provide evidence that is helpful in documenting candidates' mastery of the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs. In other cases, portfolios may be helpful to the candidates and program as a learning opportunity but not as a key assessment.

If each of the following items accurately describes the program's portfolio assignment, the portfolio may work well as a key assessment. If not, the assessment may work well for other program purposes, but not as a key assessment. Concerns related to portfolios used as key assessments should be noted in the Peer Review Report.

- › If the portfolio assignment includes a compilation of previously evaluated artifacts, the only section of the portfolio submitted as evidence to demonstrate alignment with the NAEYC standards is the evaluation of something new related to the artifacts (e.g., reflective writings that have not been previously evaluated); the previously evaluated artifacts themselves are not presented as evidence of alignment with the standards.
- › The portfolio assignment requires all candidates to include the same artifacts in their portfolios (i.e., candidates do not self-select the type of artifacts to be included in their individual portfolios).
- › The portfolio assignment clearly aligns with NAEYC standards rather than focusing primarily on aspects of career or field experience preparation, such as proof of fingerprinting; the portfolio assignment has clear expectations for candidate performance that differentiate qualitatively between meeting and not meeting the NAEYC standards.
- › The portfolio includes only one set of candidate instructions rather than several individual assignment instructions packaged as one assessment. Instructions may be given to candidates at one time or in sections during the course.
- › The portfolio includes only one rubric (rather than the individual rubrics previously used to evaluate each artifact); the same rubric is used by all faculty teaching the assessment to evaluate candidate performance related to the NAEYC standards. The rubric may be given to candidates at one time or in sections during the course but is a single rubric, not a collection of rubrics individual to each artifact.
- › The portfolio rubric is not a checklist of included versus not included portfolio components/artifacts or a rubric that is used only by field experience supervisors or candidates instead of by faculty.

- › The portfolio assignment provides the program with useful information regarding candidate performance related to the NAEYC standards that can be used to improve teaching and learning related to the standards.
- › If the portfolio is a large, comprehensive assignment that evaluates multiple standards, these standards are also evaluated in other key assessments.

Guidance on Reviewing Programs' Data Collection, Analysis, and Use

Collecting and analyzing candidate performance data in relation to the standards is an important part of self-study for programs beginning the accreditation process and is critical for accredited programs as part of their continual improvement journey. Any questions or concerns related to data collection, analysis, or use that emerge from the peer review team's reading of the Self-Study Report should be discussed with the program during the site visit. Areas that are still unclear or that remain a concern after discussion with the program should be noted in the Peer Review Report.

Reviewing Candidate Performance Data

Programs are required to submit data on candidate performance related to the standards. For programs seeking first-time accreditation, one application of data per standard must be submitted. For programs seeking renewal, two applications of data per standard must be submitted.

The Commission strongly encourages programs to collect and report candidate performance data by key element, but this is not a requirement at this time.

Programs are encouraged to report data in the format that best meets their program's needs. For example, programs may choose to combine columns from their rubrics (e.g., combining both "Met" and "Exceeded" columns from rubrics into "Met" for data tables) when compiling data, or may choose to report these separately. Headers do not need to read "Not Met" or "Met"; however, it should be clear which columns show candidate performance that met the standard and which columns show candidate performance that did not meet the standard.

If an institution is seeking accreditation for multiple programs, data tables should either be replicated for each program or should clearly differentiate the various programs within individual cells; data need to be disaggregated by program.

Data charts/tables should

- › Indicate the date(s) of the application(s) of data included in the chart
- › Disaggregate the data by application date
- › Disaggregate the data by program if more than one program has been submitted for accreditation
- › Indicate from which key assessment(s) the data is pulled
- › Account for data from all key assessments that measure a particular standard; if a standard is measured by more than one key assessment, the program has the option to aggregate data from all key assessments measuring that standard or to disaggregate the data by key assessment
- › Include the number and percentage of candidates who performed at each level of candidate performance included in the rubric
- › Indicate clearly which levels of performance are considered to have met and not met the standard(s)

Reviewing Responses to the Data Analysis Questions in the Self-Study Report

In the Self-Study Report template, programs are asked to respond to two data analysis questions for each standard. Below are some prompts to help guide your team's review of the programs' responses in the template, as well as during the interview questions on-site.

Data analysis question 1: How are degree candidates performing with regard to the key elements of Standard [X]? Briefly describe each program's data results across all key assessments designed to measure Standard [X].

- › In the program's response, did they note where they saw positive or negative results and provide an explanation for what might be causing these results?
- › If the program is using more than one key assessment to measure a particular standard, did they note whether there are differences in candidate performance between the key assessments and provide an explanation for what might be causing these differences?

Data analysis question 2: How is the program using (or how does the program intend to use) the data from Standard [X] to improve teaching and learning related to the standard?

- › Who meets to review data from the key assessments, and how often do they meet?
- › Did the program indicate any changes they might make (or have made) to their course content or field experiences based on the program's analysis?
- › Did the program indicate whether changes to their assessments are needed for this standard?
- › Did the program reflect on what the results of the data indicate (i.e., whether they need to provide more learning opportunities for this standard, or whether these learning opportunities or assessments may need to come earlier or later in the program)?

Guidance on Reviewing Standard 7

Field/clinical experiences are at the heart of every effective educator preparation program. Candidates prepared in NAEYC-accredited programs must have a strong grounding in the knowledge and application of the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs so that they can work effectively with young children and colleagues in their current and future workplaces. Standard 7 affirms the importance of accredited programs providing multiple opportunities for candidates to observe and practice with a variety of age groups within the birth-to-8 age range and across several types of early learning settings.

Of note, Standard 7 does not require a set number of field experience hours. However, programs are expected to provide field experiences that offer candidates meaningful opportunities to observe and practice with the age groups and settings outlined in the standard.

Programs Must Be Evaluated on the Full Breadth And Depth Of Standard 7, Not Just The Key Elements

Reviewers should evaluate programs on the full breadth and depth of Standard 7. While meeting the key elements of Standard 7 is important, the standard addresses more than just whether programs are offering field experiences across age groups and settings. The Self-Study Report template has a section on Standard 7 where programs complete a field experience chart; through narrative, the program must address the indicators of field

experience quality found in the full standards rationale, including how programs select, plan, and sequence field experiences; support mentor/supervising teachers; and develop partnerships with field experience settings. During the site visit, programs may share additional evidence of meeting this standard.

Focus on Educational Programs

In order for a field experience to count toward meeting Key Element 7a or 7b, the primary purpose must be educational, not recreational or custodial. For example, NAEYC-accredited early learning programs may be assumed to be primarily educational. After-school settings whose primary purpose is educational most often have a curriculum that is readily identifiable.

Adjustment to the Categories of Settings in Key Element 7b

The Commission considered the many questions and concerns raised by programs about offering field experiences in at least two of the three settings listed in the original Key Element 7b. Given how the early childhood landscape has evolved since the current standards were published, the Commission will allow the following flexibility in meeting 7b (a notice of this was issued to programs as “Guidance on Standard 7” in fall 2017):

- There are now four categories of settings: early school grades (kindergarten through third grade), early learning and care centers, home-based early learning and care programs, and Head Start (or equivalent) programs. Previously, early learning and care centers and home-based early learning and care programs were considered one setting. Given the differences in administrative structure between the two, they represent two distinct settings and will now be treated as such in the accreditation system. Programs must ensure that all candidates have field experiences in at least two of the four settings.
- Within the Head Start (or equivalent) setting, the Commission will consider equivalent settings that have a similar mission and structure to Head Start, such as state-funded programs for low-income families. In order to be considered equivalent, these settings must (a) be majority publicly funded, (b) have a mission similar to Head Start, (c) have similar requirements for staff qualifications and credentials, and (d) offer comprehensive services to the young children and families they serve, including services for early learning, health, and family well-being.

Field Experiences Offered Outside of the Settings in Key Element 7b

Field experiences offered outside of the settings listed in Key Element 7b can be a valuable part of a preparation program, and programs are encouraged to continue to offer them. While these settings, such as zoos and museums, will not count toward meeting Key Element 7b, they may count toward meeting Key Element 7a, provided the experiences in these settings focus on working with young children within the specified age groups and are primarily educational in purpose. The focus of the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs is preparing individuals for the early childhood educator profession. While graduates of accredited programs pursue employment in a multitude of settings in the early childhood field, the standards are meant to ensure that graduates entering the early childhood educator profession have knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to working with young children in the most common early learning settings (as named in Key Element 7b).

Field Experiences Offered in after-School Programs

Programs are encouraged to thoroughly describe the context of after-school field placements in the narrative section of Standard 7 in the Self-Study Report.

- › A field experience offered in an after-school program that is primarily educational (see above) may count toward meeting the 5- to 8-year-old age group in Key Element 7a, provided the experience focuses on observation and/or practice with children in that age group, even if older children are also present.
- › If the educational after-school program operates in a physical setting that functions as an early school grades setting during the day, the field experience may also count toward meeting Key Element 7b as an early school grades setting.



Field Experiences Offered in Public Pre-K Programs in Elementary School Settings

A field experience offered in a public pre-K setting may count toward meeting the 3- to 5-year-old age group in Key Element 7a. Depending on how the pre-K program is administered in the elementary school, the field experience may be considered an early learning and care center setting, Head Start (or equivalent), or an early school grades setting for the purpose of meeting Key Element 7b. Programs will make this determination based on whether the pre-K setting is managed by the administrative leadership in the elementary school as part of the larger school community or as a separate entity that simply shares a building with the elementary school. Other considerations might include whether administrative leaders in the school building have early childhood credentials and experience.

Programs are encouraged to contact NAEYC staff if further clarification is needed around which category is the best match for a particular setting; a classroom cannot simultaneously be categorized as more than one early childhood setting, though it could be possible for two early childhood settings to exist in the same building.

Field Experiences of Transfer Candidates

Early childhood baccalaureate degree programs that have formal articulation agreements with early childhood associate degree programs have flexibility to consider whether field experiences that candidates bring from those associate degree programs count as part of the field experience requirements of the baccalaureate program. However, the baccalaureate program is required to ensure that all candidates—those who begin at the baccalaureate institution and those who transfer into the institution—have field experiences that meet Standard 7 by the time of program completion.



Typical Issues and Condition Statements Identified by the Commission

The following are typical issues that the Commission finds when reviewing programs seeking first-time or renewal accreditation. This list is not exhaustive but rather is a list of the most common issues and associated condition statements. Keeping these issues in mind when reviewing a program can help guide the information your team includes in its Peer Review Report.

Typical Issue	Typical Condition Statement ¹
Issues Related to Alignment to Standards	
Key elements of a standard are not being assessed (this is seen across multiple standards, and/or multiple elements of a standard are missing in the key assessments—although the depth and breadth of the standard is met). In some cases, the program might believe the key element is included but is not measuring this key element accurately.	Revise or create key assessments (student instructions and rubrics) for Standard X to demonstrate explicit alignment with the depth and breadth of the standard, and to meet the cognitive demands and skill requirements congruent with the standard.
The key assessment(s) measuring a standard does address the key elements of a standard but is not addressing the full breadth and depth as described in the rationale for the standard, or the requirements for “met” are not at a level expected by the standard.	
The key assessment is a portfolio assignment and only includes previously evaluated artifacts (i.e., it is not measuring something new) related to the standard(s)—or has other challenges addressed in NAEYC’s portfolio guidance.	

¹Condition statements are given to programs for which the Commission has identified a significant concern(s). Programs have two annual report cycles to meet the condition.

Typical Issue	Typical Condition Statement ¹
Issues Related to Rubric Quality	
<p>The rubric(s) of a key assessment contain primarily quantitative, not qualitative, descriptors for levels of student performance.</p>	<p>Revise all rubrics [or identify applicable rubrics measuring specific standards] so they provide objective and qualitative distinctions between levels of student performance expected with regard to each standard they are designed to assess.</p>
<p>The rubrics do not clearly define and/or distinguish student performance levels between “met” and “not met.” (In some cases, the language under multiple rubric columns may be too similar to make a distinction between “met” and “not met.” In other cases, the scoring guide may look like a rubric but function more like a checklist, without adequate description of what is meant at the different performance levels.)</p>	
Issues Related to Rubric Quality	
<p>There is significant clustering of key elements of multiple standards in the same rubric row within a key assessment(s).</p>	<p>Revise key assessments (student instructions and rubrics) for Standard(s) X to demonstrate explicit alignment with the depth and breadth of the standard(s), and to meet the cognitive demands and skill requirements congruent with the standard.</p>
Issues Related to Data Collection and Analysis	
<p>Data from key assessments are not disaggregated by standard, application, and/or program.</p>	<p>Provide at least one application of data disaggregated by standard, application, and/or by program.</p>
<p>For first-time programs, the program did not provide one application of data for one or more standard(s). For renewal programs, the program did not provide two applications of data for one or more standard(s).</p>	
<p>The data analysis does not describe how faculty are consistently using data to improve teaching and learning in relation to the standard.</p>	<p>Provide evidence that the program is consistently analyzing and using data related to the standards to improve teaching and learning.</p>
Miscellaneous Issues	
<p>A key assessment is offered in an elective course or a key assessment isn’t being given in all sections of a required course.</p>	<p>Provide evidence that all students in [name of program] are required to complete Key Assessment X.</p>
<p>The key assessment is (or appears to be) a group project.</p>	<p>Revise or create a new key assessment to ensure that individual student performance in relation to the standard is evaluated.</p>

Completing the Peer Reviewer Worksheet

Prior to the site visit but after reading the Self-Study Report, each reviewer should complete the Peer Reviewer Worksheet, which can be found in your team's online community space, to document your initial impressions and areas that need clarification. The team chair will confirm how far in advance of the visit your team members should plan to have the individual worksheets completed, based on the chair's plans for compiling the team members' worksheets; the team chair will also confirm the preferred style of sharing responses (e.g., posting individual documents in the online community space or commenting individually on a shared Google Doc).

Your thoughtful impressions will form the basis of a productive team meeting on Sunday evening. Most likely, some of your initial questions and concerns will be answered through conversation with your teammates, while others will be shared across the team; your team's remaining questions can be posed to the program coordinator and others during the visit. (New questions may emerge through this conversation as well.)

There is no need to feel nervous about documenting your first impressions—the worksheet won't be shared with the program, and there are no right or wrong comments. Focus on blocking off time before the visit, according to the timeline established by the chair, to document your impressions. If you have questions about how to complete the worksheet, feel free to post those on your team's online discussion space. Keep in mind that in many cases questions may arise due to confusing or incomplete information in the Self-Study Report, in which case you can document these questions within the worksheet for your team to discuss when you arrive on site. To make the transition from worksheet to report more efficient, we recommend that reviewers note on their worksheet the specific Self-Study Report page numbers where evidence was found or questions arose.



Conducting the Site Visit

Clothing Recommendations for Site Visits

In response to questions from reviewers about what clothing to pack for various site visit activities, NAEYC staff have compiled these recommendations as a guide. In almost all cases, it is not necessary to purchase new clothing prior to a site visit. When in doubt about particular clothing choices, please feel free to contact NAEYC staff.

Appropriate for all visit activities	Possibly appropriate for all visit activities	Appropriate for evening team meetings (but not for interactions with program faculty, community stakeholders, etc.)	Best not to pack
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Office-appropriate shirts, blouses, and tops › Office-appropriate sweaters and blazers › Dress pants, mid-length skirts, and dresses › Neckties or scarves if preferred (not required) › Professional-looking footwear that is comfortable for walking › Peer reviewer badge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Suits may be fine on some visits for reviewers who prefer them, but they are not necessary › However, on some visits, suits may be perceived by the program as overly formal. If in doubt about the particular campus context, feel free to consult with the team chair and/or NAEYC staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Jeans, khakis, and capri-length pants that are neat and clean › T-shirts, casual collared shirts, and casual sweaters that are neat and clean › Sneakers that are neat and clean › Anything deemed “appropriate for all visit activities”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Clothing or footwear that is faded, frayed, ripped, or stained. › Clothing that is revealing in terms of showing undergarments or skin, including shorts › Shirts with writing/messages › Clothing whose tightness or bagginess could distract others from visit activities › Footwear that is uncomfortable for walking › Limit or avoid perfume, cologne, or other scents, as team members working in close contact may have chemical sensitivities

Expectations Related to Site Visit Host Hospitality

NAEYC’s Higher Education Self-Study and Site Visit Manual includes a section that guides programs on preparing to address the reviewer team’s needs on campus—it notes what you’ll need (like water and basic office supplies) and describes other information, such as parking arrangements and online access codes, that is necessary for you to be able to conduct your review.

As noted elsewhere in this Peer Reviewer Manual, peer reviewers are reimbursed for meal expenses after the visit. Typically, reviewers either purchase their lunches from on-campus dining if there is a suitable option available, or the program may provide menus from nearby lunch spots and handle pickup/delivery (using payment provided by reviewers, for later reimbursement by NAEYC) while the reviewers are conducting morning visit activities.

NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct notes that Peer Reviewers may not request or accept any compensation whatsoever, nor any gifts of substance (e.g., briefcases, tickets to athletic or entertainment events) from the institution being reviewed or anyone affiliated with the institution. While the giving of small tokens (e.g., coffee mugs, key chains, elaborate snacks in the team workroom) is important in some institutional cultures, peer reviewers should not expect this form of hospitality at all institutions—and should be cautious about using or displaying college-branded items after the visit, as it could inadvertently lead to a breach of confidentiality. If unsure, the peer reviewer should err on the side of declining gifts of any kind.

Typical Site Visit Schedule

Site visits should follow the official schedule or an NAEYC-approved variation. The local context of your program, class and faculty schedules, the field experience sites where candidates are placed, and the questions raised by the peer review team may influence the details. Please do not shorten, add, or skip activities. Any changes to the standard site visit schedule must be approved by NAEYC. Peer review team chairs should submit the site visit schedule to NAEYC as far in advance as possible, no later than four weeks before the start of the visit.

Please remember that these activities are conducted to gather evidence related to accreditation standards and criteria, and there may not be enough time to visit every outstanding field site or classroom beyond those that can provide unique information that will contribute to the accreditation decision.

The following is the standard site visit schedule, beginning on Monday morning with a campus tour. An alternative schedule is also available when a Monday morning program coordinator interview is preferred over an introductory tour. The program contact and team chair will decide which schedule is preferred.

Day 1: Sunday

Team Travel | Private Dinner and Team Meeting

Review worksheets and synthesize questions and concerns related to accreditation criteria and standards. **Group these questions into inquiry themes to share in the morning meeting with program coordinator. These questions will guide the site visit. Finalize team member roles: who conducts which interviews, observes which sites, etc.**

Day 2: Monday

8:30–9 AM

Team is introduced to the program via a tour of the campus and institutional resources. Tour may be led by program coordinator and/or others.

9:30–10:30 AM

Initial meeting with program coordinator to share the themes of inquiry: What are the team's initial questions and concerns related to accreditation standards and criteria?

11 AM–12 PM

Team may split up to

- Visit classes in session and browse course websites
- Tour additional campus/institutional resources (or take a deeper look at resources that were included in the general tour)
- Review additional program documents
- Visit field sites described in the Self-Study Report

12:30–1:30 PM

Team has a private lunch.

2–3 PM

Team meets with candidates (without the program coordinator or administrators).

3:30–4:30 PM

Team meets with faculty, including those that are full time, part time, and field experience supervisors (without the program coordinator or administrators).

5–8 PM

Team has a private dinner meeting to update its findings and plan the next day's questions.

Day 3: Tuesday

8:30 – 9:30 AM

Second meeting with program coordinator to review progress on themes of inquiry: Which questions have been answered? Which remain? Did new questions arise?

10 AM –12 PM

Team may split up to

- Visit classes in session and browse course websites
- Tour additional campus/institutional resources (or take a deeper look at resources that were included in the general tour)
- Review additional program documents
- Visit field sites described in the Self-Study Report

12:30–1:30 PM

Team has a private lunch.

2–3 PM

Team meets with administrators (without the program coordinator).

3:30–4:30 PM

Team meets with community stakeholders (without the program coordinator or administrators).

5–8 PM

Team has a private dinner meeting to make final notes on its findings for the Peer Review Report.

Day 4: Wednesday

8–9:30 AM

Team has a private breakfast meeting to prepare exit report.

10–11 AM

Team presents their Exit Report (30–60 minutes) to the program coordinator and other invited stakeholders, giving a verbal summary of overall themes of team findings related to accreditation criteria and standards.

AFTERNOON

Team travel.

Tips for a Successful Site Visit

- 1.** Remember the spirit of friendly inquiry that led you to become a peer reviewer. When in doubt, choose a path that is supportive and strengths-based over one that could unintentionally drift toward consulting or trying to “fix” another program to make it look more like one with which you are familiar. The site visit and commission process should remain focused on accreditation standards and criteria and be guided by NAEYC’s Code of Ethical Conduct. It is your job to engage in evidence-based inquiry and discovery.
- 2.** Consider the specific context of your visit:
 - › Expectations around data are different for renewal (two applications) vs. first-time (one application) programs.
 - › Some first-time programs have support and mentoring within their state. Others are pioneering NAEYC accreditation.
 - › Some renewal programs have been actively engaged for the past seven years; others may have had faculty transitions and/or not realized that the system and expectations have evolved more quickly than their assessments.
- 3.** If alignment between a key assessment and a standard/key element isn’t apparent, ask a program to “Tell me more about . . .” how this assessment provides evidence, or where else to look for evidence. This can be a supportive, strengths-based way to seek additional information. Sometimes the evidence is there, but it just wasn’t described fully in the Self-Study Report or was presented in an innovative way. Sometimes the evidence isn’t there. In those cases, “Tell me more about . . .” questions will prevent surprises in the exit report and in the Peer Review Report.
- 4.** Consider institutional and team culture, and remember that you are conducting a peer review and are therefore interacting with your professional peers as equals.
 - › Keep in mind that for some programs and administrators, reviewers are the only faces of NAEYC that they see.
 - › Remind yourself that like you, your teammates have volunteered their time away from professional and personal responsibilities to serve a cause we all believe in.
 - › Be aware of your word choice and the tone in which your words are delivered—in person and electronically—as well as your body language, clothing, and other ways you can show respect for an institution’s culture while helping forge a positive culture within the team.

5. Remember that strong programs are responsive and intentional—they know their communities, actively engage their stakeholders, and are responsive to specific contexts. You are trying to learn more about how the program does this. Strong programs also take risks and experiment with innovative practices within the framework of a sound professional knowledge base, a code of ethical conduct, and professional standards. This program is not supposed to be like yours or like anyone else's. Unique or innovative approaches that fit the program's context are strengths. And finally, remember that strong programs engage in continuous reflection and improvement, and therefore benefit from change during self-study. They have likely changed during the months between writing the Self-Study Report and your visit as well, and that's okay.
6. Peer reviewers should not have dinner with or socialize with representatives of the site you are evaluating. You may need to ask some difficult questions during the visit or deliver a difficult exit report on the last day. You were assigned to this program because you do not have personal relationships that would pose a conflict of interest. It is important to maintain professional distance and avoid building friendships that could pose a conflict of interest during the visit. Instead, follow up on potential friendships at the next NAEYC conference.

Examples of Additional Evidence Your Team May Review On-Site

During a site visit, additional documentation may be shared with your team by the program as evidence to support their Self-Study Report. When reviewing documents that are not part of the Self-Study Report, it is important to capture what was seen by your team in the Peer Review Report. Remember that your team is serving as the eyes and ears of the Commission, and being detailed about the evidence seen on-site helps ensure a fully informed accreditation decision.

Examples of support documentation may include the following (please note that these are examples, not a list of required documentation):

Program Context

Criterion 1: Mission and Role in Community

- › Flyers and/or photos of candidates' involvement in the community
- › Flyers for student services on campus
- › Copy of the institutional catalogue (saved to desktop if it is only in digital form)
- › Copy of mission statement and support if it is published in many forms (digital, print, etc.)

Criterion 2: Conceptual Framework

Samples of where the conceptual framework is written:

- › Student copies, syllabi, photos of informative bulletin boards that display the conceptual framework, photos of candidates' work related to the conceptual framework
- › Conceptual Framework graphic and how all stakeholders can identify it
- › Documents tying conceptual framework to coursework

Criterion 3: Program(s) of Study

- › Catalogue
- › Procedures on how to apply for graduation
- › Course credit information
- › Admission requirement (provide all links)
- › Transfer agreements

Criterion 4: Quality of Teaching

- › Syllabi and other course documents that illustrate the indicators of strength for this standard
- › Evidence of faculty knowledge about and experience with diverse populations
- › Samples of course evaluations and how these are used

Criterion 5: Role in Supporting the Education Career Pathway

- › List of relevant high schools, community colleges, and/or four-year colleges and universities and graduate programs with which the program actively partners
- › Articulation agreements, letters of support, and other documents that reflect partnerships and cross-institutional initiatives
- › Documentation provided to prospective candidates about where their credentials fit with program requirements
- › Candidate advising materials related to next steps after graduation
- › Data that shows candidates continuing on the educational pathway

Criterion 6: Qualifications and Characteristics of Candidates

Documentation that answers the question “Who are your candidates?”

- › Bio pages on candidates
- › Demographics of candidates
- › TEACH Scholarship and demographic support
- › ECE club happenings
- › ECE candidates receiving scholarships
- › Samples of ECE candidates presenting at local conferences
- › Samples of candidates being involved in the community

Criterion 7: Advising and Supporting Candidates

- › Brochures, step plans, academic planning guides used
- › Any form used by staff, advising, etc., to document candidates’ growth and development
- › Samples of retention plans
- › Documentation of support systems throughout the institution (e.g., food pantry, help lines, referral services, child care, transportation assistance)

Criterion 8: Qualifications and Composition of Faculty

- › Faculty résumés
- › Documentation to support that faculty knows and practices the NAEYC Code of Ethics
- › A list of committees, organizations, conferences that faculty attended and participate in
- › Samples of job postings, interview process
- › Documentation of how faculty are evaluated on teaching, scholarship, and service, consistent with the institution’s mission

Criterion 9: Professional Responsibilities

- › Support of community involvement (e.g., brochures, flyers, photos)
- › Copies of contract, job descriptions
- › Support of faculty participating on the institution level
- › Meeting notes
- › Meeting agendas
- › Samples of curriculum rewrites

Criterion 10: Professional Development

- › List of professional development experiences with dates
- › Opportunities for institutional support

Criterion 11: Program Organization and Guidance

- › Advisory meeting agenda, notes, and sign-in sheets supporting faculty attendance
- › Documentation of institution-wide meetings in which faculty participate
- › Documentation on how faculty are involved in evaluation of courses and decision making
- › Copy of institution's mission statement and ECE program mission statement

Criterion 12: Program Resources

- › Photos or tour of resource room filled with materials for faculty to use in classroom
- › List of resource items
- › Copy of program budget

Learning Opportunities

Learning opportunities are a key indicator of capacity to address the standards throughout the program, even (or especially) in cases when the review finds that work is still needed on refining assessment measures. And the site visit is an important opportunity to bring the learning opportunities to “life” in a way that goes beyond the chart in the written report. Therefore, it is helpful in the resource room to have other learning opportunities displayed besides the key assessments, such as photos of group work, samples of papers, photos of candidate-designed classrooms, or bulletin boards. During the team's field site visits and classroom observations, it is also helpful to be mindful of opportunities to highlight some of the different learning opportunities they'll encounter.

Key Assessments and Data/Use

Of course, the key assessments themselves (instructions to candidates + rubrics) are included in the Self-Study Report. During the site visit, it is helpful to have available a few examples of graded key assessments—anonymous, without candidate names. It is especially helpful if the examples reflect different levels of candidate performance in relation to the standards.

The program will want to have available any additional new data that have been collected since submission of the Self-Study Report. The program will also want to provide documentation of how the data are used to improve teaching and learning in relation to the standards.

Standard 7: Field Experiences

- › Agreements between the program and the field experience setting
- › Materials used to orient and support mentor/supervising teachers and administrators
- › Materials used to orient and support candidates while in field experiences
- › Documents showing that the after-school program's primary purpose is educational (providing academic support and enrichment services), if after-school settings are being used to document evidence toward meeting Key Element 7b
- › Candidate observation and evaluation tools
- › The system used to track candidates' field experiences
- › Evidence about the quality of the field experience site, such as its QRIS rating, NAEYC accreditation, etc.
- › Evidence showing that Head Start field placements aren't available (due to distance or the unwillingness of the Head Start setting to accept candidates from the program), if the program wants to count Head Start equivalent settings toward meeting Key Element 7b
- › Evidence showing how the mission, funding, staff qualifications, and services offered by a field setting are similar to Head Start, if the program wants to count the setting as a Head Start equivalent for purposes of meeting Key Element 7b
- › Ways in which the program supplements field experiences when high-quality experiences are not available
- › Interviews with faculty, candidates, cooperating teachers, and other supervisors

Tips for conducting meaningful team meetings

At each team meeting, you have two main agenda items: to discuss which standards and criteria need further inquiry and to check if you are well prepared for what comes next in your visit schedule. If you have interviews ahead, what questions do you need to ask? If you have observations or document reviews next, what are you looking for? Meaningful team meetings are the key to having an efficient, pleasant, and valuable visit—and a good night's sleep.

Share the Responsibility

The purpose of the team meeting is to reflect on evidence related to the NAEYC standards and criteria that you have gathered so far and determine areas in need of further inquiry. Look to your team chair for leadership, but be prepared to share responsibility for keeping the team on task.

Keep Ethical Conduct in Mind at all Times

Team meetings should not be conducted in restaurants, open areas of the hotel where the team is staying, or other public places. It is very possible that someone nearby will be affiliated with the college you are discussing—as a board member, employee, candidate, or family member of an employee or candidate. Higher education institutions have strong community roots.

Maintain professional ethics at all times, even in private team meetings. If a team member drifts into sarcastic or disrespectful comments about the program, redirect the meeting and make a note of this later in your peer evaluations. If your own frustration or exhaustion is getting the better of you, take a short break. When you return, take responsibility for helping lead a more efficient and focused meeting.

Use Scheduled Time Wisely

The site visit schedule includes 30-minute breaks between each event—you may sometimes need to use them as team meetings, but your work will be much more effective and pleasant if you use scheduled team meetings efficiently and take breaks during these windows. Take a walk, have a cup of tea, hang out in the bookstore or library, or check in at home or at the office. When you conduct focused team meetings during scheduled meeting times, you can use scheduled breaks to meet your personal needs.

At the end of the day, enjoy a meal together, conduct an efficient team meeting after dinner, and then get some rest. Just as breaks are best used for personal needs, team meeting times should be used for team work, not as an opportunity to socialize or to catch up on unrelated work.

Sunday Team Meeting

Your site visit begins on Sunday evening. Your team will have communicated online before your arrival, but you may be meeting other team members face-to-face for the first time. It is important to arrive in time to have dinner together—without representatives from the site—so that you can get to know a bit about each other and begin to connect as colleagues. You will be spending the next few days together, working hard. It is important to relax and enjoy a meal together each evening. But keep an eye on the clock—you will need to meet for at least an hour after dinner most nights.

After dinner, your team leader will facilitate your first meeting. All team members should be prepared and have the program Self-Study Report, NAEYC standards, and completed Peer Reviewer Worksheets/Rubrics.

At this first meeting, you will share your initial worksheet comments. Some criteria and standards may be strongly supported in the Self-Study Report, while others may be unclear, or the report alone may not provide adequate evidence of strength. These items need more evidence to be evaluated and will be the focus of inquiry during your visit. As you review your worksheets, jot down some questions for each of the groups you will interview—faculty, candidates, alumni, administrators, and community stakeholders. Check your schedule—which of these groups do you meet with on Monday? Draft questions for those meetings first.

By the time you adjourn on Sunday evening, your team will have completed two tasks: (1) You should have reached team consensus on criteria and standards that are strongly supported in the report and on themes for inquiry during your visit. You will share these with the program coordinator during your first meeting on Monday morning. (2) You should have used your

worksheet notes to draft questions seeking more evidence related to areas of concern and expanding areas of strength or innovative practice for each of your Monday interviews.

Monday Team Meetings

The Monday night meeting is very important. You are at the halfway point of your site visit, and open questions must be answered tomorrow. The Monday night meeting should move quickly through areas that the team sees as strengths. Your team should have gathered the information needed during the day's interviews to reach consensus on many of the criteria and standards that were unclear on Sunday. Tonight you decide how to use your final meetings and observations on Tuesday. What questions remain? Which criteria still warrant significant clarification? Which standards, key elements, or assessment components (rubrics, data, use of data) need more evidence before you can complete your worksheet rubric? These items must be the focus of your inquiry on Tuesday.

Tuesday Team Meetings

If necessary, use breakfast time to review and prepare for the day. Do you need to request additional documents or talk with someone again? It is unlikely that you will be able to bring back a full group from Monday, but you may be able to ask someone a follow-up question by phone. Do you need to make any changes in today's schedule? While you cannot eliminate any activities from the visit, at this point you may see that you need to prioritize one of them.

Check on your progress at midday. Make sure that all open areas of inquiry are completed by the afternoon. Confirm tomorrow morning's schedule with the program coordinator. When is the exit session? Will you have time for a team meeting tomorrow morning?

By the end of your Tuesday evening team meeting, you should have the rough draft of a complete team report. Check again to make sure that your comments on strengths and areas for improvement connect to the areas identified in the Self-Study Report. Remember that the program has worked hard on that report, so be respectful and ensure that your team plans to reference it during tomorrow's exit session.

Wednesday Team Meeting

If needed, make time for a final team meeting during or after breakfast, but before your exit session. Use it to finalize your plans. What are the main themes of your oral report? Who will present which sections? Does everyone have prepared notes? All comments should reflect team consensus.

Also ensure that your team has a plan for completing the written report. The team chair is responsible for submitting the Peer Review Report to NAEYC, but the work of completing the report should be shared among all team members, and all members should be able to submit a final copy of the report upon request should the team chair encounter an emergency.

Tips for Conducting Meaningful Interviews

The purpose of the site visit is to gather and reflect on information related to the NAEYC standards and criteria. Interviews with faculty, candidates, administrators, and community stakeholders are a very important part of the visit. The schedule includes designated times on Monday and Tuesday afternoons to meet with these individuals. The particular administrators and community stakeholders the program includes will depend on the program context (such as the administrative structure within the institution and the program's relationship with a community advisory board or other entities within the community). Here's a more detailed look at meeting participants.

- › Faculty meeting: Should include full-time and part-time faculty members, but not the program coordinator.
- › Administrator meeting: Attendees vary based on context and program preference, but may include deans, provosts, presidents, and others in leadership roles within the institution.
- › Candidate meeting: The program is encouraged to include candidates at various stages in their programs.
- › Community stakeholders' meeting: If the program has a community advisory board, that group may form the heart of the program's invitation list for this meeting. When inviting participants, all programs are also encouraged to think about sites where candidates complete field experiences, higher education partners from other institutions, and other ways the program experiences "community."

Technology can often be helpful in enabling participation from individuals with distance or scheduling challenges. Particularly if a program has multiple campuses or candidates who enroll in an online program option, it is important for the team to hear perspectives from individuals who experience the program's physical or virtual sites away from the main campus. Often, peer review teams don't have room in their schedule to travel to distant sites, and technology may allow greater participation levels from individuals connected with these sites. The team chair will work with the program coordinator in advance of the visit to think about how to maximize participation in the program's particular context.

Outside of the formal meetings identified on the site visit schedule, the team should welcome informal opportunities to talk with individuals during field site and classroom observations. However, certain visit activities—such as meetings between the program coordinator and team or the exit session (for faculty and administrators to learn the team’s findings)—do not present an opportunity for candidate/community involvement. When your team chair is finalizing the visit schedule with the program coordinator, they should feel free to discuss particular questions that come up, as informed by your team’s reading of the Self-Study Report.

Prepare Skillful Questions in Advance

Your team will want to prepare questions that get people talking about the program, the community, the candidates, the faculty, the learning opportunities, and the key assessments. Just as you do back home, plan ahead but be flexible in the moment. Always open with brief introductions and an explanation of your purpose. Decide in advance who will ask which questions, and in what order. Take turns leading the interviews. It helps the program to see that all team members have a voice, so resist the temptation to have only the chair or more experienced members participate in group settings.

The questions you ask during interviews are driven by the questions you generated during your team meetings. Your initial questions are developed from your worksheets. Keep them grounded in the accreditation process and standards. Use indicators of strength and the accreditation handbook to make sure that your expectations are appropriate. Remember, this program does not need to meet the requirements of your state, your institution, your personal philosophy, or the conceptual framework of your own program. It does need to meet accreditation expectations and to develop its strengths using its own framework and resources.

Focus less on direct yes or no questions and more on open-ended questions such as those listed in the following section. These lists are not exhaustive, and it isn’t necessary to ask all of these questions; use the suggestions as a guide for the type of questions to ask and the tone in which to ask them.

When drafting the Peer Review Report, capturing direct quotes from stakeholders can be a great way to provide strengths-based information about the program, which is both helpful to the Commission and validating to the program. Keep this in mind as you take notes during interviews.

Examples of Interview Questions to Ask During the Site Visit

Interviews with Degree Candidates

- › Are you familiar with the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct? Where did you learn about it? Can you give some examples of times you have referred to it in your coursework or field experiences?
- › What has been your favorite assignment in the early childhood program so far?
- › Where in the program have you learned about working with families?
- › What are some of the challenges you've encountered along your education pathway? How have faculty members helped you succeed?
- › What do you know about NAEYC accreditation?
- › What is one word that captures your learning at [institution name]?
- › What have you learned about advocacy at [institution name]?
- › What are you learning from your field experiences?
- › What do you see as strengths of this program and what might you change if you were in charge?

Interviews with Faculty

- › What is your favorite course to teach?
- › The Self-Study Report says that this course uses Key Assessment [X]. Have you used that assessment yet? How well is it working? What parts of this assignment seem the most challenging? Are you considering making any revisions to that assessment? In the rubric, can you help me understand what is meant by _____?
- › What is your vision for the early childhood education program? What are your ideas for how to further develop the program in the future?
- › How has the program included candidates in the self-study work and/or the accreditation process?
- › What kinds of professional development opportunities do faculty have at [institution name]?
- › How were you involved in the development of the key assessments?
- › How do you feel you are given the opportunity to have an active voice in the program?
- › How are you involved in analyzing candidate performance data related to the NAEYC standards?
- › What are some of the learning opportunities that you feel have worked really well?
- › What do the candidates seem to do well on?

Interviews with Administrators

- › How does the early childhood program fit into the mission and identity of the college?
- › What do you see as the program's value to the college? To the community?
- › How does the program compare to other programs or to the institutional goals/norms in the areas of candidate enrollment, budget, candidate-to-full-time-faculty ratios, full-time-to-part-time-faculty ratios, and faculty advising loads?
- › What is the campus-wide approach to technology and distance learning?
- › What is the college's structure for candidate advising and other candidate support services?
- › If there is a campus children's center or lab school, how does it support the college's mission?

Lead the Tone of the Interview, but not the Answers

The people you interview will probably want to tell you wonderful things about the program. You will need to guide the interview, but you can include some warm-up time and design some questions that allow the program stakeholders to tell their stories. Avoid giving positive and negative reactions. Instead of commenting "Good" or "That's great," use neutral responses, like "Can you tell me more about that?" "Tell me more about. . ." is also a helpful way to guide programs to look closely at their key assessments— and sometimes results in self-realizations about their challenges.

Avoid leading questions. Instead of asking candidates, "Do the faculty support you or just leave you out in the cold?" ask, "Was there ever a time that you felt overwhelmed in this program? Where did you find support?"

The team chair will help to ensure the interview starts on time; everyone on the team can contribute to ensuring it occupies the full time allotted (without extending the time). Sometimes, participants may have many stories to share, or the team will have many questions based on the Self-Study Report, and it won't be hard at all to fill a full hour of productive conversation. Other times, the Self-Study Report may have been so clearly written that the team might not need a full hour's worth of additional information to complete particular sections of the report. In these cases, using "Tell me more about . . ." to elicit unique program strengths or initiatives can help strengthen those sections of the report while making sure the program feels heard. When busy individuals have cleared their calendars and possibly traveled a considerable distance to attend, using the full hour allotted for these interviews is one way to convey that their perspective is valued.

Tips for Conducting Meaningful Observations

Share the Responsibility

Your team chair is the primary liaison between the team and the program, and the program coordinator is the primary representative of the program. However, you will all need to work together closely to get the most from your observations of the campuses, field sites, and classes in action.

At times, the team may need to split up in order to complete all observations. You may decide to have each member observe a different field site, a different campus, or different classes. As always, use your worksheet/rubric to determine which criteria and standards are items of concern or clarification.

Remember that observations are sources of evidence for specific criteria and for learning opportunities related to accreditation standards. Here are a few examples:

- › Observing classes, including online or other distance learning sections when applicable, can provide evidence for Criteria 4: Quality of Teaching, as well as Learning Opportunities
- › Observing field sites that are selected as representative of the report can provide evidence for Standard 7: Field Experiences as well as Learning Opportunities
- › Touring campuses with a focus on candidate and faculty support services can provide evidence for Criteria 7: Advising and Supporting Candidates, and Criteria 12: Program Resources



Tips for Handling Concerns in the Self-Study Report and During the Site Visit

It is important to express your concerns during the reading of the Self-Study Report, interviews, or observations in language that is specific and objective. Draw connections to NAEYC accreditation materials. For example, if you think a program's key assessments are not adequately addressing the depth and breadth of a particular standard, check to be sure your expectations are in line with the supporting explanation of that standard (in the 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs), and cite the specific area of the standard for which your team has not seen evidence.

Refer to specific sources of evidence from the report or the visit when you identify a significant concern. For example, if your team is concerned that the Self-Study Report described a key assessment being used consistently in a particular course, and during an interview a faculty member who teaches that course was not able to discuss her experiences with the assessment rubric, cite the interview as objective evidence for this concern. Remember the guiding principle of transparency. It's okay to inform the faculty member being interviewed that the report described this assessment as being in place for this course. It's also okay to tell the program coordinator that interviews have not indicated active use of key assessments across all sections of a course, as described in the Self-Study Report. Allow the coordinator or faculty member to provide clarification or to update information. Document those responses.

Always share concerns in your morning meetings with the program coordinator. The findings from your Wednesday exit session and in your written report should not be a surprise. Remind the coordinator that your role is to gather evidence, not to make an accreditation decision, nor to make the final decision on whether a standard is met or not met. The program may dispute your report by submitting a Written Response to correct anything they feel is inaccurate. Put your concerns on the table early on so that you can be confident the program was given ample opportunity during your visit to provide accurate clarifying information related to any concerns.

Sample Exit Report Template

On the final morning of the site visit, your team will provide a verbal exit report to the program faculty and administrators summarizing your findings. The following is a sample exit report that includes details related to one specific program. To use it as a template, replace details to suit the specifics of the program you are visiting. Ideally, all members of the team should play a part in the exit meeting. For challenging visits, the team chair should be the one to present the team findings on the standards section.

Sample exit report

Good morning! It is good to see you again. As you know, I am [name], chair of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation peer review team, and I am here with my colleagues, [name] and [name]. We have spent two and a half very informative days at [name of program].

Note: If the college is pursuing accreditation for more than one early childhood degree program, name both programs here.

Many thanks to

- The institution for being a forerunner in the accreditation process and supporting the program for pursuing the process.
- Note: If this is a renewal program, this is a good time to acknowledge their work over the past 7+ years.
- The program coordinator and the department for their hard work in the self-study process.
- The college for the pleasant accommodations, and [name of support staff] for their hospitality toward the peer review team.

We would like to review what the team has been doing over the past few days.

The team has read the program's Self-Study Report and examined the evidence. We have interviewed candidates, faculty, administrators, and community stakeholders. We have visited one field site with community partners [name of field site] and toured the [other field site]. We have toured the campus to observe the resources [college] provides for its candidates, including speaking with many of the employees who provide support services. We've learned about the population of candidates that [college] serves. We saw first-hand the candidate engagement and interactive learning taking place in [name of program] courses on this campus.

As a reminder, our job here is fact-finding and reporting the results of our findings, and we do not make the final accreditation decision. The visit is intended to be transparent, evidence based, and conducted in the spirit of inquiry between peers. Program faculty, community stakeholders, candidates, and administration representatives have responded to our many questions and have been active participants in the dialogue and exploration process.

The team's written report will review each criterion and standard, noting evidence gathered during our visit. We will affirm strengths and identify areas for improvement with special attention to the evidence that the program provided in the Self-Study Report and the on-site visit. The report will comment on

- program approaches to documenting learning opportunities
- developing and using key assessments
- collecting performance data from the key assessments
- the use of data to improve teaching and learning in relation to each of the six competency-based standards
- program approaches to field experiences

Although the criteria in Part 1 of the Self-Study Report are critical in establishing the context in which learning occurs, the methods used to document and evaluate how learning occurred in relation to the six competency-based standards and one programmatic standard are essential.

Our findings related to program context:

Several context criteria represent strengths at [name of program].

[Identify 3–5 specific strengths related to the criteria. Cite which criterion each strength relates to. Feel free to quote from interviews when describing program strengths.]

[Identify 1–5 challenges related to the criteria. Ideally, these would be challenges that the program self-identified in the Self-Study Report, and the team can express support for the program's/college's efforts in addressing these challenges. Hopefully these will not come as a surprise at the end of the team's time on campus. The Exit Report is a chance to ensure the challenges won't be surprising when they appear in the Peer Review Report.]

One of the special aspects of peer review visits is the opportunity to hear personal testimonials from the community where the early childhood program resides. Some themes that ran through the interviews can be recalled through a few examples.

Note: Feel free to include examples of positive/supportive comments from community stakeholders, candidates, administrators, and faculty.

Our findings related to accreditation standards:

Self-study required the program to identify learning opportunities—various ways of assessing candidates' learning centered on six competency-based standards and one programmatic standard set forth by NAEYC. These seven standards are related to

- Promoting Child Development and Learning
- Building Family and Community Relationships
- Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
- Using Developmentally Effective Approaches
- Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum
- Becoming a Professional
- Early Childhood Field Experiences

The accomplishment of meeting these standards is measured by identifying five or six key assessments from which data can be collected to demonstrate candidate outcomes, inform program effectiveness, and act as the basis for future program improvements, as well as demonstrating the program provides adequate field experience opportunities for candidates to observe and practice with varied age groups in varied settings.

After reviewing all evidence the team found that **[list findings]**.

Sample language for findings: The program provides candidates with strong learning opportunities that are aligned with all six competency based standards. The team identified concerns related to the key assessments and their alignment to the key elements of Standards 2 and 6, as well as to the clarity of performance expectations within the rubrics. The team also identified concerns related to the program's system for data collection and analysis, finding that the program has begun the process of developing a plan for data collection, but significant work is needed.

These are the next steps. The team will write a Peer Review Report and submit it to NAEYC with our findings. The team does not make the accreditation decision; we gather evidence that supports, affirms, and/or validates the written Self-Study Report. The program will receive a copy of the report from NAEYC by the end of the semester and will have a chance to respond within a time frame specified by NAEYC. The Peer Review Report, the program's Written Response, and the Self-Study Report will be reviewed by the Commission, which will make the decision regarding accreditation of the program.

Note: If the college is pursuing accreditation for more than one early childhood degree program, mention that each program will receive an accreditation decision from the Commission.

(If this was a first-time visit, share the following.)

Based on review of these multiple documents, the Commission will make one of three accreditation decisions:

- Accredited—This program substantially meets the seven accreditation standards. It provides adequate opportunities for candidates to learn and practice the competencies reflected in the standards. Assessments or assessment

plans, including rubrics or other scoring guides, appear adequate in providing an accurate picture of candidates' growth and competence in relation to the accreditation standards. The program is collecting data that provides evidence of candidate performance in relation to the accreditation standards or has a plan and clear potential to collect data. In response to candidate needs, the program uses this evidence to improve the program or has specific plans to use this evidence. It has addressed each of the accreditation criterion to at least an acceptable level.

- Accredited with Conditions—Significant areas for improvement have been identified with respect to the accreditation standards. Other notable strengths in the program indicate that improvement in these areas is possible within two years and can be effectively documented in Annual Reports. The program is publicly listed as Accredited during the two-year term.
- Not Accredited—The program does not substantially meet all accreditation standards. Multiple concerns exist across key components, including but not limited to capacity and plans for assessment of candidate performance. The program has the right to appeal a decision of "Not Accredited." The program may choose to return to self-study work and repeat the Self-Study Report and site visit process.

(If this was a renewal visit, share the following.)

Based on review of these multiple documents, the Commission will make one of three accreditation decisions:

- Accredited—This program substantially meets the seven accreditation standards. It provides adequate opportunities for candidates to learn and practice the competencies reflected in the standards. Assessments, including rubrics or other

scoring guides, appear adequate in providing an accurate picture of candidates' growth and competence in relation to the accreditation standards. The program is collecting data that provides evidence of candidate performance in relation to the accreditation standards. In response to candidate needs, the program uses this evidence to improve the program. It has addressed each of the accreditation criterion to at least an acceptable level.

- Accredited with Conditions— Significant areas for improvement have been identified with respect to the accreditation standards. Other notable strengths in the program indicate that improvement in these areas is possible within two years and can be effectively documented in Annual Reports. The program is publicly listed as Accredited during the two-year term.
- Accredited with Probation—An accredited program is notified of probation status when a Commission review of evidence indicates that the program may no longer meet accreditation standards.

Note: If many significant concerns were identified during the visit, feel free to

highlight that the “Accreditation with Probation” decision exists as a safeguard to ensure that an accredited program, which has already demonstrated strength in meeting the standards in a previous review cycle, would never lose its accreditation through a single decision.

The accreditation decision will be communicated to the program within the semester that follows this visit.

It has been a special privilege to be on campus this week. The team is very appreciative of your hospitality and full participation in this process. Please extend our thanks to those who are not here for this meeting. We would like to close with some words we heard during our visit. Note: consider concluding with an upbeat quote from during the visit, or other positive note.

At this point, allow the program to ask questions. The most common question is “when will we hear from the Commission?” For fall visits, they'll receive their Peer Review Report by the end of the fall semester and have 30 days to prepare their response; then their Self-Study Report, the Peer Review Report, and their response will be shared with the Commission; the Commission's decision will be relayed by the end of the spring semester. For spring visits, programs will receive their Peer Review Report by the end of the spring semester and have 30 days to prepare their response; then their Self-Study Report, the Peer Review Report, and their response will be shared with the Commission; the Commission's decision will be relayed by the end of the summer.



Report Writing Guidance

Tips for Collaborating on Report Writing

For reviewers who are not serving as team chair, supporting your team chair in finalizing the Peer Review Report is one of the best ways you can demonstrate the collaborative spirit that has guided the entire process thus far. This means that before you leave campus, each team member should have

- › A shared understanding of who will complete which next steps, and on what timeline. (Some teams depart campus with the report close to final form; others have a bit more work to do, often depending on the degree of challenge encountered during the visit.)
- › An electronic copy of the report in its latest form. Many teams like to use Google Docs for collaborative editing; others prefer Microsoft Word for formatting consistency. Most important is that all team members can access the latest version of the report— in order to continue their work in finalizing it and as protection for any unfortunate “life happens”/“technology happens” glitches after the team’s departure from campus.

Once you return home to the professional and personal responsibilities you put on hold during the site visit, it can be challenging to remain as engaged in the online community space as you were when you were first perusing the Self-Study Report and confirming your travel to the program site. But your engagement at this stage is just as crucial! The Commission depends heavily on the Peer Review Report to reach an accreditation decision, and the team chair depends heavily on the full team for compiling the report—especially since each team member participated in a unique combination of classroom and field site observations and other experiences on campus. Please continue to help your team chair feel supported through the process of finalizing the draft report for NAEYC and while responding to NAEYC feedback. Also, please hold on to all materials until the program has received an accreditation decision (typically the semester following the visit) in case there is an appeal, in which case the team’s materials may be needed. Once the program has received an accreditation decision and the appeals deadline has passed, all team members should shred and delete any files associated with the review.

Style Guide

Capitalization

- › Self-Study Report
- › the self-study process/a program that is in self-study
- › Peer Review Report
- › peer review team/peer reviewers
- › NAEYC Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs (on first use, write out the full name)
- › the Commission/Commissioners (after the full name has already been used)
- › Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation system (no acronyms)
- › program coordinator/primary contact/secondary contact/dean/president
- › Annual Report, Contact Information Update Form, Annual Update Form, Decision Report, Written Response
- › online community (not Basecamp)
- › Standard 1 / Criterion 6 / Criteria 1-3 / Key Assessment 4 / Key Element 3a (note: no # is included before standard, criterion, or key assessment numbers)
- › the standards / the criteria / the key assessments / the eligibility requirements / the key elements
- › 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs
- › accreditation handbook

Types of Programs

- › associate's degree
- › bachelor's degree
- › master's degree
- › associate degree program(s)
- › baccalaureate program(s)
- › renewed accreditation/renewal status

Punctuation

- › Use the serial comma (the comma before “and” in a list of three or more items)
- › Commas and periods go inside quotation marks.
- › Periods go outside parentheses, unless the whole sentence is in parentheses. For example: The program enjoys a strong relationship with several local childcare centers serving English language learners (Self-Study Report, p. 15).

Other

- › these data were (plural)
- › “Page” may be abbreviated as “p.” and “pages” as “pp.”
- › “applications” of data (rather than “rounds,” “semesters,” etc.)
- › Please follow APA style for areas not addressed above



Peer Review Report Self-Assessment

Prior to submitting your team’s Peer Review Report, you are encouraged to self-review the report for the following attributes. This will help reduce the need for follow-up communication between the team and NAEYC staff.

Standards	Met	Not Met
Check marks in grid match comments for each section		
Rationale provides specific information and refers to page numbers in the Self-Study Report		
Comments are within the scope of work		
Comments are related to standards—and criteria, when appropriate.		
Comments about data and use of data related to standards are specific to the standards		
Comments:		
Criteria	Met	Not Met
There is a relationship between identified strengths and weakness and the Self-Study Report, where appropriate		
Rationale provides specific information and refers to page numbers in the Self-Study Report		
Comments are within the scope of work		

Criteria (continued)	Met	Not Met
Comments are related to criteria—and standards, when appropriate—to connect key assessments and data used to improve the program		
Comments:		
Overall Report	Met	Not Met
Is clear, well written, and requires few edits		
Provides clear and appropriate examples		
Comments:		

Sample Peer Review Report Excerpt

Reviewer Comments for Standard 1 Ratings

Key assessments submitted for this standard:

Key Assessment 1: Child Case Study

Key Assessment 2: Curriculum Planning

Comments on Learning Opportunities to Support Key Elements:

Learning opportunities throughout the program are aligned with key elements of NAEYC standards, particularly with regard to developmentally appropriate practice (Self-Study Report, pp. [page numbers]). During visits to field sites and interviews with stakeholders, it was apparent that the program’s pre-service teachers had been provided with effective learning opportunities related to Standard 1. During interviews, one candidate commented [quote], while a field experience supervisor noted that [quote].

Comments on Key Assessments Related to Key Elements:

In Key Assessment 1, candidates [description of activity]. The program indicates alignment with Key Elements 1a and 1c; while the team did see clear alignment with 1a, we did not see clear alignment with 1c (Self-Study Report, p. [page numbers]).

In Key Assessment 2, candidates [description of activity], demonstrating alignment with Key Element 1b (Self-Study Report, p. XX). However, while Key Element 1b is included in the instructions to candidates, it is not explicitly included in the rubric for this key assessment.

After reviewing all evidence provided, the team found that the instructions and rubrics were not explicitly aligned with the key elements of Standard 1 in a way that would yield meaningful data for program improvement related to the full depth and breadth of the standard. However, by the end of the visit, the program had already begun work on revising the assessments and had scheduled a meeting with the college's assessment coordinator.

Comments on Data Related to Candidate Performance:

At the time of the spring 2017 site visit, no data were provided related to candidate performance for Standard 1. Formal data have not yet been collected using these key assessments (Self-Study Report, pp. XX). The Self-Study Report indicates that the program plans to collect data in fall 2017; the program confirmed this during the visit and shared they will be using [software program] to facilitate this, but they do not yet have a more detailed written data collection plan.

Comments on Use of Candidate Performance Data:

At the time of the Self-Study Report, no use of data was described related to candidate performance for Standard 1. However, during the site visit, the program shared examples of how data from institutional assessment efforts related to regional accreditation had been used to improve teaching and learning within the program. The program has already scheduled a meeting with their institutional research department to plan how they can expand upon this process to include analyzing program assessment data related to the NAEYC standards beginning in fall 2017.



Appendix



Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment

Revised April 2005

A position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Endorsed by the Association for Childhood Education International

Adopted by the National Association for Family Child Care

Preamble

NAEYC recognizes that those who work with young children face many daily decisions that have moral and ethical implications. The **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct** offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood care and education. The **Statement of Commitment** is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgement of an individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education.

The primary focus of the Code is on daily practice with children and their families in programs for children from birth through 8 years of age, such as infant/toddler programs, preschool and prekindergarten programs, child care centers, hospital and child life settings, family child care homes, kindergartens, and primary classrooms. When the issues involve young children, then these provisions also apply to specialists who do not work directly with children, including program administrators, parent educators, early childhood adult educators, and officials with responsibility for program monitoring and licensing. (Note: See also the "Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators," online at www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/ethics04.pdf.)

Core values

Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education are based on commitment to the following core values that are deeply rooted in the history of the field of early childhood care and education. We have made a commitment to

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture,* community, and society
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague)
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect

* The term *culture* includes ethnicity, racial identity, economic level, family structure, language, and religious and political beliefs, which profoundly influence each child's development and relationship to the world.

Conceptual framework

The Code sets forth a framework of professional responsibilities in four sections. Each section addresses an area of professional relationships: (1) with children, (2) with families, (3) among colleagues, and (4) with the community and society. Each section includes an introduction to the primary responsibilities of the early childhood practitioner in that context. The introduction is followed by a set of ideals (I) that reflect exemplary professional practice and by a set of principles (P) describing practices that are required, prohibited, or permitted.

The **ideals** reflect the aspirations of practitioners. The **principles** guide conduct and assist practitioners in resolving ethical dilemmas.* Both ideals and principles are intended to direct practitioners to those questions which, when responsibly answered, can provide the basis for conscientious decision making. While the Code provides specific direction for addressing some ethical dilemmas, many others will require the practitioner to combine the guidance of the Code with professional judgment.

The ideals and principles in this Code present a shared framework of professional responsibility that affirms our commitment to the core values of our field. The Code publicly acknowledges the responsibilities that we in the field have assumed, and in so doing supports ethical behavior in our work. Practitioners who face situations with ethical dimensions are urged to seek guidance in the applicable parts of this Code and in the spirit that informs the whole.

Often “the right answer”—the best ethical course of action to take—is not obvious. There may be no readily apparent, positive way to handle a situation. When one important value contradicts another, we face an ethical dilemma. When we face a dilemma, it is our professional responsibility to consult the Code and all relevant parties to find the most ethical resolution.

Section I

Ethical Responsibilities to Children

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in settings that are safe,

healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child. We are committed to supporting children’s development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We are also committed to promoting children’s self-awareness, competence, self-worth, resiliency, and physical well-being.

Ideals

- I-1.1**—To be familiar with the knowledge base of early childhood care and education and to stay informed through continuing education and training.
- I-1.2**—To base program practices upon current knowledge and research in the field of early childhood education, child development, and related disciplines, as well as on particular knowledge of each child.
- I-1.3**—To recognize and respect the unique qualities, abilities, and potential of each child.
- I-1.4**—To appreciate the vulnerability of children and their dependence on adults.
- I-1.5**—To create and maintain safe and healthy settings that foster children’s social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development and that respect their dignity and their contributions.
- I-1.6**—To use assessment instruments and strategies that are appropriate for the children to be assessed, that are used only for the purposes for which they were designed, and that have the potential to benefit children.
- I-1.7**—To use assessment information to understand and support children’s development and learning, to support instruction, and to identify children who may need additional services.
- I-1.8**—To support the right of each child to play and learn in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of children with and without disabilities.
- I-1.9**—To advocate for and ensure that all children, including those with special needs, have access to the support services needed to be successful.
- I-1.10**—To ensure that each child’s culture, language, ethnicity, and family structure are recognized and valued in the program.
- I-1.11**—To provide all children with experiences in a language that they know, as well as support children in maintaining the use of their home language and in learning English.
- I-1.12**—To work with families to provide a safe and smooth transition as children and families move from one program to the next.

* There is not necessarily a corresponding principle for each ideal.

Principles

P-1.1—Above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are emotionally damaging, physically harmful, disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, or intimidating to children. This principle has precedence over all others in this Code.

P-1.2—We shall care for and educate children in positive emotional and social environments that are cognitively stimulating and that support each child's culture, language, ethnicity, and family structure.

P-1.3—We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programs or activities on the basis of their sex, race, national origin, religious beliefs, medical condition, disability, or the marital status/family structure, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs or other affiliations of their families. (Aspects of this principle do not apply in programs that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children.)

P-1.4—We shall involve all those with relevant knowledge (including families and staff) in decisions concerning a child, as appropriate, ensuring confidentiality of sensitive information.

P-1.5—We shall use appropriate assessment systems, which include multiple sources of information, to provide information on children's learning and development.

P-1.6—We shall strive to ensure that decisions such as those related to enrollment, retention, or assignment to special education services, will be based on multiple sources of information and will never be based on a single assessment, such as a test score or a single observation.

P-1.7—We shall strive to build individual relationships with each child; make individualized adaptations in teaching strategies, learning environments, and curricula; and consult with the family so that each child benefits from the program. If after such efforts have been exhausted, the current placement does not meet a child's needs, or the child is seriously jeopardizing the ability of other children to benefit from the program, we shall collaborate with the child's family and appropriate specialists to determine the additional services needed and/or the placement option(s) most likely to ensure the child's success. (Aspects of this principle may not apply in programs that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children.)

P-1.8—We shall be familiar with the risk factors for and symptoms of child abuse and neglect, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse and physical, emotional, educational, and medical neglect. We shall know and follow state laws and community procedures that protect children against abuse and neglect.

P-1.9—When we have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, we shall report it to the appropriate community agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When appropriate, parents or guardians will be informed that the referral will be or has been made.

P-1.10—When another person tells us of his or her suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, we shall assist that person in taking appropriate action in order to protect the child.

P-1.11—When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of children, we have an ethical responsibility to protect children or inform parents and/or others who can.

Section II

Ethical Responsibilities to Families

Families* are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's well-being, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development.

Ideals

I-2.1—To be familiar with the knowledge base related to working effectively with families and to stay informed through continuing education and training.

I-2.2—To develop relationships of mutual trust and create partnerships with the families we serve.

I-2.3—To welcome all family members and encourage them to participate in the program.

* The term *family* may include those adults, besides parents, with the responsibility of being involved in educating, nurturing, and advocating for the child.

I-2.4—To listen to families, acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies, and learn from families as we support them in their task of nurturing children.

I-2.5—To respect the dignity and preferences of each family and to make an effort to learn about its structure, culture, language, customs, and beliefs.

I-2.6—To acknowledge families' childrearing values and their right to make decisions for their children.

I-2.7—To share information about each child's education and development with families and to help them understand and appreciate the current knowledge base of the early childhood profession.

I-2.8—To help family members enhance their understanding of their children and support the continuing development of their skills as parents.

I-2.9—To participate in building support networks for families by providing them with opportunities to interact with program staff, other families, community resources, and professional services.

Principles

P-2.1—We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or program setting unless access is denied by court order or other legal restriction.

P-2.2—We shall inform families of program philosophy, policies, curriculum, assessment system, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do—which should be in accordance with our ethical responsibilities to children (see Section I).

P-2.3—We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions.

P-2.4—We shall involve the family in significant decisions affecting their child.

P-2.5—We shall make every effort to communicate effectively with all families in a language that they understand. We shall use community resources for translation and interpretation when we do not have sufficient resources in our own programs.

P-2.6—As families share information with us about their children and families, we shall consider this information to plan and implement the program.

P-2.7—We shall inform families about the nature and purpose of the program's child assessments and how data about their child will be used.

P-2.8—We shall treat child assessment information confidentially and share this information only when there is a legitimate need for it.

P-2.9—We shall inform the family of injuries and incidents involving their child, of risks such as exposures to communicable diseases that might result in infection, and of occurrences that might result in emotional stress.

P-2.10—Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent without penalty. We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education, development, or well-being of children.

P-2.11—We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children.

P-2.12—We shall develop written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. These policy documents shall be made available to all program personnel and families. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).

P-2.13—We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.

P-2.14—In cases where family members are in conflict with one another, we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party.

P-2.15—We shall be familiar with and appropriately refer families to community resources and professional support services. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been appropriately provided.

Section III

Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility to colleagues is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the workplace.

A—Responsibilities to co-workers

Ideals

- I-3A.1**—To establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, confidentiality, collaboration, and cooperation with co-workers.
- I-3A.2**—To share resources with co-workers, collaborating to ensure that the best possible early childhood care and education program is provided.
- I-3A.3**—To support co-workers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.
- I-3A.4**—To accord co-workers due recognition of professional achievement.

Principles

- P-3A.1**—We shall recognize the contributions of colleagues to our program and not participate in practices that diminish their reputations or impair their effectiveness in working with children and families.
- P-3A.2**—When we have concerns about the professional behavior of a co-worker, we shall first let that person know of our concern in a way that shows respect for personal dignity and for the diversity to be found among staff members, and then attempt to resolve the matter collegially and in a confidential manner.
- P-3A.3**—We shall exercise care in expressing views regarding the personal attributes or professional conduct of co-workers. Statements should be based on firsthand knowledge, not hearsay, and relevant to the interests of children and programs.
- P-3A.4**—We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against a co-worker because of sex, race, national origin, religious beliefs or other affiliations,

age, marital status/family structure, disability, or sexual orientation.

B—Responsibilities to employers

Ideals

- I-3B.1**—To assist the program in providing the highest quality of service.
- I-3B.2**—To do nothing that diminishes the reputation of the program in which we work unless it is violating laws and regulations designed to protect children or is violating the provisions of this Code.

Principles

- P-3B.1**—We shall follow all program policies. When we do not agree with program policies, we shall attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organization.
- P-3B.2**—We shall speak or act on behalf of an organization only when authorized. We shall take care to acknowledge when we are speaking for the organization and when we are expressing a personal judgment.
- P-3B.3**—We shall not violate laws or regulations designed to protect children and shall take appropriate action consistent with this Code when aware of such violations.
- P-3B.4**—If we have concerns about a colleague's behavior, and children's well-being is not at risk, we may address the concern with that individual. If children are at risk or the situation does not improve after it has been brought to the colleague's attention, we shall report the colleague's unethical or incompetent behavior to an appropriate authority.
- P-3B.5**—When we have a concern about circumstances or conditions that impact the quality of care and education within the program, we shall inform the program's administration or, when necessary, other appropriate authorities.

C—Responsibilities to employees

Ideals

- I-3C.1**—To promote safe and healthy working conditions and policies that foster mutual respect, cooperation, collaboration, competence, well-being, confidentiality, and self-esteem in staff members.

I-3C.2—To create and maintain a climate of trust and candor that will enable staff to speak and act in the best interests of children, families, and the field of early childhood care and education.

I-3C.3—To strive to secure adequate and equitable compensation (salary and benefits) for those who work with or on behalf of young children.

I-3C.4—To encourage and support continual development of employees in becoming more skilled and knowledgeable practitioners.

Principles

P-3C.1—In decisions concerning children and programs, we shall draw upon the education, training, experience, and expertise of staff members.

P-3C.2—We shall provide staff members with safe and supportive working conditions that honor confidences and permit them to carry out their responsibilities through fair performance evaluation, written grievance procedures, constructive feedback, and opportunities for continuing professional development and advancement.

P-3C.3—We shall develop and maintain comprehensive written personnel policies that define program standards. These policies shall be given to new staff members and shall be available and easily accessible for review by all staff members.

P-3C.4—We shall inform employees whose performance does not meet program expectations of areas of concern and, when possible, assist in improving their performance.

P-3C.5—We shall conduct employee dismissals for just cause, in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. We shall inform employees who are dismissed of the reasons for their termination. When a dismissal is for cause, justification must be based on evidence of inadequate or inappropriate behavior that is accurately documented, current, and available for the employee to review.

P-3C.6—In making evaluations and recommendations, we shall make judgments based on fact and relevant to the interests of children and programs.

P-3C.7—We shall make hiring, retention, termination, and promotion decisions based solely on a person's competence, record of accomplishment, ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position, and professional preparation specific to the developmental levels of children in his/her care.

P-3C.8—We shall not make hiring, retention, termination, and promotion decisions based on an individual's sex, race, national origin, religious beliefs or other affiliations, age, marital status/family structure, disability, or sexual orientation. We shall be familiar with and observe laws and regulations that pertain to employment discrimination. (Aspects of this principle do not apply to programs that have a lawful mandate to determine eligibility based on one or more of the criteria identified above.)

P-3C.9—We shall maintain confidentiality in dealing with issues related to an employee's job performance and shall respect an employee's right to privacy regarding personal issues.

Section IV

Ethical Responsibilities to Community and Society

Early childhood programs operate within the context of their immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet the diverse needs of families, to cooperate with agencies and professions that share the responsibility for children, to assist families in gaining access to those agencies and allied professionals, and to assist in the development of community programs that are needed but not currently available.

As individuals, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide the best possible programs of care and education for children and to conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity. Because of our specialized expertise in early childhood development and education and because the larger society shares responsibility for the welfare and protection of young children, we acknowledge a collective obligation to advocate for the best interests of children within early childhood programs and in the larger community and to serve as a voice for young children everywhere.

The ideals and principles in this section are presented to distinguish between those that pertain to the work of the individual early childhood educator and those that more typically are engaged in collectively on behalf of the best interests of children—with the understanding that individual early childhood educators have a shared responsibility for addressing the ideals and principles that are identified as “collective.”

Ideal (Individual)

I-4.1—To provide the community with high-quality early childhood care and education programs and services.

Ideals (Collective)

I-4.2—To promote cooperation among professionals and agencies and interdisciplinary collaboration among professions concerned with addressing issues in the health, education, and well-being of young children, their families, and their early childhood educators.

I-4.3—To work through education, research, and advocacy toward an environmentally safe world in which all children receive health care, food, and shelter; are nurtured; and live free from violence in their home and their communities.

I-4.4—To work through education, research, and advocacy toward a society in which all young children have access to high-quality early care and education programs.

I-4.5—To work to ensure that appropriate assessment systems, which include multiple sources of information, are used for purposes that benefit children.

I-4.6—To promote knowledge and understanding of young children and their needs. To work toward greater societal acknowledgment of children's rights and greater social acceptance of responsibility for the well-being of all children.

I-4.7—To support policies and laws that promote the well-being of children and families, and to work to change those that impair their well-being. To participate in developing policies and laws that are needed, and to cooperate with other individuals and groups in these efforts.

I-4.8—To further the professional development of the field of early childhood care and education and to strengthen its commitment to realizing its core values as reflected in this Code.

Principles (Individual)

P-4.1—We shall communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services that we provide.

P-4.2—We shall apply for, accept, and work in positions for which we are personally well-suited and professionally qualified. We shall not offer services that we

do not have the competence, qualifications, or resources to provide.

P-4.3—We shall carefully check references and shall not hire or recommend for employment any person whose competence, qualifications, or character makes him or her unsuited for the position.

P-4.4—We shall be objective and accurate in reporting the knowledge upon which we base our program practices.

P-4.5—We shall be knowledgeable about the appropriate use of assessment strategies and instruments and interpret results accurately to families.

P-4.6—We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that serve to protect the children in our programs and be vigilant in ensuring that these laws and regulations are followed.

P-4.7—When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of children, we have an ethical responsibility to protect children or inform parents and/or others who can.

P-4.8—We shall not participate in practices that are in violation of laws and regulations that protect the children in our programs.

P-4.9—When we have evidence that an early childhood program is violating laws or regulations protecting children, we shall report the violation to appropriate authorities who can be expected to remedy the situation.

P-4.10—When a program violates or requires its employees to violate this Code, it is permissible, after fair assessment of the evidence, to disclose the identity of that program.

Principles (Collective)

P-4.11—When policies are enacted for purposes that do not benefit children, we have a collective responsibility to work to change these practices.

P-4.12—When we have evidence that an agency that provides services intended to ensure children's well-being is failing to meet its obligations, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to report the problem to appropriate authorities or to the public. We shall be vigilant in our follow-up until the situation is resolved.

P-4.13—When a child protection agency fails to provide adequate protection for abused or neglected children, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to work toward the improvement of these services.

Glossary of Terms Related to Ethics

Code of Ethics. Defines the core values of the field and provides guidance for what professionals should do when they encounter conflicting obligations or responsibilities in their work.

Values. Qualities or principles that individuals believe to be desirable or worthwhile and that they prize for themselves, for others, and for the world in which they live.

Core Values. Commitments held by a profession that are consciously and knowingly embraced by its practitioners because they make a contribution to society. There is a difference between personal values and the core values of a profession.

Morality. Peoples' views of what is good, right, and proper; their beliefs about their obligations; and their ideas about how they should behave.

Ethics. The study of right and wrong, or duty and obligation, that involves critical reflection on morality and the ability to make choices between values and the examination of the moral dimensions of relationships.

Professional Ethics. The moral commitments of a profession that involve moral reflection that

extends and enhances the personal morality practitioners bring to their work, that concern actions of right and wrong in the workplace, and that help individuals resolve moral dilemmas they encounter in their work.

Ethical Responsibilities. Behaviors that one must or must not engage in. Ethical responsibilities are clear-cut and are spelled out in the Code of Ethical Conduct (for example, early childhood educators should never share confidential information about a child or family with a person who has no legitimate need for knowing).

Ethical Dilemma. A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities.

Sources for glossary terms and definitions

- Feeney, S., & N. Freeman. 1999. *Ethics and the early childhood educator: Using the NAEYC code*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Kidder, R.M. 1995. *How good people make tough choices: Resolving the dilemmas of ethical living*. New York: Fireside.
- Kipnis, K. 1987. How to discuss professional ethics. *Young Children* 42 (4): 26–30.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a nonprofit corporation, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, dedicated to acting on behalf of the needs and interests of young children. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (Code) has been developed in furtherance of NAEYC's nonprofit and tax exempt purposes. The information contained in the Code is intended to provide early childhood educators with guidelines for working with children from birth through age 8.

An individual's or program's use, reference to, or review of the Code does not guarantee compliance with NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Performance Criteria and program accreditation procedures. It is recommended that the Code be used as guidance in connection with implementation of the NAEYC Program Standards, but such use is not a substitute for diligent review and application of the NAEYC Program Standards.

NAEYC has taken reasonable measures to develop the Code in a fair, reasonable, open, unbiased, and objective

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NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct Revisions Workgroup

Mary Ambery, Ruth Ann Ball, James Clay, Julie Olsen Edwards, Harriet Egertson, Anthony Fair, Stephanie Feeney, Jana Fleming, Nancy Freeman, Marla Israel, Allison McKinnon, Evelyn Wright Moore, Eva Moravcik, Christina Lopez Morgan, Sarah Mulligan, Nila Rinehart, Betty Holston Smith, and Peter Pizzolongo, *NAEYC Staff*

Statement of Commitment*

As an individual who works with young children, I commit myself to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. To the best of my ability I will

- Never harm children.
- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- Respect colleagues in early childhood care and education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.
- Stay informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional.
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

* This Statement of Commitment is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgment of the individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education. It is recognition of the moral obligations that lead to an individual becoming part of the profession.

Code of Ethical Conduct

Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators

Adopted Spring 2004

**A Joint Position Statement Supplement of
the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC),
the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE), and
American Associate Degree Early Childhood Teacher Educators (ACCESS)**

Adopted by the National Association for Family Child Care

Early childhood educators who teach adults to work in early childhood settings are called upon to sustain different relationships and to balance the needs of a wider variety of clients than those who work directly with young children and their families. And as teacher educators fulfill their responsibilities to adult learners, they encounter some unique ethical challenges in the context of a complex network of relationships. The primary challenge is to find a balance between an obligation to support and nurture adult learners and the obligation to provide caring and competent professionals to work with young children and their families. While the existing NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is a valuable resource that addresses many of the ethical issues encountered by early childhood adult educators, it does not provide all of the guidance they need to address the ethical issues that arise in their work.

Through this Supplement to the Code of Ethical Conduct, NAEYC, NAECTE, and ACCESS hope to identify and explore the recurring ethical dilemmas faced by early childhood adult educators, and to reach some consensus about how they might best be addressed. This Supplement places primary emphasis on the ethical responsibilities and recurring ethical dilemmas that face early childhood teacher educators in two- and four-year degree-granting institutions. However, many of its provisions are also applicable to early childhood educators who provide nondegree training and

mentoring to adults in early childhood care and education settings.

Purpose of the Supplement

Like those who work with young children, early childhood adult educators are regularly called upon to make decisions of a moral and ethical nature. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct is a foundational document that maps the ethical dimensions of early childhood educators' work in early care and education programs. Adult educators share the ethical obligations assumed by all early childhood educators, reflected in the core values, ideals, and principles set forth in the NAEYC Code. **We embrace the central commitment of the field of early care and education to the healthy development and welfare of young children. Everything we do in our role as educators of adults is intended to further this ultimate commitment.**

Early childhood adult educators have ethical responsibilities beyond those spelled out in the NAEYC Code. They have responsibilities to adult students; institutions of higher learning and agencies that conduct training; the programs in which they place adult students and staff and clientele; professional colleagues; children and their families and community; and society and the field of early childhood care and education at large.

Core values

In addition to adhering to the core values spelled out in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, early childhood adult educators commit themselves to the following two core values:

- To respect the critical role of a knowledgeable, competent, and diverse early childhood care and education workforce in supporting the development and learning of young children.
- To base practice on current and accurate knowledge of the fields of early childhood education, child development, adult development and learning, as well as other relevant disciplines.

Conceptual framework

This document sets forth a conception of early childhood teacher educators' professional responsibilities in six sections that address arenas of professional relationships. The sections are (1) adult learners, (2) sites providing practicum experiences, (3) employing institutions of higher learning and agencies that provide training, (4) professional colleagues, (5) children and families, and (6) community, society, and the field of early care and education. The first three sections address those areas of responsibility unique to educators who work primarily with adults. Sections 4-6 spell out additional responsibilities of early childhood adult educators in areas addressed in the NAEYC Code. When there is a direct parallel in the NAEYC Code or a related principle or ideal, the Code is referenced after the Supplement item.

Ideals and principles

This Supplement to the NAEYC Code identifies additional ideals (aspirations) and principles (guides for conduct: definitions of practices that are required, prohibited, and permitted) that address the unique ethical responsibilities of early childhood adult educators. These ideals and principles were developed by analyzing adult educators' descriptions of recurring ethical dilemmas in their work. The goals and principles included in this Supplement are designed to inspire and guide early childhood adult educators toward actions that reflect the field's current understandings of their ethical responsibilities.

(*Note:* There is **not** a one-to-one correspondence between ideals and principles.)

1. Ethical responsibilities to adult learners

Our work is always guided by the core values of the field of early care and education, including our commitment to ensuring the welfare of children. From that perspective we prioritize the unique commitments of early childhood adult educators and acknowledge that our day-to-day responsibilities focus primarily on the professional development of adult learners.

Definitions

Early Childhood Adult Educator

A professional who teaches early childhood educators in an institution of higher education (includes adjunct faculty) and those who conduct not-for-credit training for the early care and education workforce.

Adult Learners

Adult learners, both preservice and inservice, who work in or are preparing to work in settings that provide care and education for young children from birth through 8 years of age.

Student

An adult learner who is gaining preservice or advanced education in the field of early childhood education and care through an educational institution.

Colleague

A fellow early childhood educator who teaches, trains, or mentors adult students in an institution of higher learning or who conducts not-for-credit training for the early education workforce. (*Note:* There are specific responsibilities to colleagues employed by one's own institution.)

Mentor

An experienced early childhood professional who works directly with both young children and practicum students in an early childhood program and who, in collaboration with an early childhood teacher educator, guides and counsels the students.

Ethics Supplement

Material that has been added to NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to provide further information and guidance about the ethical responsibilities of early childhood adult educators.

Ideals

- I-1.1 To continually update our own knowledge of the field of early care and education so that we are able to present current, well-grounded information to those we teach.
- I-1.2 To provide college students with a foundation in core content areas of early childhood education, including child development and its social contexts; child guidance; the design of safe, healthy learning environments; curriculum and assessment; work with families; work with children and families from diverse cultures; advocacy skills; and professionalism, including ethics.
- I-1.3 To provide adult learners with learning experiences based on principles of adult learning and consistent with the core values of early care and education, current knowledge, and best practices in the field.
- I-1.4 To present controversial material fairly, acknowledging the validity of contrasting perspectives and, when appropriate, identifying our own biases.
- I-1.5 To have high and reasonable expectations of learners.
- I-1.6 To fairly and equitably assess what adult students know and are able to do.
- I-1.7 To ensure that our programs serve diverse adult learners (including diversity in language, culture, race/ethnicity, and social class).
- I-1.8 To ensure that our programs are accessible to those with diverse needs (as to the times, location, format, and language of training).

Principles

- P-1.1 We shall provide learning experiences that are consistent with the best practices for adult learners and that match the needs, learning styles, cultures, and stages of development of adult learners.
- P-1.2 We shall inform learners of conduct and work expectations, including institutional standards for writing, performance, and intellectual honesty.
- P-1.3 We shall give learners a fair chance to succeed and diverse ways to demonstrate their competence.
- P-1.4 We shall provide additional support for adult learners who have the potential to work effectively with young children but have difficulty meeting academic standards.
- P-1.5 We shall provide additional support and counsel to those who demonstrate academic excellence while having difficulty in meeting standards for classroom practice.

- P-1.6 We shall inform those seeking training in early childhood education of current economic and social conditions affecting the field so that they may make an educated decision about career choices.
- P-1.7 We shall provide information about disparities between best practice and commonly accepted practice to better prepare students to face ongoing challenges related to their work with children.
- P-1.8 We shall not place students or allow students to continue in placements that, in our best professional judgment, are not beneficial to children.
- P-1.9 When it becomes apparent that a practicum placement is not supporting a student's professional development or is not beneficial to the student or children, every effort shall be made to move the student to a more appropriate placement.
- P-1.10 When it becomes apparent that an adult learner is not able to benefit from our training, class, or program, we shall help her/him identify an alternative educational path or goal.
- P-1.11 We shall honor confidentiality, sharing only necessary information about an adult learner, only to those who need to know, and only through appropriate professional channels.
- P-1.12 We shall make it clear at the outset if training involves the sale of products or services from which we stand to gain financially and will do this only if the products or services are relevant and serve educational goals.

2. Ethical responsibilities to practicum sites

Some knowledge and skills needed by early childhood educators can only be acquired through direct experience in early childhood settings. Therefore, early childhood adult educators rely heavily on placements in programs (practicum sites) in which students can apply what they have learned, get feedback from children and adults, and reflect on what they have learned from their experience.

Ideals

- I-2.1 To provide practicum experiences that will positively support the professional development of adult students.
- I-2.2 To foster collegial and collaborative working relationships with educators who work in practicum settings.
- I-2.3 To be respectful of the responsibilities, expertise, and perspective of practitioners who work with students in practicum settings.

I-2.4 To recognize the importance and contributions of practicum staff members in the professional development of our students.

Principles

P-2.1 We shall place students in settings where staff are qualified to work with young children, where mentors have experience and training in supporting adult learners, and which to the greatest extent possible reflect the diverse communities in which our students will be working.

P-2.2 We shall clearly state all parties' roles and responsibilities and prepare students, mentors, and administrators for practicum experiences. We shall provide appropriate support for all parties' efforts to fulfill their roles and meet program expectations.

P-2.3 When we have a concern about a program in which we place students, we shall address that concern with the classroom teacher or program administrator. (If the concerns relate to the health or safety of children, see the applicable sections of the NAEYC Code: P-1.11 and P-4.9-12.)

P-2.4 We shall ensure that qualified personnel conduct regular supervision of practicum experiences in order to support professional development of adult students and monitor the welfare of children.

P-2.5 We shall honor confidentiality and guard the privacy of the programs (teachers and clientele) in which we place students.

P-2.6 We shall teach adult students that they have a professional obligation to honor confidentiality and shall make every effort to ensure that they guard the privacy of the program, its teachers, and clientele.

3. Ethical obligations to institutions of higher learning and agencies providing training

Our primary responsibility to our employers is the development of knowledge and skill in adult learners. This work is intended to further our ultimate commitment to the welfare and development of young children. (Section III-B of the NAEYC Code provides the foundation for the additional commitments for adult educators listed below.)

Ideals

I-3.1 To assist the institutions and agencies for whom we work in providing the highest quality of educational programs for adult learners. (NAEYC Code I-3B.1)

Principles

P-3.1 We shall respect the integrity of courses by following approved course descriptions.

P-3.2 We shall evaluate our adult learners fairly, using those standards that are congruent with the mission of our institution and regarded as accepted practice in the field.

P-3.3 We shall offer training and instruction only in areas in which we have or can obtain appropriate experience and expertise. (NAEYC Code P-4.2)

P-3.4 We shall, when our involvement with a student involves more than one role (e.g., instructor, employer, supervisor), keep these roles separate. We shall make decisions, recommendations, and give feedback appropriate to the different contexts.

4. Ethical responsibilities regarding colleagues

The work of the early childhood adult educator involves interaction and collaboration with colleagues. Our professional responsibility to colleagues is to maintain positive and productive working relationships. (Section III-A of the NAEYC Code provides the foundation for the additional commitments for adult educators listed below.)

Ideals

I-4.1 To be collegial to and supportive of early childhood coworkers in our own and other institutions. (NAEYC Code I-3A.1-4)

I-4.2 To serve as mentors to junior faculty and novice adult educators.

Principles

P-4.1 When an adult learner comes to us with concerns about a colleague's competence, fairness, ethics, or accuracy, we will give the learner support in clarifying his or her concerns and in deciding and following through on a course of action to address the problem.

P-4.2 When we have concerns regarding a colleague's competence, fairness, ethics, or accuracy, we will *first* express our concerns to that colleague. (NAEYC Code P-3A.2)

P-4.3 When a colleague appears unwilling or unable to address problems, we will express our opinions about his or her competence through official channels such as performance evaluation.

P-4.4 We shall honor confidentiality and share information about colleagues in appropriate institutional

settings. We shall not share information about colleagues in the community or with students.

5. Ethical responsibilities to children and families

Because those we train have a direct impact on children's lives, early childhood adult educators have some additional responsibilities to children and families above and beyond what is set forth in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

Ideals

- I-5.1 To support the development of competent and caring professionals to work with young children and their families.
- I-5.2 To provide a diverse workforce that reflects the linguistic, racial/ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds of the children served in early childhood programs and their communities.
- I-5.3 To speak out against practices that are unjust or harmful to young children and their families.

Principles

- P-5.1 We shall make the welfare of children the deciding factor in our decisions regarding our work with adult learners. We shall not participate in or overlook practices (in our students, colleagues, institutions, agencies, or practicum settings) that are harmful to children. **This principle has precedence over all others in this Supplement.** (NAEYC Code P-1.1)
- P-5.2 We shall provide sound educational experiences for those we teach that enable them to understand and provide for the optimal development of children and support for their families.
- P-5.3 We shall not allow a student to complete a program if we have direct evidence that he/she may endanger children's physical or psychological well being.
- P-5.4 We shall not allow a student to pass a course or move to the next level of the profession if he/she has not demonstrated expected levels of knowledge and competence in course content or if he/she does not demonstrate the ability to relate positively and effectively with children and families.
- P-5.5 We shall build into all required training minimum required levels of participation and demonstrations of understanding and competence.
- P-5.6 When we have made a concerted effort to work with a student, and the student still does not demon-

strate the intellectual, physical, or social-emotional capacity to work effectively with children and families, we shall make every effort to counsel the student out of the field.

- P-5.7 We shall use the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct to assist adult learners in making sound decisions concerning their work with children and families.

6. Ethical responsibilities to community, society, and the field of early childhood education

Early childhood adult educators have extensive knowledge, expertise, and education and often have a profound impact on the field of early childhood education in their communities. Because of this leadership role they have responsibilities to community, society, and the field of early childhood education above and beyond what is expected of those who work in programs serving young children.

Ideals

- I-6.1 To train caring and competent teachers who will provide safe and nurturing care and education for young children and be supportive of their families.
- I-6.2 To prepare students to work successfully in and to respect the culture of the communities in which they are placed.
- I-6.3 To continue to grow and learn and to base practice on the best current knowledge available.
- I-6.4 To encourage the developing professionalism of the adult learners with whom we work.
- I-6.5 To make other professionals, the public, and policy makers aware of the importance of the early years and the positive impact on society of high-quality early childhood programs staffed by well-trained early childhood professionals.
- I-6.6 To strengthen and expand the knowledge base of early childhood education.
- I-6.7 To advocate on behalf of children, families, high-quality programs and services for children, and professional development for the early childhood workforce.
- I-6.8 To conduct research that reflects the experiences of children from diverse language, racial/ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Principles

- P-6.1 We shall be accurate and truthful when we provide recommendations and serve as references for

individuals seeking admission to programs, applying for certification, or seeking employment.

P-6.2 In our role as early care and education experts, we shall base recommendations on our informed and unbiased professional opinion. We shall exercise caution before recommending commercial products or services.

P-6.3 When asked to provide an informed opinion on issues/practices, we shall make every effort to support children and families by basing our statements on

current child development and early childhood education research.

P-6.4 We shall help adult learners learn to interpret and communicate assessment information in ways that convey the strengths of children and the limitations of the evaluation instruments.

P-6.5 We shall ensure that research we conduct appropriately reflects the diversity of the population upon whom its results may have future impact.

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NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation System Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Code of Conduct Agreement

The integrity of the NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation system depends in part upon the conduct of the Peer Reviewers who conduct site visits and the Commissioners who make accreditation decisions. In signing this agreement, Peer Reviewers and Commissioners agree to avoid conflicts of interest and preserve confidentiality as part of our responsibility to the colleges and public that we serve. Peer Reviewers and Commissioners are expected to read, understand, and agree to adhere to all the policies set forth in this document.

A. Conflicts of Interest

Peer Reviewers and Commissioners agree to conduct themselves in a manner which seeks to avoid a conflict of interest or any appearance of a conflict of interest. Peer Reviewer and Commissioner conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to: residing or working in the same state as the institution under review; being a current or pending employee, student or consultant to the institution under review; being a former employee, student or consultant to the institution under review (within the past 10 years); having family members at the institution under review; having a personal relationship with the faculty at the program under review; or having applied for a position at the program under review. Commissioner conflicts of interest may also include serving on the review team for the program under review.

If a Peer Reviewer or Commissioner is uncertain about whether a conflict of interest exists, the individual will describe in the situation in writing to staff. Staff, on behalf of the Commission, will review the written statement, and issue a ruling as to whether the matter in question creates a real or perceived conflict of interest.

B. Confidentiality

Peer Reviewers and Commissioners agree to keep confidential any and all information from or about the program they are asked to review. They will not share information obtained through documents, interviews, or discussions related to the peer review site visit or accreditation decision. All the content of discussions, interpretations and analyses will be kept confidential. Peer Reviewers and Commissioners will not discuss specific information about the program reviewed or the institution visited with anyone other than team members and staff. They will not keep or share documents obtained during the review process. Notes made about the program before, during or after the visit will only be kept for the purpose of clarifying the Peer Review Report or the Commission Decision Report. All hardcopy or electronic notes and correspondence must be destroyed/deleted after the report is complete.

C. Code of Conduct

NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation policy incorporates best practices as described by the U.S. Department of Education Recognition Criteria, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and the Association of Specialized & Professional Accreditors (ASPA). Peer Reviewers and Commissioners agree to abide by standards of personal conduct that help the team conduct a well-informed and competent review. Peer Reviewers and Commissioners do this by participating in training, preparing for site visits or Commission meetings, reviewing all report materials, assessing information critically and fairly, and conducting themselves in a professional, objective, fair manner at all times.

Peer Reviewers and Commissioners may not:

- solicit consultation arrangements with institutions preparing for accreditation visits;
- advertise their status as Commissioners or Peer Reviewers for the purpose of building a consulting clientele;
- accept a consulting arrangement at an institution for which the member served as a Peer Reviewer or on the Commission for at least two years following the accreditation decision;
- claim or imply representation of NAEYC or the Commission on Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation in any private consulting or training business. All accreditation consultation and training is arranged through the national office. Any fees or honoraria are paid to NAEYC. Any accreditation consultants or trainers are trained and assigned by the national office.

Peer Reviewers and Commissioners agree to keep their focus within the scope of published accreditation criteria, standards, and indicators of strength.

Peer Reviewers and Commissioners will not allow any personal preferences or biases to impact the program review. Each program will be considered in its own context.

Peer Reviewers will not request or accept any compensation whatsoever or any gifts of substance from the institution being reviewed or anyone affiliated with the institution. (Gifts of substance would include briefcases, tickets to athletic or entertainment events, etc.)

- If the giving of small tokens (such as, for example, coffee mugs, key chains, t-shirts, etc.) is important to an institution's culture, Peer Reviewers may accept these tokens from the institution. However, if the token includes institution-identifying information such as name, logo, or mascot, the reviewer should take care not to use or display the item outside their home until after the program has received an accreditation decision to protect confidentiality.
- If unsure, the Peer Reviewer should err on the side of declining gifts of any kind.

Peer Reviewers will not expect elaborate hospitality during site visits. Institutions are not expected to arrange for dinner for teams. It is appropriate for institutions to provide snacks and non-alcoholic beverages for teams as they conduct their work on campus and at their hotel. Where options for meals are limited, the peer reviewer team chair shall make arrangements in advance with the institution for team meals. Peer Reviewers shall abide by the guidelines set forth in the Travel Reimbursement Policy.

Peer Reviewers will not state any opinion or make any prediction concerning action by the Commission that may result from the site visit to the institution.

D. Violations of the Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Code of Conduct Agreement

Alleged violations of the Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Code of Conduct Agreement shall immediately be brought to the attention of the Commission, which shall investigate the alleged violation and accept a written or verbal statement from the peer reviewer or commissioner involved. If the Commission determines that the individual has violated the Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Code of Conduct Agreement, it may sanction the offending individual through a verbal or written reprimand or prohibit that individual from being a member of any peer review team or Commission in the future.

Agreed to and accepted by:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Travel Policy for NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Peer Reviewers & Commissioners: 2016

(This document is based on the NAEYC Travel Policy, as interpreted for peer reviewers and Commissioners in the Early Childhood Higher Education accreditation system.)

Automobile Travel

- **Personal Automobiles**— When the use of a personal automobile is necessary for NAEYC business, reimbursement for its use will be made at the mileage rate published by the IRS. Rental cars should be used in lieu of personal automobiles when the mileage exceeds 100 miles in one direction. If individuals use their own vehicle, it is their responsibility to carry adequate personal insurance coverage for themselves, the vehicle, any passengers, and any other costs associated with an accident.

The mileage reimbursement rate includes reimbursement for use of the vehicle as well as any repairs, gas charges, and the owner’s personal automobile insurance coverage, which provides the coverage in case of an accident. Tolls and parking fees are separately reimbursable.

NAEYC will not reimburse individuals for parking tickets, fines for moving violations, vehicle towing charges, or auto repairs and maintenance. Use MapQuest, Google Maps, or a similar website to confirm mileage, and attach the printout to the expense report. Additionally, if more than one authorized individual is transported in a personal vehicle, mileage is payable to only one person. The owner of the personal vehicle will not be reimbursed additional amounts for transporting multiple authorized individuals.

- **Rental Cars**—In all circumstances, the use of a rental car should be thoughtfully considered, and the relevant costs and convenience associated with the use of available ground transportation, such as taxis and hotel and airport shuttles, should be weighed against the cost and need for a rental car.

Rental cars may be used in lieu of personal automobiles when (1) it is not practical to use a personal vehicle when traveling between home and a peer review site visit or Commission meeting, and/or (2) a rental car is needed for the peer review team’s local transportation after arrival by air/rail. In the case of (1), the cost of reimbursement for mileage on a personal vehicle or for a rental car should not exceed the cost of traveling from home via air/rail, though exceptions may be made in situations for when both (1) and (2) apply. In the case of (2), the cost of a rental car should not exceed the cost of transportation via local shuttles/taxis and parking, unless the team is in a geographic area where work-conducive shuttles/taxis are not readily available.

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All drivers of rental vehicles must be over the age of 21 and have a valid driver's license, as well as sufficient insurance that covers the use of rental cars. Drivers should decline the optional collision/damage coverage offered by the rental car company.

Rental of vehicles for NAEYC business use should be arranged through NAEYC's preferred suppliers unless the rate is lower from a non-preferred provider. NAEYC has arranged corporate benefits with AVIS and Hertz, and it is recommended that individuals select these rental car companies when booking online unless other company rates are more cost-effective:

- **AVIS:** NAEYC Corporate Account Number Q155004 (use whenever asked for AWD# and/or World Wide Discount number).
- **Hertz:** NAEYC Discount (CDP) #1603084. Please set up your personal account Hertz #1 Gold Account at <http://bapmember.hertz.com>. Click on *Enrolled Accounts* (US). Click on *Fee-Waived Hertz #1 Club Gold Application*, Company Name: NAEYC, (CDP) # 1603084, PIN Code: baggold. Agree to the terms and fill out the application, including your driver's license number. This will give you your Hertz #1 Club Gold account number, which you can use to make and/or modify reservations online.
- These discount codes are valid as of 2017 and may only be used for travel that will be reimbursed by NAEYC. Travelers making arrangements for 2018 or later should ensure they are using the most up-to-date version of the travel policy.

For Commissioners, compact vehicles are the recommended vehicle size for rental purposes, although upgrades to standard cars are permissible if NAEYC provides prior approval. A detailed explanation (e.g., number of persons, luggage accommodations) should be included in the business justification.

For peer reviewers, full-size vehicles are the recommended vehicle for rental purposes when three individuals will be riding together with their luggage from/to an airport. Standard-size cars are encouraged if one reviewer (with luggage) will be traveling from home and then additional passengers (without luggage) will ride in the vehicle on site.

The policy of rental car companies is that the driver (not a third party, such as NAEYC) be the one to reserve the vehicle. Therefore, peer reviewers and Commissioners who rent a car will make their payment to the rental car company and then be reimbursed for this cost after the peer review visit or Commission meeting. In addition to the payment for the cost of the rental car, the only other permissible operating expense for rental cars in most cases is the cost to purchase gasoline.

- **Accidents** - Should an accident occur, the individual should immediately contact the following individuals or authorities:
 - Local authorities, as required
 - Personal insurance agent or company

- Rental car company (if applicable)
- NAEYC

Ground Transportation—Ground transportation is an appropriate business expense (including a tip) to the extent that such service is necessary for business purposes. Public transportation, cab, or car services are acceptable modes of transportation. The individual must weigh the benefits of costs, availability, time savings, and safety when choosing the mode for business travel. For example, for trips greater than 20 and less than 200 miles, a personal vehicle or public transportation is likely more economical than a car service.

Exception Policy

Individuals seeking an exception to any of these travel policies should contact NAEYC for consideration and approval of the exception. Individuals will need to cite the extenuating circumstances or cost-neutral reasons for the exception.

Additional Information

Reviewers and Commissioners are encouraged to contact NAEYC staff with questions.

Further Questions?

Please feel free to contact NAEYC staff at any time with remaining questions or to suggest additional topics in need of resources. You can reach us at (800) 424-2460 (select option 3 for accreditation, then option 2 for higher education) or at highered@naeyc.org.



The NAEYC Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs awards accreditation to early childhood associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree programs that demonstrate evidence of excellence by meeting the NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards. The NAEYC accreditation process provides a framework for self-study, external evaluation, and improvement in the quality of teacher preparation programs. To learn more about the benefits of accreditation, please visit [NAEYC.org/HigherEdAccred](https://naeyc.org/HigherEdAccred)

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