

6/27/2022

## ODHE— AAQEP COOPERATION AGREEMENT

between the  
Ohio Department of Higher Education  
and the  
Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation

This agreement establishes a framework for cooperation between the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) with regard to quality assurance activities in support of educator preparation in the State of Ohio. The purpose of this agreement is to support quality assurance, continuous improvement, and innovation in educator preparation by entities approved by ODHE as they seek and maintain national accreditation through AAQEP.

AAQEP affirms ODHE's efforts to ensure quality preparation of educators to meet the needs of Ohio's children, families, schools, and communities and commits to ensuring quality educator preparation by providers approved by ODHE. By entering this agreement, ODHE affirms AAQEP's mission of promoting and recognizing quality educator preparation that strengthens the education profession's ability to serve all students, schools, and communities.

### 1. Standards Used in Quality Assurance Reviews

Quality assurance reviews conducted by AAQEP in the State of Ohio will be guided by the current version of the AAQEP standards (available at [www.aaqep.org](http://www.aaqep.org)) and in keeping with AAQEP policy regarding the application of those standards. In conducting reviews of programs approved by ODHE, AAQEP will require that all relevant ODHE standards and rules and/or regulations be addressed.

In addition, providers are welcome to orient their quality assurance review to other relevant professional standards (for example, those from professional associations such as the National Council for the Social Studies, International Literacy Association, National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, International Society for Technology in Education, etc.).

### 2. Scope of Quality Assurance Reviews

The scope of AAQEP accreditation sought by providers in Ohio must include all programs (initial and advanced) recognized and/or approved by ODHE that require continuous accreditation as specified by ODHE.

In addition to programs specified above, the provider may, at its discretion, choose to include additional programs of study leading to a degree or certificate designed for those intending to work as, or already working as, educational professionals. For such programs of study, where no state standards are specified, the provider shall identify any standards in addition to the AAQEP standards to which its program(s) is(are) aligned.

### 3. Quality Assurance Review Process

All quality assurance reviews conducted by AAQEP will be guided by AAQEP's policies and procedures as specified in the *Guide to AAQEP Accreditation*, available at [www.aaqep.org](http://www.aaqep.org). AAQEP's process includes an optional proposal review stage two to three years prior to a

scheduled site visit. All Quality Assurance Reviews include an off-site review two months prior to each site visit, conducted virtually, which ODHE staff are welcome to attend, and an on-site visit the scope of which is determined by program size and complexity.

#### **4. Quality Review Team Composition**

AAQEP will appoint a sufficient number of Quality Review Team members to each review case to ensure that the review is carried out thoroughly and efficiently. Each AAQEP review team will include at least one educational practitioner from Ohio nominated by the provider hosting the review; that practitioner will receive training and support from AAQEP. The local practitioner(s) will support the review team's understanding of and respect for the local and Ohio educational context.

In addition to the AAQEP-appointed members, one or more ODHE staff members may participate as observers. Other observers, including those seeking a better understanding of the AAQEP process, may participate as agreed to by AAQEP and the host provider.

One or more ODHE staff and/or consultants may be assigned by the department to observe a site visit. The provider seeking accreditation will be responsible for the costs of travel and lodging for all state-assigned observers.

#### **5. Reviewer Preparation and Qualifications**

All review team members will meet AAQEP preparation and quality requirements. Reviewer training and professional learning opportunities will be made available to ODHE staff at no cost (though AAQEP will not cover travel expenses); ODHE observers need not have participated in the training as a condition for joining review teams as observers.

#### **6. Relation of Accreditation to Program Approval**

An Ohio EPP may choose to undergo a program review process through specialized professional associations or ODHE when pursuing AAQEP accreditation and is encouraged to use the data gathered during the program review process to inform AAQEP accreditation.

ODHE has responsibility for program approval. In granting program approval, ODHE may utilize information generated from AAQEP's accreditation review(s) of an EPP, including but not limited to an Accreditation Commission decision on AAQEP accreditation and the assignment of any concerns and/or conditions, as described in AAQEP policy.

The State will periodically review its program review requirements against the AAQEP standards and policies and will, in a timely manner, make AAQEP aware of any conflicts or potential inconsistencies so that all parties to this agreement are aware of any such issues and can work constructively together to minimize any challenges that may arise from them.

#### **7. Accreditation Decisions**

AAQEP accreditation decisions are made by the AAQEP Accreditation Commission. Accreditation statuses and terms are detailed in AAQEP's *Guide* and policy documents, available at [www.aaqep.org](http://www.aaqep.org). Full accreditation is for a term of 7 years. Observers from ODHE are welcome to attend meetings of the Accreditation Commission at which cases of Ohio providers are considered (meetings are typically conducted via video conference). Accreditation decisions, including the reports on which decisions are based and the Accreditation Commission's rationale for each decision, will be shared with the designated office at ODHE, which for purposes of this agreement is: [EdPrep@higereducation.ohio.gov](mailto:EdPrep@higereducation.ohio.gov) and the ODHE EdPrep primary contact.

## **8. Communication and Logistics of Collaboration**

Providers seeking AAQEP accreditation will ensure that ODHE is apprised of the schedule of accreditation activities, particularly of target site visit dates; providers will also send electronically a final copy of or links to the final version of their Quality Assurance Report (the self-study) to ODHE at the same time they provide it to AAQEP.

AAQEP will communicate scheduled times of its on-site reviews with ODHE staff six to twelve months prior to the event taking place. Where joint or concurrent visits are desired, AAQEP staff will coordinate logistics with designated ODHE staff and the provider. AAQEP will also apprise designated ODHE staff of the schedule of Accreditation Commission meetings at which cases from Ohio providers will be considered. In addition, AAQEP will provide designated ODHE staff with copies of all reports or official letters for Ohio providers generated by the review team and by the Accreditation Commission.

## **9. AAQEP Capacity Review and Formative Support Options**

AAQEP will make available to Ohio providers, in cooperation with and at the discretion of ODHE, two additional services:

- At ODHE's request, AAQEP will conduct capacity reviews of entities seeking first-time approval as an educator preparation provider. Such reviews will be conducted prior to the operation of the program to provide ODHE with a third-party review to inform a program approval decision. Such reviews will be designed and conducted in partnership with ODHE using the AAQEP standards as the framework.
- AAQEP also facilitates program and provider improvement for entities that have identified specific shortcomings in their work, including cases where shortcomings have been identified through external evaluations such as Ohio or accreditation reviews. AAQEP will enter into an agreement with the provider and ODHE to establish a timeline, priorities, and outcomes for such reviews.

## **10. Membership**

AAQEP views cooperation among accreditors, educator preparation providers, and ODHE as essential to effective quality assurance. It enters into this agreement with the intent of supporting both ODHE and providers authorized by it in ensuring the preparation of excellent and effective teachers and other professional educators. ODHE agrees to join AAQEP as a state member at no cost in support of these goals.

In support of shared goals, AAQEP will provide supportive services including workshops and webinars to providers in Ohio at a reasonable cost. ODHE staff may participate in any AAQEP activities offered within Ohio at no cost (AAQEP cannot cover travel expenses, meals, or lodging). AAQEP will also provide one ODHE staff member with a no-cost registration to its annual Quality Assurance Symposium and provide any additional ODHE staff registration at the reduced member rate. In addition, ODHE staff may participate in other AAQEP professional learning events held in Ohio or virtually, including reviewer training, at no cost (travel, etc., excepted, as above).

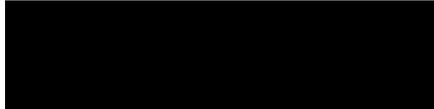
This agreement is valid from the date of the latest signature below through June 2027, unless otherwise amended by the mutual agreement of AAQEP and the Ohio Department of Higher Education.



June 27, 2022

Mark LaCelle-Peterson  
CEO and President,  
AAQEP

Date



7/26/22

Randy Gardner  
Chancellor  
Ohio Department of Higher Education

Date

Michelle  
Chavanne



## ADDENDUM

### ODHE-AAQEP COOPERATION AGREEMENT

This Addendum (the "Addendum") supplements and clarifies Sections 3 and 7 of the Ohio-AAQEP Cooperation Agreement between the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (original agreement dated 6/27/2022 and executed on July 26, 2022). These changes make available the additional accreditation status of Initial Accreditation to educator preparation providers in the State of Ohio. All changes are effective from the date of the latest signature below.

In addition to the current specification of the quality review process (Section 3), this agreement includes AAQEP's Initial Accreditation process and incorporates this clarification: Quality Assurance reviews leading to Initial Accreditation status include a virtual review which ODHE staff are welcome to attend; the size of the virtual review is determined by program size and complexity.

In addition to the current statement on accreditation decisions (Section 7), this agreement includes recognition of award of Initial Accreditation status by the AAQEP Accreditation Commission. It further recognizes that, while Initial Accreditation is awarded for not more than 5 years from the date of the decision, for providers in Ohio, the status will be recognized by ODHE for not more than two years from the date of the decision.

All other terms and conditions under the Original Agreement remain unchanged and in effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Addendum to the Original Agreement as of the date and year set forth below.

For AAQEP

 11/9/2022

Mark LaCelle-Peterson

CEO and President

For ODHE

 m/c

Randy Gardner

Chancellor

Michelle Digitally signed by  
Michelle Chavanne  
Date: 2022.11.15  
14:41:58 -0500  
Chavanne