

Highlights of the CAEP Consolidated Handbook

January 31, 2020

The CAEP Consolidated Handbook brings together the two most recent CAEP handbooks—for Advanced preparation (November 2017) and Initial preparation (May 2018)—into a single volume.

The earlier handbooks shifted CAEP guidelines for accreditation review to a single core procedure, replacing the previous CAEP options for pathways. Like them, the Consolidated Handbook:

- groups standards by their central purpose, balancing EPP-wide functions (*Standards 5, A.5 and cross-cutting themes*), with candidates and preparation (*Standards 1, 2, 3 and A.1, A.2, A3*), and results (*Standards 4 and A.4*).
- identifies key concepts with interpretive descriptions for each standard, together with examples of evidence as well as prompts and reflection questions to help EPPs develop their case for each standard (*e.g., see pp. 35-45 for Standards 1 and A.1*)

The Consolidated Handbook aligns the sections relating to Initial and to Advanced preparation side-by-side so that similarities and differences are readily apparent. Here is a summary of new features:

1. **Elimination of the “required” components label**—This was a label that had been applied for the four components of Standard 4, the continuous improvement and annual reporting components of Standard 5, and the academic criteria in component 3.2. Board action in June 2018 meant that the seven components were not to be treated as if they were additional standards. The Handbook’s examples describe characteristics of evidence that EPPs could provide (*see, e.g., Standards 4 and A.4, pp. 65-75*). The Appendix C Evidence Review Guidelines describe examples of “sufficient” evidence (*see, e.g., Standard 4 pp. 127-131, and A.4, pp. 131—134*).
2. **Provision of more explicit guidance for the diversity cross-cutting theme**—Following discussions at several meetings, the CAEP Board

adopted an expanded definition for the diversity cross-cutting theme (in December 2017) and considered CAEP’s planned implementation steps for that new definition, based on advice from the Equity and Diversity Committee. The implementation steps were included in the 2018 Initial Handbook; they are retained and written more clearly in the Consolidated Handbook:

- The text guides EPPs to respond to the diversity theme as explicitly identified in Standards 1, 2 and 3 for Initial Licensure, and A.2 and A.3 at the Advanced level. (*See chart, pp. 29, 30*)
- CAEP also describes aspects of the diversity theme to be addressed at the EPP-wide level (*See Part B, section v, pp. 20, 21 and pp. 28-30*) The focus is on:
 - a. the EPP’s own analysis of its responsiveness to the diversity theme built into CAEP’s standards;
 - b. how the EPP has used whatever diversity it has to help ensure that candidates are prepared to teach in America’s diverse P-12 classrooms; and
 - c. the challenge goals each EPP has set for itself to move toward a greater level of responsiveness to the diversity in America’s schools and to foster equity. (*See key concepts, p. 28 and self-study prompts and reflection questions, p. 31.*)

The CAEP guidelines acknowledge that each EPP has its own unique context for diversity. Challenges for each EPP differ in both kind and degree, and appropriate evidence will differ as well.

3. **Creation of an additional evidence option for the writing criterion in component 3.2**—The CAEP Board approved (December 2018) an alternative form of evidence for candidate writing proficiency that can be used instead of the 2021 50th percentile writing criterion. The option is not suggested as “equivalent to” the 50th percentile measures; it is a different approach. The alternative would encourage EPPs to use their own assessments of writing proficiency based on writing tasks similar to those typically required of practicing educators. (*See pp. 60, 61 explanation in evidence examples for Standards 3.2 and A.3.2; and Appendix F, p. 151 for complete description.*)
4. **Encourage rigorous reviews of individual preparation programs so that any evidence and feedback can be applied to build the EPP’s case for**

Standard 1—CAEP encourages EPP participation in rigorous review of preparation programs, either through external procedures like that of SPAs or their state, or through an internal one they might undertake. Such reviews can provide valuable information about candidates’ developing knowledge and professional skills in a discipline-specific field, and can inform EPPs about the merits and challenges of the preparation program itself. They can also provide a head start for an EPP’s accreditation self-study report when the program review evidence accumulated from the reviews is similar to that needed to support the EPP’s Standards 1 or A.1 case. There are three options available:

- SPA program review continues to be an available choice in which EPPs volunteer to participate, or participate as a state requirement, and for which they may earn national recognition from the appropriate SPA.
- State reviews of individual preparation programs differ from state to state. Some require evidence for discipline-specific candidate proficiencies based on state standards in a licensure area.
- Under CAEP Evidence Review of Standards 1 and A.1, EPPs may ensure that candidates have opportunities to learn and apply discipline-specific content and pedagogical knowledge in the area for which they are seeking a P-12 license, certificate, or endorsement.

SPA recognition decisions or state program approval actions are not, in themselves, evidence that Standards 1 and A.1 are met. However, each of the three options provides opportunities for EPPs to develop assessment results demonstrating candidate proficiencies in their field of specialization, including candidate capabilities in each of the four InTASC categories: learners and learning, content knowledge, instructional practice, and professional responsibilities.

When the CAEP Evidence Review option is selected—for example, when there is no SPA for preparation programs (such as elementary education) or in a case when an EPP chooses not to conduct a SPA review—there will be no separate, pre-self-study review process, and no national recognition by a SPA. The EPP’s evidence will simply be provided as partial fulfillment of its case for Standards 1 and A.1.

(See additional implementation features on program review and Standard 1, pp. 18-20; examples of evidence for discipline-specific candidate attainment, pp. 37-43; and descriptions of sufficient evidence for Initial, pp. 95, 96 and for Advanced, p. 113.)

5. Evidence Review Guidelines (Appendix C) have been created as an evaluation framework—CAEP standards require that site visitors and, finally, the Accreditation Council, make decisions about whether or not the evidence they examine is sufficient. Most of those decisions are based on collective professional judgments. For the Consolidated Handbook, CAEP has heard many comments and consulted with site visitors and the leadership of the Accreditation Council. The result, in Appendix C, will provide important information for EPPs about the basis for evaluation of their evidence.

Appendix C describes *examples* of the characteristics and sources of evidence that are “sufficient” or “below sufficient.” It is intended to build a shared understanding by site visitors and Council members, making their professional judgments consistent across the wide variety of evidence they are called upon to evaluate for accreditation.