Handbook for TEAC Auditors

TEAC

Teacher
Education
Accreditation
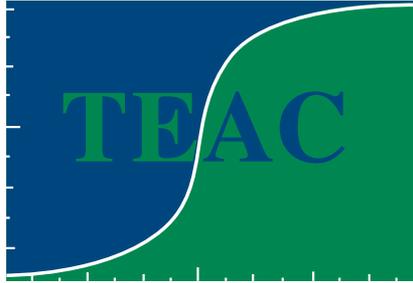Council

2011

TEAC's accreditation process at a glance

Steps	Program faculty actions	TEAC actions
1. Application	Program faculty prepares and submits on-line application and sends membership fee	TEAC staff consults with the institution and program faculty; TEAC accepts or rejects application (on eligibility requirements) and accepts or returns fee accordingly✪✱
2. Formative evaluation	• Program faculty attends TEAC workshops on writing the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (optional)✪✱ • Program faculty submits draft of the *Brief* with checklist	• TEAC staff reviews draft *Brief* or sections for coverage, clarity, and auditability and returns drafts for revisions and resubmission as needed • If appropriate, TEAC solicits outside reviews on technical matters, claims, and rationale✪✱
3. *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*	• Program faculty responds to TEAC staff and reviewers' comments✪✱ • Program faculty submits an on-line final *Brief* with checklist	• TEAC declares *Brief* auditable and instructs program to submit final version of *Brief* • TEAC accepts *Brief* for audit and submits it to the lead auditor for instructions to audit team
4. Call for comment	Program faculty distributes call-for-comment letter to all specified parties	TEAC places program on TEAC website's "call-for-comment" page
5. Survey	Program sends email addresses for faculty, students, and cooperating teachers	TEAC electronically surveys the faculty, students, and cooperating teachers who send their responses anonymously to TEAC through a third-party vendor
6. Local practitioner selected	Program selects a local practitioner to serve as a member of the audit team and sends vita to TEAC	TEAC receives a vita for a local practitioner to serve as a member of the audit team
7. Audit You are now at this stage in the accreditation process ➡	• Program faculty submits data for audit as requested • Program faculty responds to any clarification questions as needed • Program faculty receives and hosts auditors during site visit (2–4 days) • Program faculty responds to draft audit report✪✱	• TEAC schedules audit and sends *Guide to the Audit*✪✱ • Auditors analyze submitted data and formulate questions for the audit • Auditors complete visit to campus • Auditors prepare audit report and send to program faculty • TEAC staff responds to program faculty's comments about the draft audit report✪✱ • Auditors prepare final audit report is prepared and send it to program faculty, TEAC, and state representatives when applicable
8. Case analysis	Faculty responds to accuracy of case analysis (optional)✪✱	• TEAC completes case analysis and sends to program✪✱ • TEAC sends *Brief,* audit report (including faculty responses), and case analysis to panel members
9. Accreditation Panel	Program representatives attend meeting (optional) Program faculty responds to the panel's report within 2 weeks✪✱	• Panel meets to make accreditation recommendation • TEAC sends Accreditation Panel report to program faculty • TEAC staff responds to program faculty as needed✪✱ • Call-for-comment announced via email and website
10. Accreditation Committee		• TEAC sends *Brief,* any reviewers' comments, audit report, case analysis, and Accreditation Panel Report to the Accreditation Committee • Accreditation Committee meets to accept or revise the Accreditation Panel recommendation • TEAC sends Accreditation Committee's decision to program
11. Acceptance or appeal	Program faculty accepts or appeals TEAC's action (within 30 days)✪✱	• If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report • If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEAC initiates its appeal process
12. Annual report	Program faculty submits annual report and fees to TEAC✪✱	TEAC reviews annual reports for as many years as required by program's status with TEAC✪✱

Key: ✪✱ signifies the process continues until there is consensus among the parties
* TEAC uses "*Brief*" to refer to both the *Inquiry Brief* and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

Teacher Education Accreditation Council

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Price guide
TEAC members: one copy free, on request; each additional copy $25
Non-members: $35.50
Bulk orders for classroom or other instructional use only:
call (302) 831-6702 for member and non-member prices; proof of course use or instructional event required

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For more information about TEAC, see www.teac.org

Using this handbook

This handbook is primarily for the TEAC auditor. It is intended to help in preparing for audits of *Inquiry Briefs* and *Inquiry Brief Proposals* and to contribute to the writing of the audit report.

The handbook contains a full description of the audit process, the responsibilities of the program and TEAC staff, and auditors' responsibilities. It also provides guidelines for making audit decisions and developing the audit opinion. In addition, it includes an array of audit tools: documents and templates that will be used in each audit.

For additional reference during an audit, the handbook also contains the basic information about TEAC and a complete description of the quality principles.

The *Guide to Accreditation* (2010) could be a valuable resource in preparing for a TEAC audit as it describes in detail TEAC's requirements for the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* the audit, the panel's recommendation for accreditation, and the final accreditation decision. Finally, because the auditors' work is part of the TEAC accreditation process and auditors represent TEAC during the site visit, the TEAC *Operations Policy Manual* (2010) will provide important information about TEAC's policies and procedures.

What is in this handbook?

The handbook begins with ten principles that describe the qualities of a TEAC auditor and can serve to guide auditors in their role and responsibilities. Following that introduction, the guide has four parts:

- Part One describes the TEAC audit in detail. It outlines the particular responsibilities of the program, TEAC staff, and the auditors and explains each phase of the audit.

- Part Two provides information and guidance on making decisions.

- Part Three contains the audit tools you will use before, during, and after the audit including the TEAC Accreditation Framework for both teacher education and educational leadership programs, templates for the Summary of the Case and the parity and capacity tables, and information about writing findings to audit tasks.

- Part Four covers practical matters such as schedule and costs and addresses the most frequent questions auditors have about their work.

Maintaining communication with the program and with TEAC is especially important during the audit process, as is understanding the process and the responsibilities of each party involved. For this reason, TEAC has prepared a companion volume to this handbook, the *Guide to the TEAC Audit,* for TEAC candidates as they prepare for the audit.

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Ten principles to guide auditors in their work (or, what programs should expect from TEAC auditors)

These ten principles describe the qualities the program faculty, staff, and students should expect from a TEAC auditor:

1. TEAC auditors maintain confidentiality during and after audits.

Auditors do not discuss or share their knowledge of programs or institutions, faculty, staff, and students with others except as required to fulfill their responsibilities to TEAC. In particular this means that they should not discuss at one institution the auditing experiences they had at another institution. There is a *need to know* criterion about shared information from site to site, but interpreting the *need to know* should be done as cautiously and conservatively as possible. (See principle 9, below.)

2. TEAC auditors commit fully to the process of the audit.

The auditors are prepared to participate in all activities related to the audit. While on site, they maintain focus and are not distracted from the work at hand by making and receiving phone calls, faxes, emails, and other messages. Auditors are instructed to arrange personal and professional schedules according to the requirements of the audit.

3. TEAC auditors disclose any conflict of interest.

Auditors should not audit programs at institutions where there is any appearance of a conflict of interest, such as could exist if the auditor:

- Worked at the institution at some previous time;
- Applied for a position at the institution at some previous time;
- Is or was involved in a professional or personal conflict

or collaboration with a member of the institution's faculty now or at some previous time; or

- Is a candidate, or will soon be a candidate, for a position at the institution.

None of these conditions will necessarily disqualify a person as a consulting auditor of a program at an institution. However, the person alone cannot decide whether a conflict of interest exists. The decision must be made by TEAC in consultation with the institution. Because TEAC staff will not be able to know if these or similar conditions exist, it is incumbent upon potential auditors to bring them to the attention of TEAC staff.

While TEAC's policies firmly discourage gift-giving, receptions, banquets, and entertainment during the audit visit, sometimes these cannot be avoided altogether, and in these rare instances the auditors must be vigilant that their decision-making is not compromised as a result.

4. TEAC auditors are sensitive to privacy issues.

If faculty members or their faculty representatives show reluctance to share data that are requested by the auditors, then the auditors are instructed to be sensitive to their feelings and stop asking for them. If the data are central to the auditing process, the auditors will contact TEAC for direction in these matters. Privacy issues are very important to faculty and to TEAC, and care is needed to respect them and seek other ways to verify the evidence in the *Brief.* TEAC has also anticipated the fact that other ways may not be possible (see *disclaimer* audit opinions).

5. TEAC auditors do not evaluate the program or offer judgments or commendations to program faculty or institutional representatives.

At no time should auditors characterize the data they are reviewing in an *Inquiry Brief* in terms of whether or not they provide support for the faculty claims (except data about institutional commitment and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* plan). It is important that TEAC auditors stay in role on this question — speaking and reporting only to whether the evidence in the *Brief* is accurate and fairly represented.

6. TEAC auditors are not coaches or consultants.

Auditors should not advance suggestions about how programs can be improved, how *Inquiry Briefs* might be improved, or how the program's chances for accreditation can be improved. Auditors are not to diagnose weaknesses in education programs, nor volunteer advice on these matters. Auditors of *Inquiry Brief Proposals,* however, are at liberty to seek information that will strengthen the program's eventual case and otherwise advise the program about methods that might be better suited to the program's argument.

7. TEAC auditors characterize TEAC policies with great care.

It is important that auditors qualify their interpretations or cite the language in one of the TEAC publications that officially addresses the questions posed to the auditor. In case of doubt, and without being dismissive, auditors will suggest that the inquirers call the TEAC office for official interpretations of TEAC policies.

8. TEAC auditors maintain a professional distance between themselves and the program faculty.

Every event during the visit is part of the audit. Auditors are constantly on the alert for information that corroborates or disconfirms the information in the *Brief.* The audit team makes the best use of its time through continuous inquiry. Although sharing rides or meals with faculty and administrators during the audit sessions should be avoided if at all possible, meals are sometimes an efficient and effective way to convene a group; in such instances, auditors use the occasion to verify targets of interest. The issue is maintaining an optimum and uncompromised professional distance. Auditors should not be cold, aloof, or unfriendly.

9. TEAC auditors are discreet.

Auditors share information and perceptions with discipline and care. Wherever auditors travel, whether to large cities or remote rural areas, they will find that the *community* represented by the institution is also well represented in airports, restaurants, and public transportation. Although the auditor might feel safe in off-campus sites to characterize, for example, an exchange with a faculty member, or to portray a data set advanced to support a claim, such activity is extremely unwise.

10. TEAC auditors are positive and sensitive.

Auditors are expected to make every effort to convey the attitude that their purpose is to verify the evidence in the *Brief.* They should avoid any mannerism that could be taken as a "gotcha" style or inquisitor approach to the audit. They are there to verify, and their demeanor should make it clear that they are willing to go the extra mile to verify and corroborate evidence. Should they fail to verify some evidence, which undoubtedly will happen, they must make doubly sure they are correct, and then take care not embarrass the faculty with the revelation or otherwise call attention to their disappointment over the negative findings. This approach, apart from flowing from TEAC's core beliefs, also increases the likelihood that the faculty will cooperate and be forthcoming with auditors and as a result that the audit will successfully arrive at the proper conclusion.

PART ONE: THE TEAC AUDIT
Overview of the TEAC audit

One defining feature of the TEAC accreditation process is the **academic audit**: a team of auditors visits a campus to examine and verify on site the evidence that supports the claims made in the professional education program's *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal.*

Once the program's *Brief* has been accepted as auditable by the TEAC staff, TEAC and the program faculty schedule and plan the audit. (*See the TEAC audit schedule in Part Four of this handbook, "Practical matters."*)

TEAC will consult with those in the pool of trained auditors and assign, by mutual agreement, a team of auditors to an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal.* Once selected, the audit team members insure that there are no undeclared conflicts of interest surrounding their participation in the audit. In this initial period of planning for the auditors' visit, program faculty members also have an opportunity to review the résumés of the members of the audit team to identify any potential conflicts of interest that may exist and that the match between the auditor's qualifications and the program is appropriate. TEAC officers and program faculty will negotiate claims of conflicts of interests.

The team of two to four TEAC-trained auditors visits the campus for two to three days. In some cases, the visit may be extended if the audit challenge is especially complex or broad.

It is TEAC's philosophy that throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and the program faculty maintain open and frequent communications on any and all relevant matters. Maintaining communication is especially important during the audit process, as is understanding the process and the responsibilities of each party involved.

The audit team includes a lead auditor, who will usually be a TEAC staff member, one or more consulting auditors who are usually education professionals (most often higher education faculty members or administrators), a local practitioner selected by the program faculty (for example, a classroom teacher, principal, or counselor), and in some cases a state education department representative in states where TEAC has a formal protocol agreement. Planning with the team is generally coordinated by the lead auditor.

Scope of the audit

The audit process does not address the basic accreditation question of whether or not the evidence is compelling, persuasive, sufficient, or convincing. Instead, the audit, with the exception of the case for institutional commitment, determines only whether the descriptions and characterizations of evidence in the *Brief* are accurate. The auditors' question is no more or no less than *Are the statements in the* Brief *accurate?* The auditors seek to verify the data behind the claims the faculty makes in the *Brief.*

To determine whether or not the evidence in the *Brief* is trustworthy, auditors need access to the raw data, spreadsheets, and documents upon which the authors of the *Brief* relied in writing the *Brief.* The faculty should be prepared to show the TEAC auditors the data (records, journals, ratings, evaluations, transcripts, artifacts, etc.) that are portrayed in the *Brief.* A simple rule is: *if the authors needed to look at it, the auditors may also.* Because the TEAC auditors will try to verify as much of the *Brief* as can be practically prior to the site visit, the faculty may be asked to send the supporting source data, including data and spreadsheets, prior to the visit. However, by its very nature, a substantial portion of the audit must be conducted on site.

Not all the evidence in the *Brief* is appropriate for auditing; only the evidence related to TEAC principles and standards is targeted. In designing and conducting the audit, TEAC staff and auditors use as a guide the general instructions laid out in the **TEAC Accreditation Framework**, which is presented in Part Three of this handbook. Auditors should be thoroughly familiar with the principles and standards in this template before they begin reading the *Brief*.

The audit is a series of **tasks**, each assigned to an aspect of the *Brief* that is also associated with one of the principles or standards of the TEAC system.

Audit of the *Inquiry Brief*

The main purpose of the audit of an *Inquiry Brief* is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims that the program meets TEAC's three quality principles. From a pool of audit targets, the audit team will select samples of evidence that they predict will reveal and represent the totality of the evidence the program faculty has presented in the *Inquiry Brief*. The auditors are free to search for additional evidence in the process of the audit and these discoveries may support, strengthen, or weaken the verification of the evidence behind the program faculty's claims with regard to the quality principles.

Audit of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

The audit of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* carries forward the features of formative evaluation into the audit itself. While the auditors will verify targets associated with the program's rationale, quality control system, and the institution's commitment to and capacity for program quality, they will also search on site for possible lines of evidence that can be used to support the program's claims and potential methods of establishing the reliability and validity of the evidence. The audit team will cross-examine the plan, engaging the program faculty in a dialogue about the claims, the evidence the faculty proposes to use to support its claims, and how the program will use student learning data to improve educational practice. A feedback session is scheduled at the end of the visit to discuss suggestions for changes to the proposal. The result is that a firm and realistic plan for the eventual *Inquiry Brief* can be established and negotiated between the auditors and the program faculty.

Responsibilities: program, TEAC, and auditors

The program faculty and TEAC staff members share responsibilities for supporting the work of the auditors both before and during the visit, and the auditors have very specific responsibilities before, during, and after the audit.

The program's responsibilities

For the year in which a program's *Brief* is audited, the institution currently pays an audit fee of $2,000 per *Brief.* In addition, the institution is responsible for all costs related to each audit and audit team (two to four people, over two to four days): lodging (up to four nights), food, travel, and fees ($1,500 per auditor; an honorarium of at least $100 per day for the on-site practitioners and the cost of a substitute if the practitioner is a classroom teacher). The audit fee and related audit costs are separate from the program's institutional membership dues.

The program faculty under review will be responsible for designating an audit coordinator who is responsible for the logistical aspects of the audit visit. The duties of the coordinator might include the following:

1. Distribute to all specified parties the call-for-comment, soliciting comments about the program from all parties with a stake in the program.

2. Make provisions for lodging, meals, transportation, and the handling of expenses.

3. Schedule interviews and meeting rooms.

4. Nominate a teacher or administrator to serve on the audit team as the local practitioner and arrange to cover the cost of a substitute if the practitioner is a classroom teacher.

5. Provide email addresses for faculty, students, and cooperating teachers to whom TEAC will send an electronic survey.

6. Provide for administrative support during the audit such as access to telephones, computers, printers, photocopiers, the Internet, and other support services.

7. Ensure that the auditors are able to obtain needed information, documentation, and other evidence necessary to complete the audit.

Feedback

All TEAC processes, particularly the audit, are exemplified by dialogue between TEAC and the program to ensure that TEAC's understanding and characterizations of the program are as accurate as possible. This dialogue occurs informally throughout the audit period and also formally at certain points, as when the program faculty is asked to do the following:

1. Respond in writing as requested to any clarification questions sent by the audit team about parts of the Brief that the auditors find unclear or ambiguous. The clarification questions and the program responses are generally included in the audit report so long as they illuminate a matter pertinent to the TEAC system.

2. Verify the accuracy of the auditors' summary of the case. The summary is written by the auditors and reflects their understanding of the case the faculty is making for accreditation. Once the accreditation decision is made, the summary of the case will be posted on the TEAC website.

3. Respond to the audit report. The response should be confined to any errors the auditors may have made and these comments will be incorporated into the next draft of the audit report along with the TEAC response to the comments. Once both TEAC and the program faculty are satisfied with the accuracy of the audit report, it is finalized

and entered into the record submitted first to the TEAC Accreditation Panel and then to the TEAC Accreditation Committee. Each body considers the report, along with other documentation including the *Brief,* in its respective deliberations.

4. Respond to written and/or telephone surveys regarding the accreditation experience. TEAC seeks to continually improve its processes to make them more useful, effective, and positive, and hence values the feedback of its members as key to identifying strengths and weaknesses in each aspect of the accreditation process.

TEAC's responsibilities

Before the audit visit, TEAC staff will be responsible for the following:

1. Schedule the audit; assign auditors; share auditors' résumés or cv's with the program for review.

2. Communicate with the audit coordinator to assure that all logistical arrangements have been made satisfactorily.

3. Supply the audit coordinator with the call-for-comment letter to distribute to all parties with a stake in the program and post the call-for-comment on the TEAC website.

4. Communicate with the auditors to discuss logistical arrangements, the visit schedule, the ethical obligations of auditors, and other audit policies and concerns.

5. Prepare, in conjunction with the audit team, the audit tasks, with reference to any matters in the *Brief* that seem of particular interest or show signs of being problematic.

6. Provide training to the program's designated local practitioner in preparation for the on-site portion of the audit.

7. Communicate and coordinate with the state education representative, as appropriate.

8. Prepare, in conjunction with the audit team, the auditors' summary of the case and send it to the program for review and approval.

9. Send any pre-visit clarification questions to the program for response.

After the audit, the lead auditor and TEAC staff prepare the audit report and send it to the program for review.

Auditors' responsibilities

TEAC auditors have five interrelated responsibilities:

1. **Understand**. At the outset of the audit, the auditors must understand the *Brief* and the local contexts about which the *Brief* is written. This understanding helps build a sense of rapport and confidence among the parties, thereby avoiding the tense and confrontational relationship that sometimes characterizes audits in other circumstances.

   TEAC auditors base their judgments solely on the evidence and not on preconceived ideas or biases, no matter what their source. The auditors therefore make every effort to fully understand the contexts in which they are operating and to treat all persons they meet with respect and comity.

2. **Verify**. The text of the *Inquiry Brief* or the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and the selected evidence are the targets of the audit.

   The auditors verify the text of the *Brief,* and they do this by examining the referents of the text to be sure that the text is accurate with respect to the meaning of the language, data, and evidence. The auditors examine and probe the accuracy of the language of selected formal statements of the program's goals, claims, rationale, and the TEAC quality control system. These probes are meant to verify that the language is precise, trustworthy, and means exactly what it seems to say.

3. **Corroborate**. Sometimes the verification purposes of the audit lead the auditors to examine evidence that was not cited in the *Brief* but which nevertheless has a direct bearing on their verification of the evidence and the precision of the language in the *Brief*. The auditors, in fact, sometimes seek evidence that was not in the *Brief* to corroborate, reinforce, or disconfirm the evidence that is in the *Brief*.

4. **Judge**. The auditors come to a conclusion about whether any errors they find in the *Brief* are trivial or consequential and alter the meaning of text. If the error is minor and trivial, then the target is scored as verified but with a note of the error. If the error is of consequence and significantly alters the meaning, then the target is scored as not verified and the error noted.

   To do this, the auditors must distinguish between errors in the *Brief* that are of no significance or consequence to the meaning of the text and errors that change the meaning of the text and lead a reader to a misinterpretation of the evidence.

   In addition to verifying the evidence in the *Brief,* the auditors also make a determination of whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

5. **Represent TEAC**. Auditors represent TEAC as an organization and its particular approach to specialized accreditation in higher education. As such, the TEAC auditors answer questions and present TEAC positions in informal and formal occasions.

   In all exchanges, it is important that the auditors acknowledge their own limited roles, and that the campus representatives respect the limits of the auditors' roles. With the exception of the evidence about institutional commitment, auditors do not make evaluative decisions about accreditation, nor should they be asked to. Also, they are not on campus to suggest how programs might be improved or to offer personal positions about accreditation issues in higher education. Auditors of *Inquiry Brief Proposals,* however, may raise points for consideration on how the case the program plans to make in its eventual *Inquiry Brief* could be made stronger.

Within the general context of these five auditor responsibilities, auditors undertake five pre-visit audit activities: (1) carefully read and study the *Brief* and the TEAC Accreditation Framework, (2) prepare a summary of the case the faculty has made, (3) develop a strategy for the audit, (4) create audit tasks that will reveal the accuracy of the evidence in the *Brief,* and (5) begin verifying capacity tasks that can be completed off site.

Initial reading of the *Brief*

The auditors begin with a careful review of the *Brief* and the TEAC Accreditation Framework. The *Brief* is the subject of the audit and the accreditation framework guides auditors in their selection of what to verify during the audit. The TEAC Accreditation Framework should be reviewed prior to each audit so that auditors can think about the TEAC principles and standards in context of the particular *Brief*.

Most *Briefs* have some central or core argument or a set of assumptions upon which the *Brief* rests. For example, the program's case may rest heavily on the faculty's ability to distinguish indicators of good teaching from indicators of mediocre teaching. In this case, the verification of the faculty's ability is essential. Some *Briefs* are based upon a set of core assessment instruments. In such cases, investigation of the reliability and validity of these instruments is key to verifying the faculty's claims.

Auditors should use their initial reading to understand the *Brief,* uncover the core argument, note inconsistencies, note points that require clarification or seem implausible or too good to be true, and identify text that is particularly revealing about the program and the faculty's thinking. It is wise to pay close attention to the

tables in the *Brief* to be sure they are internally consistent, consistent with each other, and that their contents are fully understood. Most auditors find that having a calculator handy during the initial reading is useful.

Summarizing the case

Once the initial reading is completed, auditors will prepare the **summary of the case**. The summary of the case explicates the case the program has made to support its claims; it tells the program's story but in the auditors' words. The purpose of the summary is at least threefold: (1) to convey to the authors (and to others) that the auditors fully understand the *Brief's* meanings and contexts; (2) to facilitate the construction of the final audit strategy; and (3) to provide the members of the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee with an accurate summary of the case the *Brief* makes.

The auditors' summary of the case generally has the following parts:

1. The auditors briefly describe in one or two paragraphs the salient characteristics of the institution and program (type, location, age, number of faculty and students, mission, relevant demographic information, and any unique and distinguishing features).

2. The auditors restate, in their own words, the claims advanced in the *Brief* related to TEAC's *Quality Principle I,* the categories of evidence the program cites supporting the claims, the nature of the evidence the program is presenting, and the program's evidence related to the reliability and validity of the measures used to assess the claims.

3. The auditors summarize the principal results of the program's internal audit and the findings reported in Appendix B related to institutional commitment to the program.

4. Finally, because the auditors are *telling the program's story,* they do not comment about aspects of the case for accredi-

tation that they may think are weak or problematic. Nor do they make the case stronger than the program faculty made it. The summary is *about* the program's case, not the case the auditors would have made or could have made.

The lead auditor prepares the initial draft of the summary of the case; other members of the team review it, and once the team accepts the summary, TEAC sends it to the program head, who corrects any errors the auditors may have made.

Developing the audit strategy

Once the summary of the case is completed, the auditors formulate an **audit strategy** that guides the selection of targets in the *Brief* and the emphasis the audit will give to various components and subcomponents of the TEAC accreditation framework.

The audit is a series of tasks, each assigned to an aspect of the *Brief* that is also associated with one of the principles of the TEAC system. To develop the audit strategy, TEAC staff and the auditors select from the *Brief* a number of targets that are related to elements in the TEAC system and that the auditors and staff feel may be particularly revealing about the accuracy in the totality of the evidence in the *Brief.* The staff and auditors then craft tasks that are designed to verify these targets. In addition, follow-up audit tasks may be created on site during the course of the audit.

Constructing audit tasks

An audit task is composed of a **target** and a **probe**. The audit task is constructed by selecting some aspect of the *Brief* text (the *target*) and *probing* it.

A target is what the auditors are seeking to verify in the *Brief*. A target can be a particular sentence, claim, statistic, number, or piece of evidence. Each target is linked to an element, component, or subcomponent of the TEAC system.

A probe is a specific action taken by the auditor to establish whether the portrayal of the evidence for a target is accurate. If the result of the probe of a target is ambiguous or in cases where the outcomes of a probe are variable or uncertain with regard to the accuracy of the evidence for a target in the *Brief,* the auditors probe further until a stable pattern is uncovered or until a probe's result is unambiguous.

A target is verified if the auditor determines that the evidence, statistic, or claim, representing the target is accurate. This judgment can be made even if there are slight and inconsequential inaccuracies in the targeted text of the *Brief.*

In general, the auditors will undertake tasks in which they:

- check the consistency of a sample of raw data forms (e.g., transcripts, standardized test score reports, rating sheets) with the results reported in the *Brief,* comparing data on the forms to data entered into a spreadsheet or database when possible;

- re-compute results reported in the *Brief* using data from a spreadsheet or database;

- confirm that a sample of artifacts (e.g., term papers, portfolios, teacher work samples) are consistent with their description in the *Brief* and that grades and ratings for these artifacts are consistent with standards described in the *Brief;*

- verify claims made in the *Brief* about the reliability and validity of assessments;

- examine documentation of evidence-based decisions reported in the *Brief;* and

- check that key elements of the program's quality control system functioned as described in the *Brief.*

The auditors may also undertake tasks in which they seek to resolve apparent contradictions in the *Brief,* or tasks to examine a line of evidence that may not have been cited in the *Brief* but is available on site to the auditors and could corroborate the conclusions made in the *Brief.*

Of particular interest are tasks designed to test the plausibility of rival explanations for the stated conclusions. For example, the faculty may report uniformly high grades and conclude that these grades are an indication of the graduates' knowledge and skill. The auditors may investigate this conclusion using a series of tasks to check for indicators of grade inflation, lack of discrimination in assigning grades, and/or alignment of grades with factors not relevant to the knowledge and skill of interest. To the extent that the auditors can explicitly rule out such rival explanations, confidence in the *Brief* is increased greatly, along with the likelihood of an appropriate accreditation decision.

The auditors must also verify the specific claims made about program capacity and institutional made in Appendix B of the *Brief.* These verifications are reported in a series of tables in the audit report.

Of course, situations will vary from site to site. Claims and the sources of data for claims that have not been anticipated may arise, and auditors may need to consider additional kinds of probes to use in their efforts to determine if the statements and evidence found in the *Brief* are accurate.

TEAC prescribes the following features for some of the audit tasks and most audits will include the following activities:

1. The auditors observe a session of at least two regularly scheduled courses that the program offers.

2. The auditors interview the students in the program's sample or a similar sample for its internal audit or for the evidence cited for *Quality Principle I.*

3. The auditors interview a sample of cooperating teachers.

4. The auditors tour instructional and/or support facilities cited in the *Brief* and tour each to verify their existence and similarity to their description in the *Brief.*

The following are examples of possible audit tasks (targets and probes):

1. Check records, such as minutes of meetings or memos on file of faculty actions in making program decisions claimed in the *Brief.*

2. Review notes taken of interviews with focus groups and with students at their exit from the program from which summaries are prepared or generalizations included in the *Brief* are induced.

3. Inspect the responses received from stakeholders who were surveyed by the program about the program and whose responses are summarized in tables or in narrative in the *Brief.*

4. Re-compute percentages, means, standard deviations, and correlations, etc., reported in the *Brief* from the original spreadsheets and check the accuracy of the spreadsheet entries from raw data.

5. Use institutional records to re-compute the means and standard deviations of grade point averages, license test scores, admission test scores, etc., reported in the *Brief.*

6. Survey students, faculty, and cooperating teachers about the accomplishments of the students with regard to *Quality Principle I* components.

7. Have raters re-apply the coding schemes used to draw inferences from qualitative data to see if the results can be reproduced.

8. Interview senior administrators to uncover evidence of the institution's commitment to the program.

9. Pose teaching scenarios and dilemmas to students and faculty to determine if their responses align with the description of the program's mission, goals, and claims in the *Brief.*

10. Check reports concerning the reliability of multiple observers by asking the observers to rate a video-taped student teaching event, a portfolio, or some other artifact and computing the appropriate coefficients of agreement.

11. Tour the campus to verify cited evidence about claims concerning facilities, resources, and services available to program candidates, the availability of computers, faculty office space, and other capacity-related issues.

12. Check brochures, catalogs, and websites to make sure the information found in the *Brief* is consistent with the information found in these sources.

13. Examine both the data (video tapes, transcripts, field notes) and the procedures for coding the data for evidence used to support claims.

14. Examine data sets (also institutional and state reports where those same data are provided) to verify evidence of parity of funds, space, full-time faculty equivalent per student enrollment of the program with other programs on campus.

15. Interview faculty who participated in the deliberations leading to program change, examine minutes of meetings, and inspect the copies of proposals that were taken to the faculty or administration for action to determine if the *Brief* claims that changes were made in the program after considering data generated by the quality control system.

16. Visit class sessions to see if the facilities, pedagogical values, and substance of the lesson(s) align with descriptions found in the *Brief.*

17. Interview faculty who conducted the internal audit probes and inspect their records to determine that the audit was undertaken as described.

18. Interview students and faculty who were the focus of the internal audit probes to ascertain that the characterizations found in the internal audit report in Appendix A are accurate.

19. Interview faculty with regard to any errors they found in the *Brief* with regard to the portrayal of the program and its characteristics.

20. Examine files and archives describing actions taken by the faculty to improve the program to document the accuracy of the characterizations of these actions in the *Brief.*

5. The auditors verify the program's plan to investigate, or an investigation, of a link between student learning and any program factor.

6. The auditors interview members of the administration to verify their commitment to the program, and their allocation of resources to the program.

7. The auditors verify that the call-for-comment from third parties was distributed to the parties required by TEAC policy.

8. The auditors verify that any raters whose ratings are cited as evidence in the *Brief* were trained and the rating forms and instruments exist.

9. If the audited program or any option within the program is delivered in distance education format, the auditors verify that the program has (1) the capacity to ensure timely delivery of distance education and support services and to accommodate current student numbers and expected near-term growth in enrollment and (2) a process to verify the identity of students taking distance education courses.

The auditors must note any discrepancies between characterizations of the institution described in the *Brief* and the experience of the site visit, particularly facts at variance with what is reported in Appendix E.

On-site audit activities

The auditors' verification process entails the review of relevant documents and interviews with representatives of the institution, faculty, staff, students, and others (cooperating teachers, mentors, university supervisors) associated with the program. The sorts of activities the auditors might undertake, and the data to which the auditors need to have access, are described below.

Review of the pre-visit audit tasks

The auditors *tell the story* of the program seeking accreditation so that the program faculty can be assured that the auditors have understood the *Brief* in the manner intended by the program faculty. The *story* (summary of the case) will have been sent to the program faculty before the audit so the faculty members can respond with corrections and amendments. The point is to ensure that the auditors and program faculty can conduct the rest of the audit from a common basis of understanding of the *Brief.*

Understanding the local context. During the first meeting with program faculty, after the introductions are complete, the discussion turns to the summary of the case prepared by the TEAC staff and auditors and sent to the program faculty before the audit visit.

The auditors seek the program faculty's reaction to the summary of the case: *Does it hit the mark? Is it complete? Has it distorted any elements of the* Brief? The auditors should receive feedback from the faculty without argument or debate. When the auditors write their report, they will also amend the summary, based on these comments from the program faculty.

Having determined that the auditors understood the *Brief* at a level acceptable to the program faculty, the auditors move to clarifying their own understanding, or misunderstanding, of the *Brief.*

Clarification. Before the audit visit, the auditors may have asked the authors and endorsers of the *Brief* to clarify any language used in the *Brief* that may be unclear to the auditors. This effort is critical because it is essential that the program faculty believe that the auditors understand the *Brief.* TEAC believes that this feature of the audit process helps to build the rapport between the audit team members and the program faculty that comes when one party feels the other party understands its positions.

Before the audit visit, the auditors sample from a pool of statements in the text that may have been unclear to them and ask the program faculty to put in writing their explanation and clarification of the text. The auditors need to probe assertions made in the *Brief* to determine if the referents exist and mean exactly what they seem to mean. The purpose of these probes is to verify that the match between the referent and the language in the *Brief* is accurate and precise. The auditors can verify the program's assertions only if the language is clear and precise.

The audit tasks focused on language are designed to clarify text that is ambiguous or that, when explained, may be particularly revealing of the program faculty members' thinking about matters related to the quality principles. Through this process, the auditors provide the Accreditation Panel members with a basis for determining the degree to which the language and evidence in the *Brief* mean exactly what they seem to mean.

Review on-site audit tasks

The main purpose of the audit is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims with respect to the quality principles. From a pool of audit targets, the auditors select a sample that is particularly revealing and representative of the totality of the evidence the program faculty has presented in

the *Brief.* The auditors divide some tasks among themselves, and others, such as interviewing students, administrators, and faculty or observing classes, they complete together as a full team. Throughout the entire visit, the auditors are alert and sensitive to unobtrusive information that may have a bearing on the targets of the audit.

While the auditors are on site, they use the evenings and team meals as opportunities for debriefing. The auditors make mid-course corrections in the audit tasks, modify the agenda and schedule as needed, develop new audit trails, and review preliminary impressions and observations.

Verifying the evidence related to specific claims. The *Brief* includes the evidence the faculty uses to support its claims related to the program's goal of preparing competent, qualified, and caring professionals as well as to support the claim that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program. The auditors do not judge whether the claims are true or even credible. The auditors do not judge, for example, whether or not the program's graduates understand pedagogy or whether the evidence is persuasive or weak. They judge only whether or not the evidence cited in support of the graduate's understanding of pedagogy is in fact what is reported in the *Brief.* For example, if the program faculty relies on a mean score on a standardized test to advance and support its claim that the program's graduates understand pedagogy, the auditors will check to see if, in fact, the score the program's graduates earned on the test is as the program faculty reports in the *Brief.* They will not express an opinion about whether the score actually shows the graduates understand pedagogy.

Auditors look for corroborating evidence. Throughout the audit the auditors are alert to the discovery of evidence that was not cited in the *Brief* but has a direct bearing (positive or negative) on the verification of the evidence and the clarity and precision of the language in the *Brief.* The auditors are charged with assuring the Accreditation Panel that there is evidence behind the claims made in the *Brief.* There are two kinds of errors the auditors need to avoid: (1) false positive errors (concluding the evidence is present and accurate when it is not); and (2) false negative errors (concluding there is no evidence for a claim when in fact there is).[1]

Auditors evaluate errors. The auditors must also determine whether any errors they find in the *Brief* are trivial or are of some consequence to the meaning of the text. When a misstatement is trivial and of no consequence, the targeted text is not misleading in spite of the error and the statement means more or less the same thing with the error as without the error.

For example, if the auditors had recalculated a mean score and found it was 3.16 instead of the 3.06 reported in a table or in some text, it is probably the case that the targeted text would have the same meaning whether the mean is one or the other value. If the faculty claimed they are *constructivists* and it turns out in response to the auditors' probes that they meant only that they are *Piagetians,* the statement is still acceptably accurate.

The errors, or misstatements, that are of consequence are those that alter the meaning of a targeted statement in the *Brief* in such a way that the statement could mislead the reader and as result it is not verified. If the *Brief* asserts, for example, that the program students have two faculty advisors, one in arts and sciences and one in education, and the auditors find in their review of student files, that only 10 percent of the students had two advisors, the auditors would be unable to verify the program's assertion. In this instance the auditors would attempt to verify the assertion in other ways — perhaps interviewing a sample of students about the number of advisors they had, interviewing the arts and sciences faculty about whether they advised education students, or asking the program's administrators why their student files were incomplete. If these additional probes yielded more or less the same outcome, the program's claim of two advisors cannot be relied upon. If on the other hand 95 percent of the students had two

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[1] False negative errors are somewhat less likely than false positive errors as the former would surely be noted in the program faculty's response to the audit report while the latter might not be mentioned.

advisors, the program's assertion, while in error, is acceptably accurate and no reader would be misled appreciably by believing it. The auditors would score the target as verified with error and state what the error was (viz., 5% of the students did not have two advisors).

If the recalculated mean (to take the example above) differed by more than 25 percent of the standard deviation from the reported mean, the misstatement of the mean is probably *of consequence* and the auditors would conclude that the reported and misstated mean was not confirmed and verified.

Final audit team on-site work session

As the audit visit concludes, the audit team considers the findings from each audit task and begins to formulate its audit opinions. The team also analyzes the evidence about institutional commitment and determines whether or not the evidence is sufficient to support the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program. The team uses the session to start planning the **audit report**.

Judging. The auditors must come to a conclusion about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of the TEAC quality principles, the capacity components, and the internal audit was in fact verified. The auditors also must make a separate determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

In their audit report, auditors present the trustworthiness of the evidence for *Quality Principle III* in two tables in the Audit Report in which the auditors show what they have found with regard to the documentation for each subcomponent of parity and capacity. (*See Part Three: Parity and Capacity Tables.*) The auditors give one of the following four judgments (audit opinions) about the overall trustworthiness of the *Brief* and about *Quality Principles I* and *II*:

1. **Clean opinion:** A clean audit opinion is given when most of the evidence (at least 90%) in the *Brief* that bears on a principle is free of significant errors and found to be trustworthy on that account.

2. **Qualified opinion:** A qualified opinion is given when much of the evidence in the *Brief* (at least 75%) that bears on a principle is free of major errors and the evidence is found to be acceptably trustworthy on that account.

3. **Adverse opinion:** An element is assigned an adverse opinion when a significant portion of evidence (more than 25%) in the *Brief* that bears on it cannot be confirmed and verified.

4. **Disclaimer opinion:** An element is assigned a disclaimer opinion when it is not possible to verify a significant portion of the evidence (more than 25%) in the *Brief* that pertains to the element owing to missing data, limited access to information and informants, or policies and regulations that preclude the auditors' access to the information they would need to verify a target.

Final meeting with faculty representatives

The audit team usually concludes its on-site visit with a brief meeting with the audit coordinator and other interested faculty to describe the next steps in the TEAC accreditation process.

The role of auditors of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

The audit of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* carries forward the features of formative evaluation into the audit itself. While the auditors will verify the targets associated with the program's rationale, quality control system, commitment, and capacity, they will also search on site for possible lines of evidence and approach that

can be used to support the program's claims and the program's methods of establishing reliability and validity of its evidence. The result is that a firm and realistic plan for the eventual *Inquiry Brief* can be established and negotiated between the auditors and program faculty. The idea behind this approach to the audit is that the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is treated like a grant proposal to a foundation. The foundation typically shapes the proposal into a project that fits the foundation's program guidelines just as an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must fit with TEAC's *Quality Principles.* It is also like a dissertation proposal in which the doctoral committee becomes a partner in the plan of research. The outcome of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* process is that the program and TEAC become partners in designing a plan for a successful future *Inquiry Brief.*

Staff and the assigned panelist will determine when a proposal is ready for an audit site visit. The audit team visiting the program will usually consist of three people: the *IBP* panelists assigned to the program as a formative evaluator and lead auditor, a TEAC staff member, and a local practitioner.

The campus visit will have four core purposes:

1. To audit targets associated with the capacity and parity standards.

2. To audit targets associated with the quality control system as described in the program's internal audit.

3. To audit the program's rationale and methods of assessment, and

4. To consult with the program about how its plan (rationale and method) might be strengthened and improved.

While the TEAC team will carry out the traditional audit tasks related to the quality control system and components of the capacity standards, it will cross-examine the plan, engaging the program faculty in a dialogue about the claims, the evidence the faculty proposes to use to support its claims, and how the program will use student learning data to improve educational practice. A feedback session is scheduled at the end of the visit to include suggestions for changes to the proposal.

Post-visit audit activities

After the visit, the team drafts the Audit Report. TEAC then sends the draft to the program for review. With TEAC staff, the auditors respond to any comments from the program faculty, negotiate points raised by the faculty, and finalize the Audit Report. The auditors might meet in person, if convenient, or communicate by phone or electronically. Finally, the lead auditor, as a non-voting member of the Accreditation Panel, participates in the discussions of the case in the panel meeting devoted to the program's *Brief.*

Audit Report

Immediately after their campus visit, the auditors of an *Inquiry Brief* prepare the Audit Report, which is submitted to TEAC and the program faculty within a time period that maintains the time limits of the program's audit cycle and insures that the program can be considered at the cycle's panel meeting. It is submitted first in draft form inviting comment, and subsequently in final, official, form.

In the Audit Report, the auditors give their opinion about the accuracy of the evidence in the *Brief* and summarize their findings about each principle. The auditors do not comment on the implication the evidence holds for the accreditation decision.

Within two weeks of receiving the Audit Report, the program faculty must correct any factual errors. At this time, the program may formally respond in writing to the findings of the audit. After correcting factual errors and considering any responses by the program faculty, the auditors submit a final Audit Report to the TEAC staff, program faculty, and Accreditation Panel.

The Audit Report includes seven major sections:

Section I: Introduction. The first part of this section contains the final and agreed upon version of the summary of the case. The second part gives the auditors' overall opinion about the trustworthiness of the *Brief* and its parts devoted to the quality principles. The auditors' judgment about the level of institutional commitment to the program and logistics of the audit are also included in the introduction.

Section II: Audit Map. This section gives a table of audit findings, displaying the number of tasks devoted to *Quality Principles I* and *II* components and the audit tasks by number that were verified, verified with error, and not verified. The purpose of the audit map is to insure that the targets adequately sampled TEAC's requirements and to give an overview and summary of the audit conclusions.

Section III: Method. This section briefly describes the character and method of the audit.

Section IV: Findings. The third part is a full report of the findings from the auditors' probes into the evidence included in the *Brief* related to each of the TEAC quality principles. It is organized by quality principle and gives a summary of the audit findings for each principle.

The findings for *Quality Principle III* are presented in tabular form showing whether or not the auditors were able to find documentation for each requirement for parity and capacity. The tables state what documentation the auditor sought and whether it was *Found, Found in Part, Not Found, Not Checked,* or *Not Available.* In cases where the documentation was incomplete or otherwise problematic, the auditors often follow-up with an audit task which is reported in connection with *Quality Principle II.*

The findings for *Quality Principles I* and *II* are presented in the following format:

Audit task (by number) and **TEAC number** (the number of the requirement of the TEAC system, 1.1-2.3, to which the target's verification is relevant)

Target: The auditors cite by page number and quotation the text, table cell entry, etc., in the *Brief* that they are attempting to verify.

Probe: The action the auditors took to verify the target is stated (e.g., interview, calculate, corroborate, pose a problem, set a task, inspect a document, etc.).

Finding: The result of the action is described in a narrative, sometimes including a table of results from the auditors' analysis. The narrative is followed by the auditors' conclusion about the target's verification, which simply states one of the following conclusions and citations about the target: Verified (cites what precisely was verified), Verified with error (cites the minor error), or Not Verified (cites the significant error in the target).

Section V: Judgment about commitment. The auditors make a determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program. In this section they refer to relevant audit tasks and may report additional evidence from surveys and interviews that bear on commitment but not necessarily on another target in the *Brief.*

Section VI: Audit Opinion. The sixth section contains the auditors' judgments, given as audit opinions, about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of each element was verified. The section contains a table (which appears below) that gives the total number of audit targets, the number that were verified, the number that had errors, the percentage verified, and percentage with errors and the audit opinion related to these percentages. If a sufficient number of the probes confirm, or fail to confirm or verify the evidence, the report explains the findings and reasoning behind the auditors' opinions. The auditors are only guided by these percentages and if they deviate from them, they give their justifications for their conclusions.

Section VII: Audit Schedule. This section simply gives the detailed schedule of the audit visit.

Audit Report of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

The audit report will have three main parts: commitment and capacity tables, verification of the program's internal audit, and the program's plan for its *Inquiry Brief,* amended as negotiated on site.

Table: Audit findings and audit opinions for the *Brief*

TEAC element	1. Number of targets	2. Number of verified targets*	3. Number of targets with errors**	2/1 %	3/1 %	Audit opinions
1.0 *Evidence of student learning*						
2.0 *Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry*						
Overall totals						

* Targets scored as **Verified** or **Verified with error**
** Targets scored as **Verified with error** or **Not verified**

The draft audit report, in addition to offering the required audit opinion about the accuracy of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and a judgment about whether the institution is committed to the program, may give, if warranted, some points for consideration about improving the program's rationale for its assessments and proposed method for supporting its claims. In their response to the audit report, the program faculty members respond to any issues they find with any of the audit task findings. However, with regard to any suggestions the auditors may have made about the rationale and assessment method, the program faculty members and the auditors craft a response that will become the program's assessment rationale and method for the future *Inquiry Brief.* The program may take as long as it requires to craft its response which becomes its final plan (a rationale and method). When it is complete, the program is placed on the agenda for the next *IBP* Panel meeting for the panel's presentation.

Response to the program's review of the audit report

The program faculty should respond within **two weeks** of receiving the draft audit report (in the case of an *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* the timeframe is more flexible, but the types of responses, discussed below, are the same).

In its response, the program faculty may correct any factual errors made by the auditors. Factual errors may include instances in which the auditors misinterpreted the evidence they analyzed, overlooked evidence presented to them, misunderstood what was stated in the *Brief,* made an error in their own calculations and analysis, or made errors in reporting their findings or the reasons for their conclusions.

The faculty members are also free to raise questions about any matter in the audit report that is unclear. The program may comment on or question the findings of the audit; however, the program faculty cannot make any corrections or changes to the *Brief* or report changes to the program following the audit.

The program faculty members are asked to thoughtfully consider the following points before making comments about the initial draft of the audit report. The scores of the tasks and the audit opinion do not reflect an opinion about the quality of the program or the degree to which the evidence in the *Brief* satisfies TEAC's quality principles and capacity standards. They reflect only an opinion about whether the *Brief* is accurate as written. The issue in the audit is only whether or not what is in the *Brief* is accurate, not whether it could be made, or was made, more accurate by additional work on the part of the program faculty or the auditors during or after the audit. The faculty should therefore resist the temptation to challenge an audit finding or opinion by pointing out that the program can now report better evidence, that it has taken corrective actions, that it has adopted new policies, and so forth.

Final audit report

After the program faculty submits its response to the initial draft of the audit report and the audit team corrects any factual errors in the findings and negotiates any other responses with the program faculty, the lead auditor will submit a final audit report to the program faculty, the audit team, TEAC staff, and state representatives (when applicable). The final report includes the program faculty's responses and the auditors' evaluation of the program faculty's responses.

Once accepted by the program faculty and the TEAC staff, the audit report becomes part of the record submitted first to the TEAC Accreditation Panel and then to the Accreditation Committee. Each body considers the report in its respective deliberations and in support of the recommendations and decisions concerning the *Brief* and the appropriate accreditation decision.

PART TWO: ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR TEAC AUDITORS
The audit team's decision-making process

Substantive decisions

Audit tasks. Before the audit, the team selects appropriate targets and formulates audit probes that comprise the initial audit tasks. In practice, the lead auditor generally collects and organizes these tasks, but all team members participate in the creation and selection of the tasks.

On-site activities. The team makes many decisions about how the audit will be conducted. These decisions are made by consensus and based on equity and special competence. The principal decisions center on the schedule and the assignment of responsibility for various audit tasks to the team members. The lead auditor, however, has the final say in these matters should consensus be elusive.

Audit report. The audit team comes to consensus on the three key issues that must be reported in the audit report:

1. The determination of whether the target of each audit task was verified, verified with error, or not verified.

2. The formulation of the correct audit opinion for *Quality Principles I* and *II* and the overall *Brief.*

3. The judgment of whether or not the institution is committed to the program.

In the unlikely event that the team cannot reach a consensus on a point, the Audit Report notes the stalemate, the reasons for it, and moves to a conclusion, or conclusions, based upon other findings and opinions. It may be that the stalemate has no bearing on an accreditation decision, but if it does, the Audit Report presents the differing options, and consequences of the options, for the Accreditation Panel's deliberation.

The lead auditor, unless the team has agreed to another plan, writes the first and final drafts of the Audit Report, in consultation with the other member(s) of the team. The precise language of the report is negotiated by consensus, and, as above, both versions of any stalemate are noted in the final Audit Report.

Guidelines for the audit strategy

The lead auditor, sometimes assisted by the director of the Accreditation Panel and TEAC's vice president for audits, selects the audit tasks. The particular **audit trail** (the sequence and nature of the audit tasks) is a matter of the auditors' professional judgments. A target is appropriate for probing if it is related to one of the elements and components of the TEAC system.

What commends one audit task over another, and what leads to some claims receiving more audit tasks than others? TEAC employs the following criteria for the crafting of the tasks that comprise the audit:

Centrality. There must be an audit task for each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC *Quality Principles I and II.* The centrality criterion for the selection of audit tasks provides a challenge for the auditors because the authors of the *Brief* are free to address the quality principles in differing ways. The auditors are required to audit targets related to each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC system, but the *Brief* authors may write claims and provide evidence that spans more than one element of the system. Because the same claim and data source may serve more than one element, a single audit task may help verify more than one part (e.g., the verification of the student teaching evaluation data may be related to claims of teaching skill, pedagogical knowledge, student services, student feedback, and subject matter knowledge). Nevertheless, the auditors must verify the evidence in the *Brief* that is associated with each claim that is related to each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC principles I and II.

Priority. Some parts of the TEAC system play a larger role in the accreditation decision than others and have a higher priority and claim on the auditor's time and effort on that account. The evidence behind *Quality Principle I,* for example, is a determi- native factor in the accreditation decision and the length of the accreditation term and for that reason it is important that the evidence be conclusively verified for components 1.1–1.5.

Quality Principle II also has a determinative role in the accreditation decision and the length of the accreditation term, which is why special attention is given to the verification of the internal audit findings. On the other hand, the evidence for *Quality Principle III* has less influence on the accreditation decision than does the evidence behind *Quality Principles I* and *II*. Thus, the audit probes of some components have a higher priority in the strategy of the audit than other components.

Variability. If the first outcome of a probe fails to confirm the target, the auditors will extend their probe until they find a stable pattern of outcomes. If the auditors cannot find a stable pattern, then it is unlikely that the target can be verified if fewer than 75 percent of probes of the target will have succeeded in confirmation.

For example, if the grade point index from a sequence of courses on the transcript in a randomly selected student file is the target of a probe to verify whether graduates mastered their teaching subject (as surely was claimed in support of *Quality Principle I*), and the probe fails to confirm the cited program index standard, then other students' transcripts need to become targets of probes until the grade point index can be discovered, confirmed, or disconfirmed.

Internal consistency and corroboration. Auditors are encouraged to seek external targets that could corroborate evidence that is in the *Brief.* If the *Brief* cites a grade point index of 3.25/4.00 in certain mathematics courses in support of the claim that students understand mathematics, the index, taking the example above, could be the target of an audit probe that could calculate the index of a sample of students to confirm that the index indeed was

3.25/4.00 more or less. In addition, the scores of the sample of students on the Praxis I (math subtest), Praxis II (in mathematics), the scores on the SAT (math), the variability in math course grades, or the math lessons in student teaching could also be probed to see if they were consistent with, and corroborated, the meaning of the math grade index.

If, to take another example, the program faculty supports a claim of institutional commitment by reporting that the median salaries of assistant professors in education are insignificantly different from the median salaries of all the institution's assistant professors, the auditors might probe other sources of institutional salary information to check if they corroborate the evidence reported in the *Brief.*

Conclusive and persuasive. Some sources of evidence are more persuasive and compelling than others. The evidence for the claim that the program's graduates possess teaching skill (1.3) might be attributed in the *Brief* to their student teaching course grades, their employers' ratings of them, their cooperating teachers' opinion, or the academic accomplishments of the graduates' own pupils. This last source of evidence, if it were available, would be more persuasive than the student teaching course grade, for example, and would be a preferred target of the probe over the target of the grades in the student teaching course.

If a program, after doing the statistical analyses for its *Brief,* discarded its data, that fact would persuasively undermine the program's claims that it was engaged in ongoing inquiry and continuous improvement because both would be dependent on the program maintaining a complete and continuing data base, which the program no longer possessed.

Rival explanations. Upon seeing the results of a survey of employers cited in support of a claim, an auditor could verify and confirm the results. The panel members might want to know more about the sample of employers than the program revealed in the *Brief.* The auditor has to consider what evidence would support a

rival hypothesis for the employer results. If the survey response rate were only 10 percent, or if the employers were also employees of the program, or if the survey instrument had a bias for positive ratings, the verified evidence would be also be consistent with an explanation that might rival the program's interpretation of the employer survey and it could be that the survey results, while accurate, might not support the program's claims after all. Even though the actual results of the survey were accurate as reported in the *Brief,* the auditors would be instructed construct probes to examine these areas of potential alternative explanation as a further way of verifying (or not) the meaning of survey evidence.

For example, if the *Brief* claims as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of the "teachers of the year" in their state are graduates of the program, the auditors could easily confirm the number and percentage. They should also probe how many teachers in the state are graduates of the program. If 90 percent of the teachers in the state are also graduates of the program, the teacher of the year data would probably not be persuasive to the Accreditation Panel. However, if only 10 percent of the state's teachers are graduates of the program, but 90 percent of the teachers of the year are graduates, the panel might be more persuaded that the teacher of the year data indicated something about the program's quality with regard to the acquisition of teaching skill.

Similarly, if the program cites as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of its graduates secure teaching positions within three months of graduation, the panel could direct the auditors to determine what the hiring rates are for the program's region. If there is a severe teacher shortage in the region, and 100 percent of applicants are routinely hired by local districts, the program's evidence for its claim would be less persuasive to the panel.

Primary sources. Whenever possible, it is better to trace the evidence back to its origin, the raw data. When the results of a survey of graduates, for example, are cited as evidence that the graduates care about their students, the verification of the results of the survey is on surer ground when the auditors inspect the

survey instrument, inspect some completed forms from graduates, re-tally a random sample of returns, and perhaps interview one or two of the respondents to see if their responses were entered correctly on the program's forms.

When an interview is taken as the primary source, it is important to establish that the source is representative of the group in question. In general, the statements of the person interviewed are not intrinsically more authentic or accurate than the statements in the *Inquiry Brief,* which the auditor is attempting to verify. With that in mind, auditors are instructed to probe primary sources and find a probe that is less dependent on what an informant says, particularly an informant who participated in writing the *Brief.*

Auditors' heuristics

The Audit Report must include a judgment, or opinion, about the trustworthiness of the program's evidence for each of the principles of the TEAC system. The auditors use the following heuristics to guide their opinion of the evidence for the quality principles as they are presented in the *Brief*.

1. A target is said to be verified when it is confirmed by at least 75 percent of the probes assigned to it. In practice this means that if one probe fails to confirm a target, at least three other probes would need to yield positive results to verify it.

2. An element (1.0–3.0), receives a clean opinion if at least 90 percent of its targets are confirmed. If more than 10 percent of the targets are not confirmed, the element cannot receive a *clean* opinion and must receive some other opinion, depending on the circumstances described below.

3. An element is given a *qualified* opinion when at least 75 percent, but less than 90 percent, of its targets are confirmed. An element that would otherwise receive a clean opinion is also given a *qualified* opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets reveal misstatements of any kind, either trivial or consequential.

4. An element is given an *adverse* opinion if more than 25 percent of its targets cannot be confirmed.

5. An element is given a *disclaimer* opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets associated with it cannot be verified because of missing data, limited access to information and informants, or evidence that the findings reported in the *Brief* are not genuine.

These five guidelines are **heuristics** for formulating an audit opinion about each element. They are not algorithms or rules: a simple counting of outcomes of probes could be misleading with regard to the trustworthiness of the *Brief*. Some audit tasks may be more revealing than others. For example, some may have targeted only minor points, and some may be merely following up on other audit tasks on a single point. The guidelines may prove unreliable in cases where the number of audit tasks is small. The audit team knows that they are not to treat the heuristic as an algorithm or rule that can be mechanically applied. If the findings suggest anomalies that make the heuristic unworkable, the auditors will rely on their good judgments, explaining in their Audit Report the difficulties they experienced and the reasons for their audit opinions.

Heuristics, by definition and design, only *guide* decision making. Because TEAC cannot predict or accommodate all possible outcomes and circumstances, the auditors make judgments when the findings are complex and lack a regular pattern. When there is doubt, the auditors will render a lower, more conservative audit opinion rather than a higher audit opinion to alert the Accreditation Panel and the Accreditation Committee to possible dangers in interpreting the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* as trustworthy and reliable. Should a TEAC auditing team make errors in judgment in these matters, the lower and more conservative audit opinions always can be adjusted in the process that requires the mutual acceptance of the Audit Report or through the TEAC appeals process.

Overall auditors' opinion. If no quality principle received an adverse or disclaimer opinion, the auditors give the *Brief* a clean audit opinion overall if 90 percent or more of the targets are verified, and they give it a qualified opinion if at least 75 percent of the targets, but less than 90 percent, are verified or if more than 25 percent of the targets have errors of any kind. The *Brief* can go forward to the Accreditation Panel *only* with a clean or quali-

fied opinion (i.e., at least 75 percent of the targets are verified overall and for each principle). It cannot go forward if an element has been awarded an adverse or disclaimer opinion. *Briefs* that cannot go forward are returned to the program faculty for reworking and resubmission.

Auditors' judgment of commitment. The auditors are charged not only with verifying the evidence for commitment, but with determining whether the evidence is sufficient to support the program's claim that the institution is committed to the program. The program faculty members are free to provide any evidence they find convincing of their institution's commitment to their program, but they must address the issue of parity between the program and the institution in *Quality Principle III* in making their case for commitment.

Before the auditors can conclude that the institution is committed to the program, there must be documentation of the evidence of parity reported in Appendix B. In forming their conclusion, the auditors are guided by the same heuristic that guides the Accreditation Panel with regard to its judgments of how much evidence is sufficient to support a claim. This heuristic, when applied to the evidence of commitment, supports the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program when at least 75 percent of the points of comparison documented by the auditors show parity or favor the program.

Parity between the program and the institution is taken as signifying the institution's commitment to the program. Unless there is a credible rival hypothesis to the contrary, it is invariably *prima facie* evidence of commitment.

But not always — for example, the mean salaries of the teacher education faculty and the mean salary for the institution as a whole could be indistinguishable and show a parity that would seemingly signify commitment. One salary might be for 12 months of effort, however, and the other for nine months of effort, or one might include overload teaching assignments while the other does not, etc. Thus, the salary parity, as reported in the *Brief,* between the program and the institution may not always indicate institutional commitment, but may indicate the institution's exploitation of the education program faculty. Or the allocations of resources to the program faculty and the institution's faculty in general may be the same, but the allocations to the education faculty may include unique costs not shared by the others (e.g., payments to cooperating teachers, a curriculum resource center, mileage for student teaching supervision, and so forth). The auditors must consider the possibility that parity in resource allocation may have come about for reasons that might signify that the institution is really not committed to the program.

While parity usually signifies commitment, the lack of parity may not be *prima facie* evidence of a lack of commitment either. For example, the faculty may claim that a discrepancy between program and institutional salaries is in fact evidence of commitment if the institution has added a disproportionately large number of new, junior-level positions to the program, positions that were not available to other programs. The auditors would have targeted this salary claim, and if they had verified the evidence for the claim, they could easily have concluded that the salary discrepancy, as explained, indicated the institution was in fact committed to the program with regard to compensation.

PART THREE: AUDIT TOOLS
The TEAC Accreditation Framework

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATE STATUS

To be eligible for candidate status in TEAC, the program's administrator (e.g., chair, dean, director, vice president) must attest by letter to the following:

0.1 Institutional accreditation
The institution giving the program is accredited by one of the regional accreditation agencies, or the equivalent. TEAC's requirement for regional accreditation, or the equivalent, of the institution offering the program provides additional assurance that the institution is administratively and financially capable and itself has a capacity for quality.

0.2 Professional licensure
The graduates of the program must have fulfilled the academic requirements for a professional license in education.

0.3 Commitment to comply with TEAC's standards
The institution has a commitment and intent to comply with TEAC's standards and requirements (fees, annual reports, etc.).

0.4 Disclosure of any actions regarding the program's accreditation status
There is an understanding of, and agreement to, the fact that TEAC, at its discretion, may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the program's status with TEAC.

0.5 Willingness to cooperate and provide needed information to TEAC
There is an agreement to disclose to TEAC, at any time, all such information as TEAC may require to carry out its auditing, evaluating, and accrediting functions.

TEAC PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE I: Evidence of candidate learning
Programs must provide sufficient evidence that candidates have learned and understood the teacher education curriculum. This evidence is verified through audit and evaluated for its consistency and sufficiency. Each component and cross-cutting theme of *Quality Principle I* must contribute to the overall goal of producing competent, caring, and qualified teachers.

1.1 Subject matter knowledge
The program candidates must understand the subject matter they will teach.

1.2 Pedagogical knowledge
The program candidates must be able to convert their knowledge of subject matter into compelling lessons that meet the needs of a wide range of pupils and students.

1.3 Caring and effective teaching skill
The program candidates must be able to teach effectively in a caring way and to act as knowledgeable professionals.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes
In meeting each of TEAC components 1.1–1.3, the program must provide evidence that its candidates have addressed the following three cross-cutting liberal education themes:

1.4.1 Learning how to learn: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned how to learn information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new situations, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills of critical reflection that will support life-long learning in their field.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

1.4.3 Technology: Candidates must be able to use appropriate technology in carrying out their professional responsibilities.

1.5 Evidence of valid assessment
The program must provide evidence regarding the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the evidence produced from the assessment method or methods that it has adopted.

2.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE II: Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry
There must be a system of inquiry, review, and quality control in place through which the faculty secures evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. Program faculty should be undertaking inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and it should modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from its inquiry.

2.1 Rationale for the assessments
There must be a rationale for the program's assessment methods that explains why the faculty selected the assessments it used, why it thinks its interpretations of the assessment results are valid, and why the criteria and standards the faculty has set as indicating success are appropriate.

2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
Where appropriate, the program must base decisions to modify its assessment systems, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum and program requirements on evidence of candidate learning.

2.3 Influential quality control system
The program must provide evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program faculty, that the quality control system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the faculty's continual improvement of the program, and that it yields the following additional and specific outcomes:

2.3.1 Curriculum: The curriculum meets the state's program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.

2.3.2 Faculty: The *Inquiry Brief,* as endorsed and accepted by the faculty, demonstrates the faculty's accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.

2.3.3 Candidates: Admissions and mentoring policies encourage the recruitment and retention of diverse candidates with demonstrated potential as professional educators, and must respond to the nation's needs for qualified individuals to serve in high demand areas and locations.

The program must monitor the quality of the support services provided to candidates to ensure that student support services contribute to candidate success in learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

2.3.4 Resources: The program faculty must monitor and seek to improve the suitability and appropriateness of program facilities, supplies, and equipment and to ensure that the program has adequate financial and administrative resources.

3.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE III: Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality

The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program, and it does this by bringing forth evidence in the ways described below.

3.1 Commitment (program parity with the institution)

In assessing whether a program has demonstrated the existence of adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment, and supplies, the auditors, Accreditation Panel, and Accreditation Committee consider a variety of factors, most notably whether the program's facilities, equipment, and supplies are proportionate to the overall institutional resources and whether the program's financial and administrative resources are proportionate to the overall institutional resources. TEAC requires parity or proportionality in six areas:

3.1.1 Curriculum: The curriculum does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution's overall standards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

3.1.2 Faculty: Faculty qualifications must be equal to or better than the statistics for the institution as a whole with regard to the attributes of the members of the faculty (e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity). See also 3.2.4.

3.1.3 Facilities: The facilities, equipment, and supplies allocated to the pro-gram by the institution, at a minimum, must be proportionate to the overall institutional resources. The program candidates, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution's facilities, equipment, and supplies.

3.1.4 Fiscal and administrative: The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution.

3.1.5 Candidate support: Student support services available to candidates in the program must be, at a minimum, equal to the level of support services provided by the institution as a whole.

3.1.6. Candidate complaints: Complaints about the program's quality must be proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints made by candidates in the institution's other programs.

3.2 Sufficient capacity for quality

The program must also show that it has adequate and sufficient capacity in the same areas. The curriculum is adequate to support a quality program that meets the candidate learning requirements of *Quality Principle I.* The program must also demonstrate that the faculty members associated with the program are qualified for their assigned duties in the program consistent with the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators. The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program. The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators. The program must make available to candidates regular and sufficient student services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog, or other appropriate documents distributed to candidates, accurate information that fairly describes the program, policies and procedures directly affecting admitted candidates in the program, charges and refund policies, grading policies, and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

The quality of a program depends on its ability to meet the needs of its candidates. One effective way to deter-

mine if those needs are met is to encourage candidates to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of candidate views about the program and responds to candidate feedback and complaints.

3.2.1. Curriculum: The curriculum must reflect an appropriate number of cred-its and credit hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I.* An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).

3.2.2. Faculty: Faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, advanced study, contributions to the field, and professional experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members must hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors than those stated above.

3.2.3. Facilities: The program must demonstrate that there are appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

If the program (or one or more of the program options) is offered via distance education, it must demonstrate that its technical infrastructure is adequate to ensure timely delivery of distance education and support services, and to accommodate current student numbers and expected near-term growth in enrollment.

3.2.4. Fiscal and administrative: The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, the institution must be financially viable, and the resources available to the program must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

The program must demonstrate that there is an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. Faculty workload obligations must be commensurate with the institution's expectations for promotion, tenure, and other program obligations.

3.2.5. Student support services: Student services available to candidates in the program must be sufficient to support successful completion of the program and success in candidate learning. In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that candidates have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.

3.2.6. Policies and practices: The program must distribute an academic calendar to candidates. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods. If the program's academic calendar coincides with the institution's academic calendar, it may distribute the institution's academic calendar.

Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the *Inquiry Brief* regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, the claims made about the program that appear in the institution's catalog, mission statements, website, and other promotional literature.

The program must have a fair and equitable published grading policy, which may be the institution's grading policy. The program must have a published transfer of credit and transfer of student enrollment policy.

If the program includes distance education, it must have well-defined processes for (1) verifying the identity of each student who participates in class or coursework (for example, a secure login and pass code, proctored examinations, the use of technologies that verify student identity); (2) protecting student privacy and notifying students of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment; and (3) published procedures to inform faculty (full-time, part-time, or adjunct) about its policies and procedures for verifying student identity.

The institution is required to keep a file of complaints from its candidates about the program's quality and must provide TEAC with access to all complaints regarding the program and their resolution.

3.3. State standards
When appropriate, usually because of TEAC's protocol agreement with a state, a third component to the TEAC capacity standards (3.3) is added, with subcomponents (3.3.1, etc.), in accordance to the state's particular additional requirements.

Nonspecific concerns
If the *Brief* contains claims and information that are not clearly related to any feature of the TEAC accreditation framework, but which nevertheless speak to the overall re-liability and trustworthiness of the *Brief,* the auditors will list them as nonspecific concerns about the accuracy of the *Brief,* and the tasks that probe these concerns will be counted in the overall audit opinion with regard to whether they were verified or not.

TEAC PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Educational Leadership and Educational Administration preparation programs seeking TEAC accreditation must satisfy the same eligibility standards and *Quality Principle II* and *III* standards as teacher education programs (above) must satisfy. The educational leadership/administration requirements for *Quality Principle I,* however, differ from the teacher education requirements and are as follows:

1.0 QUALITY PRINCIPLE I: Evidence of Candidate Learning
Programs must provide sufficient evidence that candidates have learned and understood the educational leadership curriculum. This evidence is verified through audit and evaluated for its consistency and sufficiency. Each component and cross-cutting theme of *Quality Principle I* must contribute to the overall goal of producing competent, caring, and qualified professionals.

1.1 Professional knowledge
The program faculty must provide evidence that its candidates understand organizational theory and development, human resource management, school finance and law, instructional supervision, educational policy and politics, and data analysis and interpretation.

The graduates must be prepared to create or develop (1) an ethical and productive school culture, (2) an effective instructional program, (3) a comprehensive professional staff development plan, (4) a safe and efficient learning environment, (5) a profitable collaboration with families and other community members, (6) the capacity to serve diverse community interests and needs, and (7) the ability to mobilize the community's resources in support of the school's goals.

1.2 Strategic decision-making
The program faculty must provide evidence that the

candidates know how to (1) make decisions fairly, collaboratively, and informed by research evidence; (2) formulate strategy to achieve the school's goals; and (3) articulate and communicate an educational vision that is consistent with the school's mission and the nation's democratic ideals.

1.3 Caring leadership skills

The program faculty must provide evidence that the candidates know how to act their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for all the school's pupils.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes

In meeting each of TEAC components 1.1–1.3, the program must demonstrate that its candidates have addressed the following three cross-cutting liberal education themes:

1.4.1 Learning how to learn: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned how to learn information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new situations, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills of critical reflection that will support life-long learning in their field.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

1.4.3 Technology: Candidates must be able to use appropriate technology in carrying out their professional responsibilities.

1.5 Evidence of valid assessment

The program must provide evidence regarding the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the evidence produced from the assessment method or methods that it has adopted.

Parity and capacity tables

Table C.1 Quality Control of Capacity: Monitoring and Control (Component 2.3)

Documents were *Found, Found in Part, Not Found, Not Checked* or *Not Available for Inspection* with regard to parity between the program and institution in each area of TEAC's Requirements

Finding	Target (choose at least one for each subcomponent)	Auditors' Probe
2.3.1. Curriculum		
	Statement from the state liaison officer to verify that the program graduates are entitled to state licensure.	
	Formal notification from the state that it has approved the program.	
2.3.2 Faculty		
	Minutes of a meeting show that the *Brief Proposal* was considered and approved by the faculty.	
	Faculty have an accurate and balanced understanding of the field.	
2.3.3 Candidates		
	Admissions policy of the program is published.	
	Admissions policies encourage diversity and service in high demand areas.	
2.3.4 Resources		
	Satisfactory TEAC survey results from faculty & students.	
	Resources monitored and enhanced by the program's quality control system.	

Table C.2 Parity between the Program and the Institution (Component 3.1)

Documents were *Found, Found in Part, Not Found, Not Checked* or *Not Available for Inspection* with regard to parity between the program and institution in each area of TEAC's Requirements

Finding	Target (choose at least one for each subcomponent)	Auditors' Probe
3.1.1 Curriculum		
	The number of credits required for de-gree at the institution and program are comparable.	
3.1.2 Faculty		
	The proportions of full, associate, and assistant professors in the program and in the institution show parity.	
	The proportion of courses taught by temporary faculty in the institution and in the program shows parity.	
	The percentage of faculty with terminal degrees in program and in the institution shows parity.	
	The percentage of faculty on tenure track in program and in the institution shows parity.	
	The faculty student ratios for the program and the institution show parity.	
	The proportions of gender and race of the program faculty and the institution show parity.	
3.1.3 Facilities		
	The space and facilities assigned to the program and to similar programs shows parity.	
3.1.4 Fiscal and administrative		
	The average salary of program faculty and the average faculty salary at the institution show parity.	
	The budget allocations per student in the program and in the institution show parity.	
3.1.5 Candidate support		
	The program students have the same access to services as other students in programs at the institution.	
3.1.6 Candidate complaints		
	Candidate complaints proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints by candidates in the institution's other programs.	

Table C.3 Quality Control of Capacity: Sufficiency (Component 3.2)

Documents were *Found, Found in Part, Not Found, Not Checked* or *Not Available for Inspection* with regard to parity between the program and institution in each area of TEAC's Requirements

Finding	Target (choose at least one for each subcomponent)	Auditors' Probe
3.2.1 Curriculum		
	Credit hours required in the subject matter are tantamount to an academic major.	
	Credit hours required in pedagogical subjects are tantamount to an academic minor.	
3.2.2 Faculty		
	Full-time faculty selected at random have a terminal degree (major or minor) in the areas of course subjects they teach.	
	Adjunct faculty selected at random have a terminal degree (major or minor) in the areas of course subjects they teach.	
	Courses selected at random taught in the current semester by part-time faculty whose assignment and degree field align.	
	Randomly selected courses are taught by the regular faculty whose vita indicates qualifications to teach courses to which the person was assigned.	
3.2.3 Facilities		
	Satisfactory TEAC survey results from program faculty.	
3.2.3 Facilities		
	Auditors' observations of at least two class sessions find that the rooms and equipment constitute adequate instructional settings.	
	In the case of distance education programs, auditors verify that the technical infrastructure is adequate to ensure timely delivery of distance education and support services.	
3.2.4 Fiscal and Administrative		
	Statement from financial auditor attesting to the financial health of the institution.	
	Regional accreditor's finding of financial soundness.	
	A composite score of 1.5 or higher from USDE in its Report on Financial Statements.	
	Education faculty teaching load aligns with the institution average.	
	Program administrators are qualified for their positions.	
	Resources are adequate to administer the program.	

3.2.5 Candidate support	
Satisfactory TEAC survey results from students and faculty.	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
An academic calendar is published.	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
Random selections of two pages in the catalog that deal with the program have no inaccurate statements about the program.	
Claims made in program website and catalog are consistent with claims made in the *Brief.*	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
Grading policy of the program is published and is accurate.	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
Transfer of credit policy and transfer of student enrollment policy are published.	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
Program has procedures for student complaints.	
Program provides for student evaluations of courses.	

3.2.6 Policies and practices	
If the audited program or any option within the program is delivered in a distance education format, the auditors verify that the program has (1) the capacity to ensure timely delivery of distance education and support services and to accommodate current student numbers and expected near-term growth in enrollment and (2) a process to verify the identity of students taking distance education courses.	

Table C.4 Call for Comment

Call for comment to third parties distributed as required by TEAC policy	# Positive Comments	# Negative Comments	# Mixed Comments
[Found, Not Found, etc., as appropriate]			

Table C.5 New York State Protocol Provisions

(see also Addendum 1: New York State Education Department Computation of Faculty Load

Finding	Target (choose at least one for each subcomponent)	Auditors' Probe
3.3.1		
	There must be evidence that the teacher education candidates' experiences in the schools were a factor in the program's satisfying TEAC's 1.3, evidence of caring teaching skill.	
3.3.2		
	There must be evidence that the students/pupils in the school learned the lessons taught by the student teacher (also part of 1.3).	
3.3.3		
	There must be evidence that there is a formal partnership between the program and the clinical sites (e.g., a negotiated agreement, and/or a joint board or advisory committee).	
3.3.4		
	The program's quality control system (3.2) must have a procedure for monitoring the success of its graduates in the field.	

Template for the Summary of the Case

<div align="center">

Summary of the Case

Institution name

Program name[1]

Audit Dates

</div>

The Summary of the Case is written by the auditors and approved by program faculty. The Summary reflects the auditors' understanding of the case the faculty is making for accreditation.

Authorship and approval of the *Inquiry Brief:*

The *Inquiry Brief* was written by [name(s)], and was approved by [the division name] faculty on date.

Introduction:

1 paragraph about the institution, which may include:

- location (city and state as well as characterization as urban, rural, "20 miles from New York City," or the like)

- number of students

- student makeup (undergraduate/graduate, traditional/non-traditional, homogeneous/diverse)

- institutional mission and/or character (including religious affiliation, land-grant status, research classification, or the like)

- other significant characteristics, if any (e.g., special relationship with another institution such as branch-campus status or shared campus)

and which must include:

- **number of (full-time) faculty at institution**

- **number of students enrolled at institution**

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[1] Program options include: [list program options]   The state of [state name], at its discretion, offers teaching licenses to program completers in these option areas.

Option Name	Level (UG, grad, post-bacc)	Number of completers in previous academic year (specify year)	Number of students enrolled in current academic year (specify year)

1–2 paragraphs about the program, which may include:

- defining characteristics of the program

- organizational structure of the program within the institution

and which must include:

- **level(s) (undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, graduate)**

- **number of (full-time) faculty in program**

- **number of students enrolled in program**

- **number of completers in most recent year reported**

Program claims:

[List claims in clear language]

Evidence supporting the claims:

[list each measure (e.g., "Student Teaching Evaluation") or measure category (e.g., "NYSCTE Exams"), indicate what claims the measure supports, provide a brief description of the measure including reliability and validity evidence, and give a quick summary of the results:

Example — Evaluation Ratings (Claim 1, Claim 2, Claim 3, cross-cutting themes)

The student teaching evaluation is based on the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and is modeled after the Student Teaching Observation Report of Augsburg College (MN) and the Center of Pedagogy's "Junior Faculty Progress Report: Indicators for Evaluation" at Montclair University (NJ). Student teachers are rated with the evaluation form 7–8 times by their assistant instructors (university supervisors) and 4 times by their cooperating teachers. The TPP staff have identified specific items that measure aspects of each claim and cross-cutting theme. Scores by the two sets of raters correlated significantly for items relating to each of these six categories (claims and cross-cutting themes). In all categories, mean ratings for the sampled students were greater than 3.5 on a scale in which 3 denotes "satisfactory" and 4 denotes "accomplished."

Internal audit:

Include descriptions of:

- sampling

- organization (e.g., by TEAC component, by faculty quality/program quality/student learning quality, etc.)

- other relevant procedures]

The internal audit committee probed [list targets] and found the quality control system to be working as designed [or modify as appropriate].

Plans for program improvement:

- [see Discussion and Plan section of *Brief* and/or conclusion of internal audit as reported in Appendix A]

Statement regarding commitment and capacity:

The faculty concluded that institution is committed to program name and that there is sufficient capacity to offer a quality program (or modify as appropriate).

PART FOUR: PRACTICAL MATTERS FOR THE TEAC AUDITOR

I am a TEAC auditor. When will TEAC call on me to do an audit?

During the formative evaluation, TEAC staff review drafts of the *Brief*. When TEAC finds the *Brief* complete, it is declared "auditable" or ready for the audit, and the program submits a final version of the *Brief* both electronically and in printed format. Only after an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is declared auditable will TEAC confirm the scheduling of an audit of the program.

At that time, TEAC calls on its current pool of available auditors. In selecting auditors for a particular audit, TEAC considers the auditor's availability, geographic proximity, and familiarity with the institutional type or program.

When does TEAC conduct audits?

Because TEAC audits programs only while courses are in full session, with most students and faculty on campus, there are two audit periods during each academic year: from September 15 to December 15; and from January 15 to May 15. The table below presents the schedule of actions from the time a *Brief* is declared auditable through the decision about the program's accreditation.

Should I plan on working through the weekend?

Because the audit must take place at a time when the auditors have access to faculty, staff, students, and facilities, the audit is usually scheduled on weekdays. However, if the audit begins on a Monday, the team members would travel on Sunday and convene for an organizational meeting in the evening. Similarly, the audit might end on a Friday afternoon, but the team would spend part of Friday evening and Saturday in their post-audit activities.

Table: TEAC audit schedule 2010–2013

Inquiry Brief declared auditable no later than	Audit period		Reports and responses completed by	Panel meeting*	Committee meeting*
	From	**to**			
2010–2011 season					
Aug. 1, 2010	Sept. 1, 2010	Nov. 30, 2010	Jan. 1, 2011	Feb. 2011	March 2011
Nov. 1, 2010	Dec. 1, 2010	Feb. 28, 2011	April 1, 2011	May 2011	June 2011
Feb. 1, 2011	March 1, 2011	May 31, 2011	July 1, 2011	Aug. 2011	Sept. 2011
2011–2012 season					
Aug. 1, 2011	Sept. 1, 2011	Nov. 30, 2011	Jan. 1, 2012	Feb. 2012	March 2012
Nov. 1, 2011	Dec. 1, 2011	Feb. 28, 2012	April 1, 2012	May 2012	June 2012
Feb. 1, 2012	March 1, 2012	May 31, 2012	July 1, 2012	Aug. 2012	Sept. 2012
2012–2013 season					
Aug. 1, 2012	Sept. 1, 2012	Nov. 30, 2012	Jan. 1, 2013	Feb. 2013	March 2013
Nov. 1, 2012	Dec. 1, 2012	Feb. 28, 2013	April 1, 2013	May 2013	June 2013
Feb. 1, 2013	March 1, 2013	May 31, 2013	July 1, 2013	Aug. 2013	Sept. 2013

* The exact date for the panel and committee meetings will be scheduled at the close of each audit period.

Who are the other TEAC auditors?

Your fellow TEAC auditors are faculty and administrators from colleges and universities and other education professionals who have received auditor training from TEAC; they are staff from state education agencies; and they are practitioners in the K–12 schools. At least one member of the audit team is a TEAC staff member. TEAC will provide special training for the practitioners and others who are members of the on-site audit team. Each audit team meets before the audit to review the TEAC principles and audit process and discuss the strategy for the particular audit.

Will we have time to meet together before the campus visit starts?

Each team communicates prior to the audit by phone and/or e-mail to prepare for the audit. As noted above, when the team reaches the audit site, they convene for an organizational meeting before meeting with the program faculty to review the TEAC principles and audit process and to discuss the strategy for the particular audit.

Who arranges the logistics and the schedule for the audit?

The lead auditor works with the audit coordinator designated by the program to put together the audit schedule, make logistical arrangements, and communicate this information to the audit team.

What role does TEAC staff play in the audit?

Prior to the audit, a TEAC formative evaluator works with the program faculty on preparing its *Brief.* Once the *Brief* is prepared, a TEAC staff auditor working in conjunction with the Vice President for Audits declares the *Brief* to be auditable. The Vice President for Audits also supervises the TEAC audit process and reviews audit reports. The director of the Accreditation Panel participates in developing the audit strategy. The lead auditor, who is usually a TEAC staff auditor, writes the first draft of the summary of the case; formulates appropriate audit tasks; prepares and organizes the TEAC forms that are used in the audit; manages, conducts, and coordinates the audit visit and visit logistics (with the program's audit coordinator); writes the first draft of the audit report for review by the audit team and TEAC staff; prepares and edits the final draft of the audit report. Throughout the process, the Vice President for Membership facilitates communication between the program and TEAC, and TEAC's Chief Financial Officer handles the financial aspects of the audit (invoices the program, manages the reimbursement process). In states with a protocol agreement with TEAC, the Vice President for State Relations informs state representatives of the audit schedule and facilitates their participation in the audit.

Are my expenses covered?

Yes. Generally the program pays for lodging directly; if otherwise, you will be reimbursed for the expense. You may book travel through TEAC's travel agency to avoid out-of-pocket expenses. For other charges, you should complete an expense reimbursement form and submit it to TEAC with original itemized receipts.

TEAC's accreditation framework
TEAC's principles and standards

0.0 Eligibility for the program's candidate accreditation status
- 0.1 Institutional accreditation by one of the regional accreditation agencies, or the equivalent
- 0.2 Professional licensure available to graduates
- 0.3 Commitment to comply with TEAC's standards
- 0.4 Disclosure of any actions regarding the program's accreditation status
- 0.5 Willingness to cooperate and provide needed information to TEAC

1.0 *Quality Principle I:* Evidence of candidate learning [*Educational leadership components in italics*]
- 1.1 Evidence of candidates' subject matter knowledge
  Evidence of candidates' professional knowledge
- 1.2 Evidence of candidates' pedagogical knowledge
  Evidence of candidates' strategic decision-making
- 1.3 Evidence of candidates' caring and effective teaching skill
  Evidence of candidates' caring leadership skills
- 1.4 Evidence of the cross-cutting liberal education themes
  - 1.4.1 Learning how to learn
  - 1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy
  - 1.4.3 Technology
- 1.5 Evidence of valid interpretations of the assessments

2.0 *Quality Principle II:* Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry
- 2.1 Rationale for assessments
- 2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
- 2.3 Influential quality control system
  - 2.3.1 **Curriculum** meets professional license requirements
  - 2.3.2 **Faculty** accept TEAC goal and program's *Inquiry Brief / Inquiry Brief Proposal* and have an accurate and balanced understanding of the field
  - 2.3.3 **Candidates**: admissions policies encourage diversity and service in high-demand areas and student services contribute to candidate success in learning
  - 2.3.4 **Resources** monitored and enhanced by the program's quality control system

3.0 *Quality Principle III:* Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality
- 3.1 Commitment (parity)
  - 3.1.1 **Curriculum** meets institutional standards and degree requirements
  - 3.1.2 **Faculty** qualifications are equal to or better than the statistics for the institution as a whole
  - 3.1.3 **Facilities** are proportionate to the overall institutional resources
  - 3.1.4 **Fiscal and administrative** resources adequate to promote candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I* and in parity with the institution
  - 3.1.5 **Candidate support** equal to the level of support services provided by the institution as a whole
  - 3.1.6 **Candidate complaints** proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints by candidates in the institution's other programs
- 3.2 Capacity (sufficiency)
  - 3.2.1 **Curriculum** reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I*
  - 3.2.2 **Faculty** are qualified for their teaching assignments
  - 3.2.3 Facilities are appropriate and adequate to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I*
  - 3.2.4 **Fiscal and administrative**: institution is financially sound and there is an appropriate level of institutional resources for faculty development
  - 3.2.5 **Candidate support** services are sufficient to support successful completion of the program
  - 3.2.6 **Policies and practices** are adequate for program quality and satisfy federal requirements

State standards: When appropriate because of TEAC's protocol agreement with a state, a third component to the TEAC capacity standards (3.3) is added, with subcomponents (3.3.1, etc.) in accordance to the state's particular requirements.

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For more information about TEAC, see

www.teac.org