

**Survey Report and Team Findings Guide**

**Instructions for Full Accreditation Surveys**

**Published July 2019**

**For Medical Education Programs with**

**Full Accreditation Surveys in the 2019-20 Academic Year**

LCME*Survey Report and Team Findings Guide, Instructions for Full Accreditation Surveys* in AY 2019-20

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**Table of Contents**

[Overview 1](#_Toc13217595)

[Steps in the Preparation and Review of the Survey Report and Survey Team Findings 2](#_Toc13217596)

[Survey Team Members Receive the Survey Package 2](#_Toc13217597)

[Survey Team Secretary Makes Survey Team Member Assignments 2](#_Toc13217598)

[Survey Team Members Receive Data/Information Updates from the School 3](#_Toc13217599)

[Survey Team Develops a Set of Findings 3](#_Toc13217600)

[Survey Team Chair Reports the Survey Team Findings to Institutional Leadership 4](#_Toc13217601)

[Survey Team Members Complete Their Sections of the Draft Survey Report 4](#_Toc13217602)

[Survey Team Secretary Assembles the Draft Survey Report and the Survey Team Findings 5](#_Toc13217603)

[The Survey Report Appendix 5](#_Toc13217604)

[Review and Submission of the Survey Report and Survey Team Findings 5](#_Toc13217605)

[Feedback to the Survey Team on the LCME’s Action 7](#_Toc13217606)

[Style Guide for Survey Report Preparation 8](#_Toc13217607)

## Overview

This document contains the instructions for survey teams to use when preparing LCME survey reports for full accreditation surveys conducted during the 2019-20 academic year. This document is the companion to the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*, which is the “skeleton” of the survey report. The *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports* contains embedded questions related to each element where survey team members provide descriptive information and complete tables with quantitative data. For information about the roles of team members, the survey visit schedule, and the logistics of planning for and conducting the visit, consult theLCME website ([lcme.org/survey](http://lcme.org/survey/)) and also review the *Guidelines for the Planning and Conduct of Accreditation Survey Visits* on the LCME website under Publications ([lcme.org/publications](http://lcme.org/publications/)).

Survey teams only make recommendations about performance in elements and do not review or make judgments about compliance with the 12 accreditation standards. That judgment is the responsibility of the LCME after its review of the survey report and associated survey team findings. Survey teams are responsible for reviewing the information provided by the school for each element and for making a determination of the program’s performance in each element. The following definitions are to be used:

***Satisfactory***

The required policy, process, resource, or system is in place and, if specified by the element, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that it is effective.

***Satisfactory with a Need for Monitoring***

1. The medical education program has the required policy, process, resource, or system in place, but there is insufficient evidence to indicate that it is effective. Therefore, monitoring is required to ensure that the desired outcome has been achieved.
2. The medical education program’s performance currently is satisfactory with respect to the element, but there are known circumstances that could directly result in unsatisfactory performance in the near future. Therefore, monitoring is required.

***Unsatisfactory***

The medical education program has not met one or more of the requirements of the element. The required policy, process, resource, or system either is not in place or is in place but has been found to be ineffective.

The survey team will produce two documents: the **survey report** and the **survey team findings**.

**The Survey Report**

The survey report is developed using the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*, available on the LCME website ([lcme.org/publications](http://lcme.org/publications/)). The template contains questions and/or requests for specific narrative or quantitative information for each element. These should be retained and the responses provided under each numbered information request. The final survey report must have all questions answered and requested data provided, including the associated appendix documents.

**The Survey Team Findings**

The survey team findings are developed using the *Survey Team Findings Template*, available on the LCME website ([lcme.org/publications](http://lcme.org/publications/)). The completed *Survey Team Findings Template* contains a list of survey team findings, organized by standard and element. Elements are only included as findings if the program’s performance is satisfactory with a need for monitoring or unsatisfactory, as defined above. The survey team will develop and refine this list as the visit progresses and will report the survey team findings to the dean and, at the dean’s discretion, and university leadership at the time of the exit report using the *Exit Report Template.* The exit report template allows the survey team to organize its findings, which then will be transferred to the *Survey Team Findings Template*.

**Consistency Between the Survey Report and Survey Team Findings**

During the visit, the survey team validates the information in the survey package and then uses the most updated information to complete the survey report. The survey report is the formal record of the review of a medical education program and serves as the primary source of information for accreditation decisions by the LCME. The survey team must ensure that all its findings are fully explained and documented in the body of the report, and that all elements are addressed with sufficient information to ensure that the reader can understand the basis for the team’s findings for that element.

## Steps in the Preparation and Review of the Survey Report and Survey Team Findings

The following steps describe the process for the development of the survey report and survey team findings for a full survey visit. For additional information about timing of activities and **sample communication templates** for use by the survey team secretary, refer to the Timeline tab of [lcme.org/survey](http://lcme.org/survey/2016-17-academic-year/2016-17-full-survey/#Timeline).

### Survey Team Members Receive the Survey Package

Approximately three months before the survey visit, each survey team member will receive an email from LCME Secretariat staff with [Secure Electronic File Transfer (SEFT)](https://eft.aamc.org/EFTClient/Account/Login.htm) account information and instructions. The SEFT account is how the survey team will access the survey package submitted by the school and other historical information about the school. The survey package consists of a completed DCI, an appendix of supporting documents for each DCI section, an institutional self-study summary report, the independent student analysis (ISA), and an AAMC Graduation Questionnaire (AAMC GQ) Individual School Report. The communication from the Secretariat also will direct team members to relevant informational documents for the 2019-20 academic year on the LCME website, which team members also should read and download for reference.

It is the responsibility of each survey team member to download all the above information, including the survey package, to a USB drive or computer, to have them available prior to and during the survey visit, even if there is no internet.

### Survey Team Secretary Makes Survey Team Member Assignments

Shortly after the survey team receives the school’s survey package via SEFT, the survey team secretary assigns each survey team member standards/elements as his/her specific areas of responsibility. Each survey team member will be responsible for leading the discussion of his/her assigned areas during the survey visit and drafting those sections of the survey report. The survey team secretary will remind the team members that their assigned sections of the survey report must be prepared using the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*. All survey team members should handle and store the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports* with attention to confidentiality. It is recommended to save the survey report template on the USB drive or computer where the school’s survey package is saved.

Once a survey team member has received his/her specific assignments, he/she will review the survey package to determine if there are gaps in information. If so, survey team members will notify the survey team secretary who will coordinate the request for information with the school’s faculty accreditation lead (FAL). Team members should consider if the information in the DCI might lead to specific survey team findings (i.e., satisfactory with monitoring or unsatisfactory) in one or more elements. This could result in requests for additional information to clarify potential problem areas or inconsistencies among information sources (e.g., the DCI and the ISA).

The survey team secretary will ask survey team members to send a list of potential findings one to two weeks before the visit so that areas for follow-up or requests for additional information can be synthesized and discussed during the team’s initial meeting at the beginning of the visit (or at a pre-survey conference call).

### Survey Team Members Receive Data/Information Updates from the School

Approximately 4-6 weeks prior to the survey visit, LCME Secretariat staff conduct a brief review of the school’s submitted survey package to identify items that are missing or incomplete. LCME Secretariat staff will then contact the FAL with instructions for submitting any such items. Typically, the instructions are to email the material to the LCME staff and the survey team secretary. As soon as possible, the school will send the missing information to the survey team secretary, who will forward it to the survey team members.

Updates or corrections made to the DCI after the survey package has been submitted should be bundled and sent to the team secretary. A bundled update may be sent to the survey team once prior to the survey visit (by 30 calendar days before the visit). The timing, format, and process for providing the update to the survey team should be coordinated with the survey team secretary. There also may be additional supplemental material requested by the survey team or LCME Secretariat. Note that updates that are not requested by the survey team (“unsolicited updates”) may not be provided later than 30 calendar days before the start of the survey visit. While no unsolicited updates from the school can be accepted during the survey visit, survey team members may ask for additional information during the survey visit. Information requested by the survey team may be provided until the close of the visit. The survey team may not accept additional information after the exit report, even if the information (e.g., the policy) existed but was not provided at the time of the survey visit.

All requests from the survey team are coordinated through the survey team secretary to the FAL. This information should be provided by the survey team secretary to each of the survey team members as an electronic copy, though hard copy may also be provided at the team’s request. The survey team secretary will forward these updates to the survey team members. Survey team members should note which DCI pages have been updated/corrected and correct or expand any tables in both the DCI and the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports* with the updated information. It is recommended survey team members save updates on the USB drive or the computer to which they have downloaded the DCI, so that all information is stored in one location. Schools should refer to the LCME website for detailed instructions on submitting updates and corrections.

At the conclusion of the visit, the survey team members will receive a USB drive from the school that includes all updates that were provided before and during the visit and the date that the information was provided to the team. The USB drive will contain a table of contents with a list of the files that are included. Again, survey team members should be careful to use the most updated data/documents/information as they develop their sections of the survey report.

### Survey Team Develops a Set of Findings

As the survey team reviews the survey package prior to the survey visit, team members might identify areas that will become survey team findings. During the initial team meeting, the list of potential findings is discussed and additional information that might either support or refute each finding is identified. The team members with responsibility for these areas should include relevant questions in their discussions with school representatives to collect the needed information.

During the survey visit, survey team members work to finalize a set of findings. The findings, which must be linked to elements, are areas in which the program’s performance is satisfactory with a need for monitoring or unsatisfactory. Each evening, the survey team refines its list of findings, being sure that there is sufficient information available to include in the survey report to justify each finding.

The findings should be concise, sufficiently clear and detailed so that the reader understands the scope of the issue being cited. Relevant documentation should be included in the finding:

INSUFFICIENT DETAIL: Many medical students do not receive their grades on time.

APPROPRIATE DETAIL: In the internal medicine, obstetrics-gynecology, and surgery clerkships, at least 25% of students did not receive their final grades within six weeks during each of the previous two academic years.

When the text of the survey team findings is finalized, the survey team secretary completes the *Exit Report Template*, available on the LCME website ([lcme.org/publications](http://lcme.org/publications/)). In the template, the survey team findings are linked to elements but are not identified as satisfactory with a need for monitoring, or unsatisfactory.

### Survey Team Chair Reports the Survey Team Findings to Institutional Leadership

The purpose of the exit report is for the survey team to provide its findings to the medical school dean and, at the dean’s discretion, to institutional leadership (e.g., the president/chancellor or provost of the university). As noted above, these findings are statements that are linked to elements. The survey team chair provides the dean with a copy of the exit report. The exit report contains a disclaimer that the LCME may modify the team’s findings when it reviews the survey report.

The exit report is a one-way transmission of information. There should not be detailed discussion of the findings, though logistical questions, such as about the timetable for survey report completion can be answered by the team chair.

### Survey Team Members Complete Their Sections of the Draft Survey Report

During and after the survey visit, the members of the survey team complete their specific writing assignments within the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*. Consult the [Style Guide for Survey Report Preparation](#_STYLE__GUIDE) for style conventions. **Remember to leave the embedded questions/narrative requests in place and provide your narrative under each numbered information request.** Consult the survey team findings to ensure that the reasons for citations of elements as satisfactory with a need for monitoring or unsatisfactory are clearly explained and evidenced by appropriate data/descriptions in the survey report narrative.

Survey team members also should complete the tables requested in the report template, many of which can be copied from the DCI. For narrative and tables from the DCI that are included in the survey report, **be sure to change the perspective so it’s written in the survey team’s voice and not the school’s**. Also, summarize detailed narrative from the DCI rather than inserting the DCI information verbatim, unless the detail is necessary to justify a finding. If the survey team has received updated data/edits for any of the tables, revise the table to ensure that information is as current as possible.

### Survey Team Secretary Assembles the Draft Survey Report and the Survey Team Findings

**Draft Survey Report**

Survey team members will send their written sections of the survey report to the survey team secretary by email. This should be done by inserting their sections into the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*. The survey team secretary will assemble the complete survey team report by pasting each survey team member’s contribution into a single survey report template. The survey team secretary will also review and edit the pre-populated accreditation history section provided by the Secretariat staff and complete other sections of the survey report, such as the team’s comments on the DCI and institutional self-study summary report.

After completing his or her own sections and inserting the drafts from survey team members, the survey team secretary will review the complete draft survey report carefully to ensure that there are no gaps or inconsistencies across sections, that all sections include sufficient detail, that there is sufficient narrative and evidence to support all findings, and that all tables have been completed and updated, as relevant. The team secretary is also responsible for finalizing the [Appendix](#_The_SURVEY_Report).

When the draft survey report is complete, the survey team secretary will edit the entire survey report and survey team findings for clarity and consistency, for adhering to the style conventions outlined at the end of this document, as well as for spelling, grammar, tense, and formatting.

**Survey Team Findings**

The survey team findings are prepared by the survey team secretary from the exit report using the *Survey Team Findings Template.* Thistemplate should be modified to only include standards where there are elements with findings of either satisfactory with a need for monitoring or unsatisfactory. See the template for further instructions.

### The Survey Report Appendix

There is a set of required appendix documents organized by standard specified in the *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports*. The survey team may add relevant appendix documents under standards, as appropriate. Appendix documents should be “numbered” sequentially and the final list of Appendix documents included in the Appendix table of contents. Be sure to include page numbers for the Appendix and number the pages of the Appendix documents sequentially following from the last page of the report narrative.

When preparing the Appendix, do not include hyperlinks to documents. If a reference to a website is necessary, create an appendix document as PDFs of the webpages and/or screenshots.

### Review and Submission of the Survey Report and Survey Team Findings

There are sample email correspondence templates available to the survey team secretary on the LCME website, [lcme.org/survey](http://lcme.org/survey/), in the “Timeline” tab. These should be used for the communications with the Secretariat and the dean, as described below.

**Secretariat Review**

* Team secretary sends draft survey report and draft survey team findings to lcmesubmissions@aamc.org. Do not include the Appendix unless requested by the LCME Secretariat.
* Confirm submission of the first draft of report through email to dwaechter@aamc.org. LCME staff send draft report and findings to the LCME Secretariat for review.
* Two members of the LCME Secretariat review the survey report to ensure the report is complete, sufficient information has been included related to each element, that the findings are clear and well-documented in the survey report, and that the findings reflect current LCME expectations about performance for elements. The Secretariat may find statements in the survey report that could indicate potential additional findings (i.e., areas of unsatisfactory performance or areas that are satisfactory with a need for monitoring). In this case, the Secretariat will ask the survey team secretary whether a citation was considered by the survey team or, if not, whether the report needs to be revised since the area was not of concern to the survey team. The reviewers may suggest that a finding be deleted because the evidence is insufficient for a citation. The Secretariat also may suggest editorial changes or note concerns about format.
* The edited survey report with track changes and comments from the two Secretariat reviewers is returned via email to team secretary.

**Review of Secretariat Comments**

* Team secretary reviews Secretariat edits and comments.
* Team secretary discusses the edits from the Secretariat related to potential changes to team findings with the team chair and incorporates the agreed-upon edits into the report narrative and survey team findings.
* Team secretary notifies the Secretariat via lcmesubmissions@aamc.org regarding the decisions about Secretariat’s suggestions.

**Team Member Review**

* Team secretary emails revised survey report and team findings to all survey team members with a summary of changes made based on Secretariat review and the reasons for changes.
* Team members have 5 business days to review the survey report for editorial changes; to ensure it is clear, complete, and reflects the survey team’s consensus; and to email revisions to the team secretary.
* Team secretary reviews suggestions from team members and consults with team chair if one or more substantive changes have been recommended in the content of the survey report or the survey team findings.

**Dean Review**

* Team secretary emails the dean a clean copy of the revised survey report and survey team findings with instructions for the dean to respond via email within 10 business days to:
	+ identify errors of fact and provide corrections only if supporting information was included in the survey package, provided to the survey team secretary by one month prior to the visit, or provided to the team secretary if requested during the survey visit;
	+ note concerns about the tone of the survey report.

**Team Secretary and Chair Review of Dean’s Response**

* Team secretary considers edits and comments from the dean, along with the evidence provided to support changes.
* Team secretary discusses any of the dean’s requested changes that might lead to amendments to the survey team findings with the team chair.
* Team secretary revises the survey report and/or survey team findings based on the comments from the dean and input from the team chair.

**Team Secretary Responds to Dean**

* Team secretary emails dean with a summary of what changes requested by the dean were made and what changes were not made in the survey report and/or the survey team findings. In that communication, the dean should be reminded that remaining issues related to tone of the survey report or concerns about the conduct of the visit can be put in a letter addressed to the LCME Secretariat and sent to lcmesubmissions@aamc.org for consideration by the LCME. The letter may not address the survey team’s findings or the substance of the survey report narrative.

**Final Submission**

* Team secretary uploads clean copies of the following material to the team SEFT account:
	+ Final survey report narrative
	+ Final survey report appendix
	+ Final survey team findings
	+ Copy of all communications to/from the dean regarding changes to the survey report and/or the survey team findings
* Team secretary emails lcmesubmissions@aamc.org to notify LCME Secretariat staff that the final material has been submitted.
* LCME Secretariat staff email the team secretary to confirm successful submission within one business day; contact the LCME staff at 202-828-0596 if you need assistance.

**Survey Team Destroys Survey Visit Files**

* Team secretary emails team to confirm when the final materials were submitted to the LCME Secretariat staff and instructs team members to confidentially destroy any remaining materials from the survey visit (electronic or paper files and USB drive). The team secretary should retain all documents until after LCME action on the report/findings. The LCME members assigned to review the report prior to the LCME meeting may have a factual question as they complete their review. In this case, the LCME Secretariat staff will arrange a conference call with the team secretary, the LCME reviewers, and a member of the Secretariat.

### Feedback to the Survey Team on the LCME’s Action

After the LCME has acted on the survey report and survey team findings, the survey team members will receive a letter via email from the LCME Secretariat on the changes, if any, to the team’s findings that were made. This step is meant to assist the survey team in understanding the LCME’s expectations related to performance in elements.

## Style Guide for Survey Report Preparation

**The *Survey Report Template for Full Survey Visit Reports* for the academic year of the full survey must be used to prepare the survey report.**

**All team members must adhere to the following style conventions:**

* Use Times New Roman, 11 pt. black font and single spacing for all responses to survey report questions and tables (note, this does necessarily not apply to template headings, footers, etc.).
* Use a serial comma (Oxford comma) before the coordinating conjunction (usually “and” or “or”) in a series of three or more items.
* The words “ex officio”, “ad hoc”, and “via” (or other Latin phrases used colloquially) should not be italicized.
* No periods are used with degrees and other abbreviations, with the exception of “U.S.”
* Academic years should be listed as 20##-## (e.g., 2019-20).
* The first occurrence of an abbreviation of acronyms should be spelled out with the abbreviation/acronym in parentheses. Subsequent uses should list just the abbreviation/acronym.
* The word “data” is plural (e.g., data are available – not, data is available).
* Only one space should be used after periods in between sentences.
* Reference to the visit should describe it as a survey visit – not a site visit.
* The word "dean" is not capitalized except when it begins a sentence or is linked to an individual’s name, such as "Dean Robert Jones." The same is true for vice president, provost, president, and chair.
* The words "medical school," "college," and "university" are not capitalized unless they begin sentences or are used as the school’s full name (e.g., Jones Medical School).
* The word "faculty" is not capitalized unless it begins a sentence.
* Discipline names (e.g., "Physiology," "Biochemistry," "Medicine") are capitalized when they refer to departments. Note that "department" is not capitalized unless it is used with reference to a specific discipline, as in "Department of Medicine."
* Capitalize the names of formal school committees and subcommittees (e.g., Committee on Educational Policy), but do not capitalize the committee if the formal name is not used and the committee is referred to just by function (e.g., curriculum committee).

Ensure the appendix list in the table of contents matches the references in the body of the survey report. Refer to the appendix in the narrative if its contents are being described.

The word “assess” is used for students’ performance and “evaluate” is used for programs.

In the narrative (not tables), numbers one through nine are spelled out, and numbers 10 and higher are listed as numbers.

Any tables with symbols (such as \*) include the relevant note beneath the table with explanatory text.

Full-time and part-time should include a hyphen (not part time).

The word online contains no hyphen and is lowercase unless it starts a sentence. The word internet is lowercase, unless it starts a sentence.

The word “bylaws” should be lowercase, unless it starts a sentence.

If an item is not applicable, use “N/A” (not na).

The following abbreviations should always have periods and commas (i.e., e.g.,)

Use third person (no “our” or “we” should be included in the report).

Consistent terminology is used in the narrative for large numbers (for example, $10 million or $ 10M, but not both).

No hyphen should be used with years (“fourth year” not “fourth-year”).

If degrees are used in the narrative, use correct case and apostrophe placement (master’s degree or Master of Science is correct; masters degree is not correct).

Other than when thanking individuals in the memo or when describing qualifications of the dean, names of people should not be included; use a position title instead of a name.

When talking about ISA data, the term “respondents” should be used instead of “students” unless there was a 100% response rate (for example, “92% of respondents were satisfied”). Narrative should also be past tense (“are satisfied” should be “were satisfied” etc.).

**Before submitting the draft survey report to the LCME Secretariat, the team secretary must:**

* Carefully proofread the survey report to correct spelling, typographical, grammatical, and punctuation errors.
* Ensure that all questions are answered.
* Ensure that all tables are complete and include the most current data.
* Ensure there is consistency between the survey team findings and the survey report.

**Before submitting the final survey report to the LCME Secretariat, the survey team secretary must sign the cover memo**. An electronic signature is preferred.