





Reviewing the Documentation

Prior to the site visit, the team needs to have a thorough understanding of the institution as presented in the self-study and supporting documentation. Your analysis of these materials will help you decide which additional materials to request and which questions you'll ask on site; develop the agenda; and draft an outline for the report. Part of your role is to compare the self-study to the museum staff's actual practices and knowledge and communicate any differences to the Accreditation Commission.

The documentation includes:

- *A Guide to the Characteristics of an Accreditable Museum and the Accreditation Commission's Expectations*: They are standards of operations expected of a museum receiving accreditation. Use it to guide your review and analysis of the documentation (see pages D5–D22).
- *The Museum's Self-Study Questionnaire*: the comprehensive questionnaire surveying all aspects of operations completed by the museum
- *The Museum's Self-Study Supporting Documentation*: the plans, policies, and other relevant documentation supporting the self-study. These materials will be sent to the Team Member first, to be forwarded to the Team Contact at least three weeks prior to the site visit date.
- *Interim Approval Letter* (for initial accreditation review only): the letter to the museum from the Accreditation Commission citing specific areas of concern that will be reviewed by the Visiting Committee. Any areas cited must be addressed in the narrative report.
- *Self-Study Checklist*: the staff review of the self-study that identifies areas of incomplete documentation or concerns that should be reviewed by the Visiting Committee (indicated by a VC next to the topic). **Any areas cited must be addressed in the narrative report.**
- *Previous Narrative Report and Previous Decision Letter*: For subsequent reviews, the previous report(s) will be included in your materials. A key aspect of a subsequent review is the progress made by the institution since the previous review, especially in areas cited as concerns. **Any areas cited must be addressed in the narrative report.**

 *Develop a rough outline or list of key points to be covered in the report. This will remind you later of your observations and conclusions based on the documentation.*

 *As you review documentation, start a list of questions. Before the visit, sort the questions by appropriate interview (registrar, governing authority) and bring on the visit. This will help the review to be comprehensive and minimize follow-up calls.*