



# **Connect to Quality**

**Commit to the Highest Standards  
in Business Education**

**AACSB Accreditation**



## Connect to the future of business education.

**Engagement. Innovation. Impact.** The need for impactful leaders has never been greater, and earning AACSB accreditation puts your institution at the forefront of business education around the world.

AACSB accreditation not only enhances the institution pursuing the distinction, but its consultative approach also creates opportunities for growth and collaboration among peers and the business community.

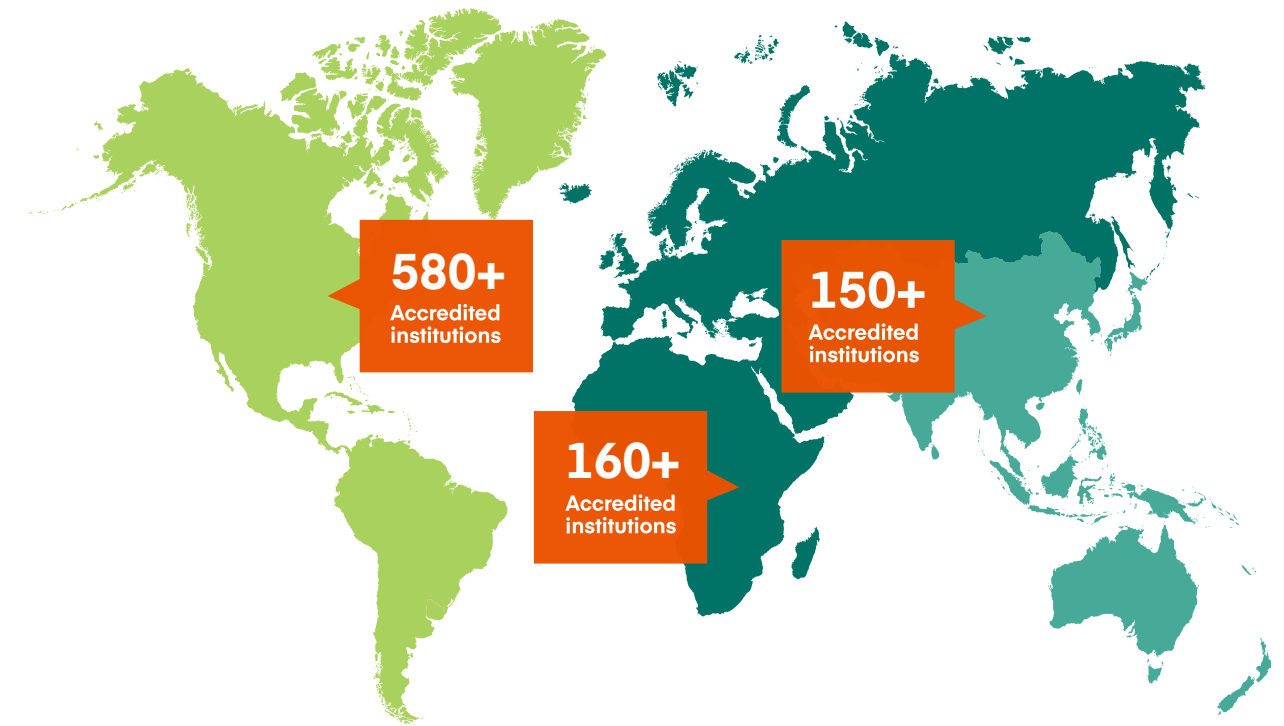
AACSB accreditation and quality assurance have long been synonymous with the highest standards in business education. Accredited schools are sought after by top students worldwide, and the world's most dynamic businesses hire graduates of accredited schools to help them power their future.

The fundamental purpose of AACSB accreditation is to encourage business schools to hold themselves accountable for improving business practice through a commitment to strategic management, learner success, and impactful thought leadership. AACSB achieves this purpose by defining a set of criteria and standards, coordinating peer review and consultation, and recognizing high-quality business schools that meet the standards and actively engage in the process.

## What is the value of AACSB accreditation?

Accreditation by AACSB signals to the world that you have met the most rigorous standards of excellence in business education.

Accreditation lets internal and external stakeholders know that you are a quality institution with a focus on excellence in areas including faculty, research, and curriculum. It demonstrates to your faculty and administration that you are committed to upholding—and advancing—the quality of your business programs. And it reassures corporate recruiters that you have prepared your students for the demanding global workforce.



### By the numbers

**1,700+**  
member organizations

**900+**  
business-accredited schools

**185+**  
accounting-accredited schools

# What are the accreditation standards?

AACSB offers two types of accreditation: [business](#) and [accounting](#). In order to earn and sustain accreditation, a school must align with nine business accreditation standards. These standards ensure continuous improvement and focus on what schools need to do to deliver on their mission, to innovate, and to create value and impact.

The standards are developed in collaboration with AACSB's diverse global Business Education Alliance to empower schools to be their best. [Learn more](#) about the transition into the 2020 accreditation standards.

## AACSB's Nine Business Accreditation Standards:



### Strategic Management and Innovation

1. Strategic Planning
2. Physical, Virtual, and Financial Resources
3. Faculty and Professional Staff Resources



### Learner Success

4. Curriculum
5. Assurance of Learning
6. Learner Progression
7. Teaching Effectiveness and Impact



### Thought Leadership, Engagement, and Societal Impact

8. Impact of Scholarship
9. Engagement and Societal Impact

Complete information on AACSB business accreditation can be found at [aacsb.edu/accreditation](https://aacsb.edu/accreditation).

## Who will conduct the accreditation reviews and manage the process?

AACSB accreditation is a peer-to-peer process, performed by business educators, for business educators. Volunteers from AACSB-accredited institutions provide individualized mentoring, conduct on-site peer review visits, and participate in committees that review the reports and recommendations from schools, peer review teams, and mentors.

When an institution enters the initial accreditation process, an AACSB volunteer mentor and an AACSB staff liaison are assigned to provide guidance and support. The mentor works closely with the institution and maintains a link between the institution and the appropriate decision-making committee of volunteers.

## How does accounting accreditation differ from business accreditation?

AACSB offers a supplemental accreditation product for schools interested in an elevated quality assurance system for their accounting programs. The accounting accreditation process can be entered either after business accreditation has been achieved, or simultaneously with the business accreditation process.

Accounting professionals play a critical role in the collection, analysis, reporting, interpretation, and verification of financial and non-financial information encompassing a variety of global economic activity. The additional six accounting standards are a rigorous complement to the nine business standards and focus on relevant and challenging skill sets students should master in order to be successful. In addition, the accounting standards encourage the integration of academic and practitioner collaboration that is crucial to the evolving accounting profession.

Additional information on AACSB accounting accreditation can be found at [aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards/accounting](https://aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards/accounting).

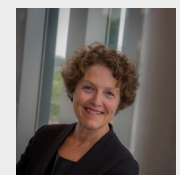


## What ISO 9001:2015 Means for AACSB

With more than 1.1 million certifications issued in over 178 countries globally, ISO 9001:2015 is the most widely used quality management systems (QMS) requirement offered by ISO.

Achieving this designation underscores AACSB's commitment to delivering innovative, high-quality, and customer-focused accreditation services globally.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of volunteering in this capacity is helping schools to reflect on their current operations to then develop processes, monitor progress, and tell their unique story of mission achievement. As you consider entering the accreditation process, remember that the peer review process includes experienced volunteers committed to sharing their knowledge and time for your school's success."



**Kim Watty**  
Emeritus Professor and  
Former Deputy Dean  
Deakin Business School

# What is the process for earning accreditation?

In order to earn AACSB accreditation, institutions undergo a rigorous review process conducted by peers from the accredited institutions who ensure the schools are committed to providing the resources needed to offer future-focused business education. Following accreditation, schools undergo continuous improvement reviews every five years to ensure they are evolving and improving over time.

Schools that have gone through the self-evaluation process uniformly report that it helped the entire organization refine its strategic direction, improve overall program and faculty quality, and provide an organized framework for tracking and supporting day-to-day operations.

1

**Establish AACSB educational membership.**

2

**Submit an eligibility application.**

3

**The eligibility application** is reviewed by the Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC). Once accepted, a mentor and AACSB accreditation staff liaison are assigned. Mentors provide guidance in the development of an Initial Self-Evaluation Report (iSER). AACSB accreditation staff liaisons serve as the point of contact between the institution and AACSB and can answer accreditation-related questions.

4

**Develop the iSER**, a plan of action showing how the school will align policies, practices, and expected outcomes with AACSB accreditation standards. A school may take up to two years to submit the iSER.

5

**The IAC reviews the iSER** and provides feedback. During this process, the IAC works with the school, the mentor, and the staff liaison to help the school bring policies, practices, and expected outcomes into alignment with AACSB accreditation standards.

6

**The IAC invites the school to submit an application** for an initial accreditation peer review team (PRT) visit. AACSB appoints a volunteer to serve as the peer review team chair and two additional members to form the PRT. The PRT chair replaces the mentor and guides the institution as it completes the final Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and prepares for the on-campus visit.

7

**Prior to the accreditation visit** (within four to six months), the institution submits the final SER to the PRT and IAC. Based on the final SER, the PRT prepares a pre-visit analysis for the school. The purpose of this letter is to clarify issues identified by the PRT and to request additional information not provided in the final SER.

8

**Following the accreditation visit**, the PRT prepares and delivers a team visit report to the applicant institution and to the IAC. This report conveys to the IAC one of three possible recommendations:

- Initial Accreditation
- Deferral of Initial Accreditation
- Denial of Initial Accreditation

9

**The IAC reviews the peer review team report and makes a recommendation.**

10

**The AACSB Board of Directors** reviews and votes on the institutions recommended for initial accreditation by the IAC.



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