

Virtual Site Visits: Tips for Institutions

Training

- ☐ Assemble coordinating team to complete MSCHE training for participation in a [virtual site visit](#).
- ☐ Ensure team members are appropriately trained to navigate your technology platform(s).
- ☐ Ask team members about any needed accommodations.
- ☐ Host a technology training the week before the visit for all team members.
- ☐ Ensure that all links and navigation is live and correct.
- ☐ Check to see that all documents meet accessibility requirements.
- ☐ Ensure institutional representatives are appropriately trained to navigate platform(s).
- ☐ Include members of the Board of Trustees in training or, if travel to campus is permissible, invite Trustees to a technology-enabled meeting room if they do not have access to reliable technology.
- ☐ Train institutional meeting “hosts” in advanced aspects of the technology platform(s).
- ☐ Consider the role of the meeting host:
 - ☐ Will your host arrive into the meeting space 5-10 minutes early to open the meeting and serve as timekeeper throughout the meeting?
 - ☐ Will your host take roll to ensure all participants have arrived and share attendance lists with the Team Chair?
 - ☐ Will your host share meeting protocols for use of the chat function, if used, and convey questions to team members during meetings?
 - ☐ Will your host gather requests for additional evidence during meetings and get those requests to appropriate to the appropriate key contacts so evidence is uploaded to the secure MSCHE portal for the team to access? Technology
- ☐ Organize back-up plans should technology become challenging.
- ☐ Collect phone numbers from each team member in case they need to be contacted to re-join a meeting or to offer assistance when connectivity has been lost during a meeting.

- ☐ Provide support to peer evaluators before, during, and after the visit by assigning specific information technology professionals to lend support when needed.
- ☐ Develop and implement security protocols (e.g., passwords, VPN access, etc.) that are straightforward enough to be understood by those unfamiliar with the modes of technology used for the virtual site visit.

Schedule

- ☐ Consider organizing a “get-acquainted” virtual program at the beginning of the visit so evaluators can be introduced to institutional staff and to the institution as a whole.
- ☐ Keep the program focused and brief, and between 30-60 minutes. Consider ways to help the team get to know the institutional culture such as a 5-minute video, ice breakers, brief breakout room experiences, and 30-second introductions of all attendees.
- ☐ Ask institutional representatives to limit campus-based duties during virtual visits so they can be available for ad hoc meeting requests.
- ☐ Provide opportunities and methods for evaluators to meet separately with one another during the virtual site visit.
- ☐ Open one day-long meeting for team members and one for institutional representatives.
- ☐ Share the entire visit schedule with team members in addition to individual calendar invites with meeting links and the name and contact information for the host.
- ☐ Sometimes team members need to join other meetings to address questions that arise. Team chairs sometimes accompany a team member at the last minute to a scheduled meeting.
- ☐ Invite members of the institutional community to the oral exit report at the end of the visit.
- ☐ Make sure the platform can host a large number of attendees.
- ☐ Communicate the visit schedule to institutional representatives and be ready to make last-minute changes.
- ☐ Large meeting tips – begin large meeting with host explaining ground rules: no recording, how questions will be taken, when time will be called; host can moderate questions coming in through chat; some software has conferencing aspects that make it possible to mute all to prevent distracting noise; assure participants that chat record will not be retained with identifying information.

Communication

- ☐ Uphold the Commission’s expectation of confidentiality and ensure all discussions between team members and institutional representative and among team members are not recorded in any way.

- ☐ Read statement of ground rules prior to each open meeting, including expectation of confidentiality.
- ☐ Share *Virtual Site Visits: Tips for Participants* with campus community in advance of the virtual site visit.
- ☐ Consider specific ways to encourage student attendance in open sessions.
- ☐ Confirm that institutional staff understand that unsolicited emails should not be sent to team members.
- ☐ Adhere to timelines communicated by the Commission for uploading additional documentation, responding to the draft Team Report, and uploading the Institutional Response.