II.1 The comprehensive review process

From the early planning stages to consideration and a decision by the Committee on Accreditation, the comprehensive review process lasts approximately two years. This section provides an overview of the entire process. The comprehensive review includes the development of a Plan for Self-Study, preparation of the Self-Study document, review by an External Review Panel (ERP), and an accreditation decision by the COA. Details regarding the work of the ERP can be found in section III.

The COA schedules the next comprehensive review as part of its accreditation decision. For Continued and Initial accreditation, the next comprehensive review is normally scheduled seven years after the last comprehensive review, unless evidence or circumstance in the interim necessitates other action by COA. For conditional accreditation, the next comprehensive review or progress review is normally scheduled for three years after the last comprehensive review, unless evidence or circumstance in the interim necessitates other action by COA.

The Director of the Office for Accreditation serves as the primary contact for the program with regard to accreditation concerns and requirements throughout the comprehensive review period. Approximately two years before review visit, the Office notifies the Program Head of the scheduled review. Following this notification, the institution and school invite a review. At this time, the Program Head advises the OA of possible specific dates for the visit and of any special areas of emphasis for the comprehensive review and Self-Study. Requests for special background characteristics and/or expertise among the panel members may be made at this time.

The COA, through the OA, proposes an ERP Chair approximately 18 months before the visit. The proposed ERP Chair is evaluated by the Program Head and faculty and may be rejected for cause (see Conflict of Interest policy, section III.4); if a conflict is identified, an alternate ERP Chair is then proposed. When an ERP Chair has been approved and has agreed to serve, the OA establishes dates of the site visit and related deadlines. These dates are considered firm.

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upon alternative approaches. Programs that wish to propose an alternative approach to the visit (e.g., a virtual visit) should discuss the matter with the OA Director at this time. Alternative visits require a negotiated agreement between the COA, the Program Head, and the Chair.

As part of the comprehensive review, the Program Head

interest. The OA Director is the final authority on the size and composition of the panel. See section III.2: Composition of the External Review Panel.

One representative of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (or an alternative professional library and information organization) is permitted to observe reviews of Canadian programs. His or her role is to observe how the panel operates, not to influence its evaluation of the program.

A comprehensive review includes a visit and report by an ERP. Panel visits occur over two business days; typically, the panel arrives one or two days early to review on-site documentation and to tour facilities.

The ERP submits a draft ERP Report due three weeks after the visit. The final ERP Report is due five weeks after the visit. The ERP Chair is responsible for overseeing the development of the Program Head should submit factual corrections to the draft ERP Report and may submit an optional response to the final ERP Report. Specific details on the responsibilities of the ERP Chair and members and development section III: Guidelines for the External Review Panel.

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24 months before the visit	The Office sends a letter to the Program Head advising of the scheduled visit and requesting a letter of invitation from the CEO of the institution seeking review of the program; The Program Head provides the Office with a set of three dates of two-day duration (usually Monday-Tuesday) for a potential on-site visit by the External Review Panel; The Program Head may identify areas that will be the focus of the Self-Study and/or suggest specializations of the ERP members.
18 months before the visit	The COA selects the ERP Chair; The OA Director informs the Program Head of the selection; The Program Head evaluates the selected ERP Chair with the faculty for potential conflicts of interest; If no conflicts are identified the Program Head approves the Chair. If a conflict is identified, the OA Director submits an alternate name to the Program Head; The OA Director discusses potential dates for the on-site review with the appointed Chair. Having selected dates from those put forth by the school, the OA Director notifies the school of the dates for the on-site review.

6 weeks before the visit	The school submits the final Self-Study to the External Review Panel and the Office.
Site visit	The External Review Panel visits the Program.
2 weeks after the visit	The ERP Chair submits a draft of the ERP Report to the Director.
3 weeks after the visit	The ERP Chair submits the draft of the ERP Report to the Program Head.
4 weeks after the visit	The school submits any corrections to facts in ERP Report to the ERP Chair and the OA Director.
5 weeks after the visit	The ERP Chair submits copies of the final ERP Report to the OA Director and the Program Head.
6) weeks after the visit	School may submit an optional response to the ERP Report.
Next regularly scheduled COA meeting	The COA meets with the ERP Chair, Program Head and/or other representatives of the school; The COA makes an accreditation decision.
10 calendar days after meeting with COA	The Office sends the COA Decision Document to the Program Head and the CEO of the institution within 10 calendar days of the end of the COA meeting at which the decision was made.