



Questions and Answers for AAQEP Site Visit Observers

AAQEP's approach to accreditation embraces transparency and collaboration, and observers are welcome at site visits, at the discretion of the host provider. Commonly asked questions about observer participation are answered here.

Who can observe a site visit and why?

Some site visit observers are AAQEP members preparing for a future visit on their own campus. Other observers, such as state representatives, may be invited by the provider to familiarize them with AAQEP's approach to accreditation or because state partnership agreements with AAQEP call for their attendance.¹ Finally, AAQEP staff members and site visit liaisons may observe visits to monitor the process and assess associated policies and procedures.

What access do observers have to documents, interviews, and reviewer meetings?

As an observer, you will be given access to the provider's self-study (Quality Assurance Report) and may attend stakeholder interviews at the discretion of the host provider. You will not have access to Quality Review Team documents or to team-only meetings during the site visit.

What are the expectations of a site visit observer?

Professionalism and courtesy are expected of all parties in an AAQEP review. Keep in mind that as an observer, you are a guest whose presence on campus is at the discretion of the provider. You will receive a schedule for your observation prior to the visit, but occasionally, extenuating circumstances may arise in which the provider or the team lead may ask you to not attend a particular stakeholder interview or to leave the room. Site observers are expected to abide by any such requests.

Is there anything I need to do to prepare prior to the visit?

Before the site visit, you are expected to complete Module 1 of AAQEP's online reviewer training to familiarize yourself with AAQEP's approach to accreditation. Staff give approved observers access to the training. You will also need to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to your arrival at the site visit.

¹ These guidelines may vary for state representatives whose state has a memorandum of agreement with AAQEP. See individual MOAs for details.

If I want to observe a site visit, do I have to stay for the entire duration?

No. Although there is no requirement to stay for all of the visit, please communicate your intentions with the host provider and the team lead before the visit.

Is there a charge to observe a site visit?

No, but you will be responsible for covering your own costs (travel, accommodations, meals) associated with the visit. You also may need to reimburse the host provider for any costs incurred on your behalf (such as catering).

How may I use what I learn as a site visit observer?

Professional judgment and courtesy should direct how you use what you've learned at a site visit. If you wish to share any information, it is expected that you will seek permission from the host provider and use appropriate acknowledgment.

How do I sign up to observe a site visit?

Send your request (and any questions) to AAQEP Director of Accreditation Services Sara Hiller at s.hiller@aaqep.org, who will contact the provider to request permission.