

# AdvancED® Glossary of Terms

## General Terms

Terms and Phrases	Definition
accreditation	A voluntary method of quality assurance developed more than 100 years ago by American universities and secondary schools, and designed primarily to distinguish institutions adhering to a set of educational standards and policies
Accreditation Progress Report	A formal written detailed account of the institution's progress in addressing the Improvement Priorities from the Engagement Review Team
accreditation status	A designation provided by AdvancED that helps further define the institution's standing relative to the results of an institution's Engagement Review
active engagement, actively engaged	Learning that allows students to generate knowledge or make meaning via such behaviors as clarifying, asking questions, comparing, and applying new information (Source: School and System Quality Factors; Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool® (eleot®); Practices and Diagnostic: Efficacy of Engagement; Teacher Inventory)
AdvancED Continuous Improvement System	A research-based, on-going process in which institutions engage for the purpose of increasing its overall effectiveness and making positive, measurable impact on all stakeholders, primarily students, by focusing on and implementing three essential elements: learn and share, examine and plan, and act and evaluate.
AdvancED Performance Standards	Research-based statements that describe conditions necessary for institutions to support organizational effectiveness and improve student performance (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
best practices	Classroom instructional and organizational strategies that have been demonstrated and accepted by the professional community to be effective in improving student learning and overall organizational effectiveness (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.5; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.6)
clearly communicated	Information disseminated to stakeholders using a method and format(s) that is coherent and appropriate to specific stakeholder groups (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.10)
climate	The quality and character of a school or institution that is reflective of its norms, goals, values, relationships, practices, and structures. The climate of an institution is typically subjective whereas the culture of the school refers to the actual state or condition of the institution. (Source: Climate and Culture Survey)

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coaching (program)	A formal and informal structure for staff members to examine and reflect about instructional practices for the purpose of improving student learning and student results (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.3)
comprehensive system	A process whereby the institution has established strategies for data collection, analysis, and dissemination from multiple measures and/or sources that act to inform an institution's decisions (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.10)
community or community representatives	People who have an affiliation with and interest in the institution's success, such as representatives from businesses, civic organizations, universities, etc. (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.8; School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic)
contextually based research	Information gathered from local data sources and analyzed to inform programmatic decisions at the local level (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.12)
culture	Generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how an institution operates (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.9; School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic)
domain	Organizational superstructure for aligning AdvancED Performance Standards. Each domain is defined by a statement describing a broad concept related to an organization or institution. AdvancED defines three domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. Each domain is further defined by standards, which in turn, are defined by Performance Rubrics. (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
educators	Professional staff who are responsible for all aspects of the instructional program, including, but not limited to, content delivery, assessment and academic intervention (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.7; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.3, 2.5, 2.7, 2.10, 2.11)
Engagement Review (formerly External Review)	A process that is conducted on-site by a team of qualified and trained educational professionals to 1) evaluate an institution's adherence to the AdvancED Performance Standards; 2) assess the efficacy and impact of its continuous improvement process; 3) assess the effectiveness of the institution's methods for quality assurance; 4) identify strengths deserving of commendations and provide required actions for improvement and; 5) make an accreditation recommendation for national or international approval by an independent commission
Engagement Review Team (formerly External Review Team)	A selected group of qualified and trained educational professionals who serve as informed experts to assess an institution's adherence to the AdvancED Performance Standards and provide recommendations for continuous improvement

Terms and Phrases	Definition
equitable/equity	Access to resources and support based on individual need (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.1, 2.3; eleet; Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)
formal program or structure	Experiences provided by an institution that are consistently implemented, process-oriented and made known to appropriate stakeholder groups (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.8, 1.9; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.4; School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - High Expectations, Healthy Culture)
governing authority	The person or group of people with the highest level of control over an institution that generally has the responsibility for oversight and policy setting (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.4, 1.5; Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)
healthy dialogue	An exchange of opinions or discussion in which members demonstrate trust, respect and understanding (Source: Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)
healthy relationship(s)	Connections and interactions between people that are respectful and trusting (Source: School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - Healthy Culture)
induction (program)	A formal and informal structure provided for new staff members to receive support, guidance, and institutional knowledge during their transition to their new position or place of employment (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.3; Teacher Inventory)
innovative practices	New or revised interventions, actions, or strategies taken to improve the institution and/or student engagement and achievement (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.12)
inquiry-based practices	A multi-step instructional process in which students define, explore and discover possible solutions to a problem where the focus is on the process rather than the outcome (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.2)
institution	An educational unit including any public, private, proprietary, or not-for-profit, pre-K to 13, high school, middle school/junior high, elementary, early learning, special purpose, supplementary, charter, distance, postsecondary non-degree granting or international entity as well as education service agency, school system, and education corporation (Source: All AdvancED Diagnostics, Standards, etc.)
inventory	A diagnostic that captures how an individual perceives his/her experiences at an institution (Source: Teacher and Student Inventory Diagnostic)
job embedded	Professional learning that is integrated into the workday; connects the learning and the application of the learning (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.1)

Terms and Phrases	Definition
learner engagement	The willingness of a student to fully participate in the learning process or instructional activity (Source: School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - Impact of Instruction, Efficacy of Engagement, Implementation Capacity; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.2)
learning communities	Structures, formal and informal, that exist and function for the purpose of increasing educator effectiveness and learner results (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.2)
learning culture	Generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence the classroom environment; a learning culture should have high expectations that focuses on the educational needs of all students (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)
learning environment	The context in which student learning occurs within a classroom setting or learning situation (Source: School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - Efficacy of Engagement; eleot)
learning expectation(s)	A competency or skill level students should demonstrate after instruction (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.1, 2.7)
learning opportunities	Planned or spontaneous circumstances that can deepen one's understanding or introduce new information or knowledge (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.1; Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.4)
learning results	Information on student(s) attainment knowledge, skills and/or abilities (Source: Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)
major content areas	Generally regarded as the academic or non-elective courses, such as mathematics, language arts/reading/English, science, and social studies (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.7)
modeling program	A structure that provides an exemplary demonstration through the use of words and actions pertaining to the way in which a certain strategy is applied, discussion is led, classroom behavior is managed, problems are solved, etc.
needs assessment	A process used to 1) analyze current condition of a desired outcome; 2) compare to an agreed upon standard; and 3) identify gaps between the two (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.5)
next levels	The subsequent course, grade, or program determined by an institution's structure or criteria (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.5; School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - Impact of Instruction)
pedagogy, pedagogical	Generally refers to strategies of instruction, a style of instruction or the process of using one's beliefs about teaching to formulate his/her teaching style (Source: School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostic - Implementation Capacity; Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.1)

Terms and Phrases	Definition
performance rubric	For AdvancED Performance Standards, a scoring guide consisting of four performance levels that contain evaluative criteria related to concepts contained within the standard statement (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
personalized learning, personalized	Custom tailoring of information, instruction, or the curriculum to the individual student (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.1)
professional practice	An accepted and understood skill, expectation, and body of knowledge that are used to make decisions and execute actions within an institution or learning environment (Source: Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.3)
reliable sources	Sources of information that are deemed honest and accurate by the institution through an accepted method of validation (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.10)
research-based	Practice that is based on the results or outcomes of current educational research (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.6)
resources	Assets and capacity to fulfill the needs of and support for the learning environment; generally, resources are categorized as financial, human, and physical materials (Source: Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.9; Standard: Resource Capacity Domain - 3.2, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8; Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument; eleet; Teacher Inventory)
School and System Quality Factors (SQF)	A set of research-based elements that provide educational institutions with conditions, processes, practices and actions to focus their improvement efforts (Source: School and System Quality Factors)
stakeholders	Staff, students, parents, community members and others who have a vested interest in the institution (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.1,1.2, 1.3, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.10; School and System Quality Factors; Practices and Diagnostics - Efficacy of Engagement, Healthy Culture, High Expectations, Clear Direction; Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)
systematic, systematically	An organized method or process that is consistently implemented (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.10; Standard: Learning Capacity Domain - 2.6, 2.12)
systemic	The impact a method or process has on all levels and facets of an institution (Source: Standard: Leadership Capacity Domain - 1.7; Effective Board Governance Observation Instrument)

## Terms that Measure Frequency, Quality and Quantity

Terms and Phrases	Definition
all	Including more than 75 percent of (e.g., learners, educators, programs, policies) (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
almost always	Occurring more than 75 percent of the time (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; Teacher Inventory)
consistency	With regularity (i.e., at equal intervals) and uniformity (i.e., in a similar manner), usually 75 percent of the time or more (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
excellent quality	The highest standard or value (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
fair quality	A minimal standard or value (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
few, few to none	Less than 25 percent of a specific stakeholder group (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; AdvancED Performance Standards)
fully embedded	Complete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
good quality	An acceptable standard or value (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
limited, little	Having some restrictions or confinements; a small amount (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards)
many	Including approximately 50 to 75 percent of a specific stakeholder group (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
most	Approximately 75 percent or more of a specific stakeholder group; occurring approximately 75 percent of the time (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
mostly embedded	Almost complete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; about 75 percent or more completed (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
not embedded	Minimal or no scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; less than 25 percent completed (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
often, frequently	Occurring many times or constantly; occurring about 50 to 75 percent of the time (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; Teacher Inventory)

Terms and Phrases	Definition
partially embedded	Incomplete scope and/or intent of policy or practice in place; about 25 to 50 percent completed (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
poor quality	Not an acceptable standard or value (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic)
rarely, never, seldom	Occurring infrequently; occurring less than 25 percent of the time (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; AdvancED Performance Standards; Teacher Inventory)
regularly	Occurring at predicted times or intervals (Source: Teacher Inventory)
some	About 25 to 50 percent of a specific stakeholder group, documents, policies, etc. (Source: School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; AdvancED Performance Standards)
sometimes	Occurring at various intervals but without consistency; occurring 25 to 50 percent of the time (Source: AdvancED Performance Standards; School and System Quality Factors Diagnostic; Teacher Inventory)
sporadically	Occurring at irregular intervals; without a pattern or order or time (Source: Teacher Inventory)

AdvancED® is the premier global resource for innovative and transformative school improvement. We are a non-profit, non-partisan organization of education professionals, applying over 100 years of school improvement and evaluation experience to cultivate student engagement and learning by providing our AdvancED Improvement Network members with the tools, resources and thought leadership needed to optimize their school and system quality and effectiveness.



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