

Benchmark Scoring

Benchmark scores evolve during the accreditation process. Scores assigned during the SER review may change based on information obtained via an Additional Information Request, at the site visit, or from the school's response to the draft ARC Report. At each stage, you will assign a score then discuss your findings with the rest of the ARC. The ARC then develops a plan for gathering any additional information that may be needed for the next stage. To score a demonstration or a benchmark at any stage of the process, you begin by asking these four questions:

1. What does the demonstration require the school **to do**?

Demo III.A5.1 | Provide a copy of your policies and procedures that clearly state that faculty are recruited, appointed, and promoted without discrimination in regard to sex, gender identity, race, color, marital status, ethnic origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

When a demonstration asks the school to **"provide"** something, it literally means that the school should pull the original text or document into its answer. Here, the school could:

1. Copy and paste the actual language of its nondiscrimination policy into its answer and provide a citation to where that language is found, or
2. Create a hyperlink in the answer section to the specific page of another document or webpage that has the language, or
3. Insert an image of the text in its original location and provide a citation. This might be a screenshot of an online version of a faculty handbook or recruiting webpage.

The school should provide a context for the pasted text, hyperlink, or image by describing the item's significance.

Demo I.B1.2 | Explain how these program goals are appropriate in light of the credentials awarded

When a demonstration asks the school to **"explain," "demonstrate," "describe," "list," "summarize," "specify," "report," "give examples of," "state,"** or **"provide a rationale/description/explanation"** for something, it means that the school should write a short essay response to the question in the space provided below the demonstration. . Use of the word **"including"** followed by a list means the school must provide a response to every item on the list or explain why an item doesn't apply. In the example given here, the school should submit a short narrative response with respect to each program goal that it listed in the previous demonstration. No hyperlink, attachment, or copied text is necessary but schools may choose to include those items if they would help to answer the demonstration.

Demo I.C1.1 and I.C2.1 | Complete the student completion and retention report using data through the end of the most recent month.

When a demonstration asks the school to **"complete"** a specific report, it refers to a separate worksheet provided by MEAC. The report will have its own instructions for completion and the school should follow the instructions closely. After the report is completed, the school should attach it to the SER itself and build the proper hyperlinks and bookmarks so that the reviewer can find the report easily.

2. What **elements** does the demonstration require?

Demo II.B2.1 | Summarize the types of learning activities used in your program and your rationale for using them. Provide specific examples of how a learning activity (or activities) supports acquisition of specific learning objectives. Please describe any activities that your program considers unique or innovative.

Decide how many directives the demonstration provides. Here, the school must “summarize,” “provide examples,” and “describe.” Then look at which things must be summarized, provided and described.

- Summarize the types of learning activities.
- For each activity listed, provide a rationale (a reason) for using it.
- For each activity listed, give an example of how it furthers a learning objective (a list of which should have been given in the previous demonstration)
- If the school thinks any of its activities are special, it should describe each one.

Therefore, if a school lists 3 types of learning activities (and doesn’t consider any of them “unique or innovative”), there will be 9 elements in this answer: 3 types + 3 rationales + 3 examples + 0 descriptions of special activities.

Demo II.D1.1 | Describe the ongoing, formal curriculum review process over the past three years, including schedules and describe how faculty, students and graduates were involved.

Decide how many directives the demonstration provides. Here, the school must “describe” but the list of things to be described is much longer than above.

- Describe how the curriculum review process is ongoing.
- Describe how the curriculum review process is formalized.
- Describe how it has been happening for the past 3 years.
- Describe the schedule for the process.
- Describe how faculty (both didactic and clinical) have been involved.
- Describe how students have been involved.
- Describe how graduates have been involved.

Although the school may write a narrative paragraph, the reviewer must deconstruct it to determine whether all seven parts are present.

Demo III.B1.1 | Describe and provide a copy of your policies and procedures that address how faculty is trained and oriented to the mission, goals, values and educational philosophy of the midwifery program including but not limited to:
a. Adult teaching and learning
b. Competency-based education
c. Cultural sensitivity and versatility

Decide how many directives the demonstration provides. Here, the school must “describe” the P&P on faculty training, but it also must “provide a copy” of them. Additionally, the school must specifically address all the issues that follow the phrase, “including but not limited to.” If the school covers other areas in faculty training and orientation, it should include information about that in the answer. Therefore, the P&P must address:

- How faculty is trained/oriented to the mission to the goals of the program.
- How faculty is trained/oriented to the goals of the program.
- How faculty is trained/oriented to the values of the program.
- How faculty is trained/oriented to the educational philosophy of the program.
- How faculty is oriented/trained on adult teaching and learning.
- How faculty is oriented/trained on competency-based education.
- How faculty is oriented/trained on cultural sensitivity and versatility.
- How faculty is oriented/trained on any other issue included in the P&P.

Therefore there will be a minimum of seven elements present, but possibly many more.

3. Decide if the demonstration, as a sum of the elements, is **adequate**.

Is the demonstration adequate?	Yes	Yes, but...	Questions Remain	No
	Adequate		Inadequate	
Are the materials present?	All material is present.		Some or all material is not present, or it appears that some or all of the material is not relevant.	Some or all material is not present, or it appears that some or all of the material is not relevant.
Do the materials satisfy the elements of the demonstration?	<p>In the SER or AIR, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has answered every element of the demonstration with a thoughtful and comprehensive narrative. The school has attached a separate evidentiary document for each element requiring one and described its significance. <p>At the site visit, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviewees provide positive responses to questions relevant to the benchmark. There is no information discovered at the site visit that contradicts the findings of the SER. There are no questions remaining after the site visit. <p>At any time, the ARC may believe, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school’s method would be appropriate to share as a model for others struggling with this demonstration. The school may have cited an exception to the requirements of the benchmark that the ARC finds legitimate. 		<p>In the SER or AIR, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has not answered all of the elements of the demonstrations. The reviewer still has questions about the response.* <p>At the site visit, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information discovered at the site visit may contradict the findings of the SER. Interviewees’ comments raise questions or concerns for the ARC. Questions remain after the site visit. <p>At any time, the ARC may believe, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school may have cited an exception to the requirements of the benchmark, but the ARC is unclear if it is legitimate and needs to investigate further. 	<p>In the SER or AIR, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has omitted some, if not all, elements of the demonstration. School may have provided information that was not relevant/ nonresponsive/ did not meet the requirements of the demonstration. (MEAC asked for an apple; school gave an orange.) <p>At the site visit, the ARC may find, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information discovered in interviews or on the site visit indicates noncompliance with MEAC standards. The school is out of compliance with MEAC standards. <p>At any time, the ARC may believe, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has erroneously claimed that the demonstration does not apply to it. The school may have cited an exception to the requirements of the benchmark, but the ARC disagrees.
Are the materials substantively adequate?	The policies and procedures described demonstrate that the school meets the MEAC standard.		The policies and procedures described may or may not meet the MEAC standard, and further investigation is warranted.	The policies and procedures described do not meet the MEAC standard.
*Note:	The ARC should not augment, supplement, or reinterpret the required elements based on personal experience or curiosity.			
	Adequate = Select “Yes” or “N/A” as appropriate from the menu in the cell adjacent to the demonstration in the “Demo adequate?” column of the review template.		Inadequate = Select “No” or “???” as appropriate from the menu in the cell adjacent to the demonstration in the “Demo adequate?” column of the review template. Explain the reason(s) for your choice in the adjacent “Comments” column.	
Remember:	Scores may change based on information obtained later in the process through audits, interviews, and the site visit. The final score can only be determined by a vote of the MEAC Board of Directors after careful, independent consideration of the materials.			

4. Determine the **Benchmark Score**. The Benchmark Score is determined by considering the degree to which the school meets expectations for that benchmark. Scores may change during the review process as the ARC receives new information. At the end of the review, the ARC recommends Benchmark Scores to the MEAC Board of Directors in its ARC Report. The MEAC Board of Directors considers the ARC’s recommendations but conducts an independent review of the materials and makes the final determination of scores. Benchmark Scores reflect the school’s compliance with MEAC standards and will be used to determine the health of a school over time and in comparison to other schools. For more information, see the MEAC Accreditation Handbook Section G.

Benchmark Score	Met – 3	Met – 2	Met – 1	Not Met
MEAC P&P	<i>“The submission exceeds expectations for this benchmark.”</i>	<i>“The submission satisfactorily meets expectations for this benchmark.”</i>	<i>“The submission meets minimal requirements for this benchmark but weaknesses are present and school is expected to address the weaknesses by the next accreditation cycle.”</i>	<i>“After a comprehensive review, the ARC is unable to conclude that the school meets the benchmark. If the benchmark is found NOT MET after the site visit and a full analysis of the submission, the ARC will recommend an interim report.”</i>
	The ARC has found every demonstration in the Benchmark adequate. The ARC believes that the school has gone “above and beyond” in its compliance with requirements. The school’s method would be appropriate to share as a model for similar schools working toward compliance with this benchmark.	The ARC has found every demonstration in the benchmark adequate based on the factors in the table above.	The ARC finds that some minor elements of the benchmark are missing, inadequate or suboptimal, but the ARC believes that they can be fixed with informal guidance from MEAC.	The ARC has been unable to find evidence that the school satisfies elements of the benchmarks. The school has not provided evidence that the demonstrations are adequate. A Not Met will trigger a formal process for coming into compliance.
Note:	The language in this table serves as guidelines only. The ARC and MEAC Board of Directors have discretion in all scoring matters. Schools that believe there is an error in its accreditation determination may follow the published appeals process in the Accreditation Handbook.			

When the ARC is formulating its recommended Benchmark Scores, it may additionally consider the following guidelines.

Benchmark Score	Met – 3	Met – 2	Met – 1	Not Met
ARC members should:	Consider whether the model is superior compared with schools with similar resources and not solely because of the advantages conferred by superior resources themselves.	Award this default score for a benchmark that has been met in all aspects to the ARC's satisfaction.	Articulate weaknesses with respect to the required elements.	Identify insufficiencies with respect to the unmet elements. Enumerate specific guidance for remediation (e.g. interim report requirements)
To decide between two scores, ARC asks:	With regard to this benchmark, would this school be a good model for similar schools to follow? Yes = Met-3 No = Met-2			
			Are objective weaknesses present? Yes = Met-1 No = Met-2	
			Are the inadequacies critical or minor? Critical = Not Met Minor = Met-1 Examples of critical inadequacies are financial health of the institution, client health & safety, student/employee health & safety, serious curricular deficiencies (NARM requirements, competencies checklist, currency, etc.) When must the inadequacies be addressed? Immediately through interim reporting = Not Met By next accreditation cycle =Met-1 How should the inadequacy be addressed? Informally = Met- 1 with description of weaknesses Formally = Not Met with Interim Report	