
Standard III: Resources

The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

A. Human Resources

The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution assures the integrity and quality of its programs and services by employing personnel who are qualified by appropriate education, training, and experience to provide and support these programs and services.
 - What methods does the institution use to assure that qualifications for each position are closely matched to specific programmatic needs? What analyses and discussions have led the institution to agree on those needs?
 - Are the institution's personnel sufficiently qualified to guarantee the integrity of programs and services?
- a. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions are directly related to institutional mission and goals and accurately reflect position duties, responsibilities, and authority. Criteria for selection of faculty include knowledge of the subject matter or service to be performed (as determined by individuals with discipline expertise), effective teaching, scholarly, and potential to contribute to the mission of the institution. Institutional faculty play a significant role in selection of new faculty. Degrees held by faculty and administrators are from institutions accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting agencies. Degrees from non-U.S. institutions are recognized only if equivalence has been established.⁴
 - How does the institution decide on hiring criteria?
 - How are faculty involved in the selection of new faculty?
 - How does the college decide an applicant is well-qualified?
 - How does the college know that the faculty selected have knowledge of their subject matter?
 - By what methods does the college define and evaluate "effective teaching" in its hiring processes? How is that effectiveness judged?
 - How does the college define and judge scholarship in a candidate, and by what means does it judge a candidate's potential to contribute to a college mission?

- How are jobs advertised?
- By what means does the institution verify the qualifications of applicants and newly hired personnel?
- How does the college check the equivalency of degrees from non-U.S. institutions?
- What evidence is there that hiring processes yield highly qualified employees?
- What safeguards are in place to assure that hiring procedures are constantly applied?

b. The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.

- How does the college decide on appropriate institutional responsibilities for personnel participation? How is participation judged?
- What process is in place to assure that evaluations lead to improvement of job performance?
- What is the connection between personnel evaluations and institutional effectiveness and improvement?
- Do evaluation criteria measure the effectiveness of personnel in performing their duties?

c. Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.

- What are the roles of teachers, tutors, and others in producing student learning outcomes?
- What deep thinking have faculty, as individuals and collectively, engaged in about how well students are learning in their courses and programs? What measures have they, again as individuals and collectively, created or selected to measure that learning?
- What discussions have faculty had about how to improve learning? What plans have been made?
- What changes have faculty made in teaching methodologies to improve learning?
- What changes in course content or sequencing have resulted from analyses of how well students are mastering course content?

- What methods has the institution developed to evaluate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes? Are these methods yielding meaningful and useful results?
- How does the institution use analysis of the results of assessment to improve student learning outcomes?
- How has staff development supported faculty performance in satisfactory development and assessment of student learning outcomes?

d. The institution upholds a written code of professional ethics for all its personnel?

- How does the institution foster ethical behavior in its employees?
- Does the institution have a written code of professional ethics for all its personnel?

2. The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution's mission and purposes.

- By what means does the institution determine appropriate staffing levels for each program and service?
- How does the institution decide on the organization of administrative and support staffing?
- How effectively does the number and organization of the institution's personnel work to support its programs and services? How does the institution evaluate this effectiveness?

3. The institution systematically develops personnel policies and procedures that are available for information and review. Such policies and procedures are equitably and consistently administered.

- What processes does the institution use to develop and publicize its personnel policies?
- How does the institution ensure that it administers its personnel policies and procedures consistently and equitably? Do these policies and processes result in fair treatment of personnel?

a. The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.

b. The institution makes provision for the security and confidentiality of personnel records. Each employee has access to his/her personnel records in accordance with law.

- What are the institution's provisions for keeping personnel records secure and confidential?

- How does the institution provide employees access to their records?

4. The institution demonstrates through policies and practices an appropriate understanding of and concern for issues of equity and diversity.

- In what ways does the institution foster an appreciation for diversity?
- How effective are the institution's policies and practices in promoting understanding of equity and diversity issues? How does the institution know these policies and practices are effective?

a. The institution creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel.

- How does the institution determine what kinds of support its personnel need?
- How does the institution design programs and services that provide for the range of diverse personnel at the institution?
- What programs and services does the institution have to support its personnel? How effective are these programs?

b. The institution regularly assesses that its record in employment equity and diversity is consistent with its mission.

- What is the institution's record on employment equity and diversity?
- How does the institution track and analyze its employment equity record? How does it use this information?

c. The institution subscribes to, advocates, and demonstrates integrity in the treatment of its administration, faculty, staff and students.

- What policies and procedures about the treatment of personnel does the institution have in place?
- How does the institution ensure that its personnel and students are treated fairly?

5. The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs.

- a. The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.
- b. With the assistance of the participants, the institution systematically evaluates professional development programs and uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.

- What professional development programs does the institution support?

- How does the institution identify teaching and learning needs of its faculty and other personnel?
- What processes ensure that professional development opportunities address those needs?
- How does the college ensure meaningful evaluation of professional development activities?
- What impact do professional development activities have on the improvement of teaching and learning? How does the institution evaluate that improvement?

6. Human resources planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

- By what process does the institution assess the use of human resources?
- How does the institution ensure that human resource decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement? Specifically, what evidence is there that the institution bases its human resource decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs?
- How does the institution determine that human resource needs in program and service areas are met effectively?

B. Physical Resources

Physical resources, which include facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution provides safe and sufficient physical resources that support and assure the integrity and quality of its programs and services, regardless of location or means of delivery.
 - Against what criteria and by what processes does the institution evaluate the safety of its facilities?
 - Upon what data has the institution determined the sufficiency of its classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and other facilities? What mechanisms does the college employ to evaluate how effectively facilities meet the needs of programs and services?
 - How well does the institution meet its facilities needs? Does the institution use the same criteria and processes for determining safety and sufficiency of facilities at off-campus sites? To what extent are off-campus sites safe and sufficient?
 - How does the college use the results of facilities evaluations to improve them? Does the college employ similar processes to assure the safety and sufficiency of its equipment?

- How does the institution support the equipment needs of the distance delivery modes it offers? Are institutional needs for equipment met?
 - a. The institution plans, builds, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources in a manner that assures effective utilization and the continuing quality necessary to support its programs and services.
 - How does the institution consider the needs of programs and services when planning its buildings?
 - What processes ensure that program and service needs determine equipment replacement and maintenance?
 - How does the institution evaluate effectiveness of facilities and equipment in meeting the needs of programs and services?
 - How effectively does the institution use its physical resources?
 - b. The institution assures that physical resources at all locations where it offers courses, programs, and services are constructed and maintained to assure access, safety, security, and a healthful learning and working environment.
 - How does the institution assure access to its facilities?
 - How does the institution ensure that it maintains sufficient control over off-site facilities to ensure their quality?
- 2. To assure the feasibility and effectiveness of physical resources in supporting institutional programs and services, the institution plans and evaluates its facilities and equipment on a regular basis, taking utilization and other relevant data into account.
 - By what process does the institution assess the use of its facilities? How often does the evaluation occur?
 - How does the college use the results of the evaluation to improve facilities or equipment?
 - a. Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment.
 - What process does the institution follow to make capital plans? How are long-range capital projects linked to institutional planning?
 - What elements comprise the definition of "total cost of ownership" the institution uses when making decisions about facilities and equipment?
 - How do planning processes ensure that capital projects support college goals? How effectively is long-range capital planning helping the college to achieve improvement goals?

b. Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

- How does the institution ensure that facilities decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement?
- What evidence is there that the institution bases its physical resource decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs? How does the institution prioritize needs when making decisions about equipment purchases?
- How does the institution determine that physical resource needs in program and service areas are met effectively? How effectively are those needs met?

C. Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

1. The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.
 - How does the institution make sure that its various types of technology needs are identified?
 - If the college is not supported by technology, how did the college make that decision?
 - How does the institution evaluate the effectiveness of its technology in meeting its range of needs? How effectively are those needs met?
- a. Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.
 - How does the institution make decisions about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software?
 - How well does technology accommodate the college's curricular commitments for distance learning programs and courses? Whether technology is provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, are there provisions for reliability, disaster recovery, privacy, and security?
- b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.
 - How does the institution assess the need for information technology training for students and personnel?
 - What technology training does the institution provide to students and personnel? How does the institution ensure that the training and

technical support it provides for faculty and staff are appropriate and effective? How effective is the training provided?

- c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.
 - How has the institution provided for the management, maintenance, and operation of its technological infrastructure and equipment?
 - Does the college provide appropriate system reliability and emergency backup?
- d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.
 - How does the institution make decisions about use and distribution of its technology resources?
 - What provisions has the institution made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty?
 - What policies or procedures does the institution have in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably up-to-date?
 - Does the institution give sufficient consideration to equipment selected for distance programs? How effectively is technology distributed and used?

2. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.
 - How does the institution ensure that facilities decisions emanate from institutional needs and plans for improvement?
 - What evidence is there that the institution bases its technology decisions on the results of evaluation of program and service needs?
 - How does the institution determine that technology needs in program and service areas are met effectively?
 - How does the institution prioritize needs when making decisions about technology purchases? How effectively are those needs met?

D. Financial Resources

Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning.

- What is the institution's overall budget?
- Does it have sufficient revenues to support educational improvements?
- Are the institutions finances managed with integrity in a manner that ensures financial stability?
- Does the resource allocation process provide a means for setting priorities for funding institutional improvements?
- Are institutional resources sufficient to ensure financial solvency?

1. The institution relies upon its mission and goals as the foundation for financial planning.
 - a. Financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning.
 - Does institution review its mission and goals as part of the annual fiscal planning process?
 - Does the institution identify goals for achievement in any given budget cycle?
 - Does the institution establish priorities among competing needs so that it can predict future funding? Do institutional plans exist, and are they linked clearly to financial plans, both short term and long range?
 - Does the financial planning process rely primarily on institutional plans for content and timelines?
 - Can the institution provide evidence that past fiscal expenditures have supported achievement of institutional plans?
 - Does the board and other institutional leadership receive information about fiscal planning that demonstrates its links to institutional planning?
 - b. Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.
 - Do individuals involved in institutional planning receive accurate information about available funds, including the annual budget showing ongoing and anticipated fiscal commitments?

- Does the institution establish funding priorities in some fashion that helps the institution achieve its goals in reasonable fashion? Are items focused on student learning given appropriate priority? What other documents describing funding priorities are used by institutional planners?

c. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies and plans for payment of liabilities and future obligations.

- What evidence of long-term fiscal planning and priorities exists?
- Does the institution have plans for payments of long-term liabilities and obligations, including debt, health benefits, insurance costs, building maintenance costs, etc.? Is this information used in short-term or annual budget and other fiscal planning?
- Does the Institution allocate resources to the payment of its liabilities and funds/reserves to address long term obligations? Are resources directed to actuarially developed plans for Other Post-Employment Retirement Benefit (OPEB) obligations?

d. The institution clearly defines and follows its guidelines and processes for financial planning and budget development with all constituencies having appropriate opportunities to participate in the development of institutional plans and budgets.

- Where or how are the processes for financial planning and budget recorded and made known to college constituents?
- What mechanisms or processes are used to ensure constituent participation in financial planning and budget development?

2. To assure the financial integrity of the institution and responsible use of financial resources, the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making.

a. Financial documents, including the budget and independent audit, reflect appropriate allocation and use of financial resources to support student learning programs and services. Institutional responses to external audit findings are comprehensive, timely, and communicated appropriately.

- Are funds allocated, as shown in the budget, in a manner that will realistically achieve the institution's stated goals for student learning?
- What do the audit statements say about financial management?
- Does the institution provide timely corrections to audit exceptions and management advice?

- Is the institutional budget an accurate reflection of institutional spending and does it have credibility with constituents?
- Are audit findings communicated to appropriate institutional leadership and constituents?

b. Appropriate financial information is provided throughout the institution.

- What information about budget, about fiscal conditions, about financial planning and about audit results is provided throughout the college? Is this information sufficient in content and timing to support institutional and financial planning and financial management?

c. The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

- What is the ending balance of unrestricted funds for the institution's immediate past three years. Is this amount sufficient to maintain a reserve needed for emergencies?
- Does the institution have any other access to cash should the need arise?
- How does the institution receive its revenues? Does this receipt pose cash flow difficulties for the college? If so, how does the college address cash flow difficulties? (e.g., COPS, loans)?
- Has the institution sufficient insurance to cover its needs? Is the institution self-funded in any insurance categories? If so, does it have sufficient reserves to handle financial emergencies?

d. The institution practices effective oversight of finances, including management of financial aid, grants, externally funded programs, contractual relationships, auxiliary organizations or foundations, and institutional investments and assets.

- What are the institution's procedures for reviewing fiscal management? Are those regularly implemented?
- What evidence about fiscal management is provided by external audits and financial program reviews?
- Does the institution review its internal control systems on a regular basis? Does the institution respond in a timely manner to internal control deficiencies identified in the annual audit?
- Is there an annual assessment of debt repayment obligations and are resources allocated in a manner that ensures stable finances?
- Are student loan default rates, revenues, and related matters monitored and assessed to ensure compliance with federal regulations?
- Has the institution received any audit findings or negative reviews during the last six years?

- e. All financial resources, including those from auxiliary activities, fund-raising efforts, and grants are used with integrity in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.
 - Are the institution's special funds audited or reviewed by funding agencies regularly?
 - Do the audits demonstrate the integrity of financial management practices?
 - Are expenditures from special funds made in a manner consistent with the intent and requirements of the funding source? Are bond expenditures consistent with regulatory and legal restrictions?
- f. Contractual agreements with external entities are consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, governed by institutional policies, and contain appropriate provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution.⁵
 - What contractual agreements exist, and are they consistent with institutional mission and goals?
 - Does the institution have appropriate control over these contracts? Can it change or terminate contracts that don't meet its required standards of quality?
- g. The institution regularly evaluates its financial management processes, and the results of the evaluation are used to improve financial management systems.
 - Does the institution have an annual external audit to provide feedback on its processes?
 - Does the institution review the effectiveness of its past fiscal planning as part of planning for current and future fiscal needs?

3. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of financial resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.

- What processes does the institution use to assess its use of financial resources?
- How does the institution ensure that it assesses its use of financial resources systematically and effectively?
- How does the institution use results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement?

Sources of Evidence: Examples for Standard III

Listed below are examples of potential sources of evidence for Standard III. There may be many other sources which institutions should provide and teams should ask for.

Standard III: Resources

A. Human Resources

- Evidence about how the institution determines human resource needs of programs and services.
- Evidence that the institution uses analyses in determining hiring priorities.
- Evidence, such as planning meeting minutes, that the institution systematically considers and relies on needs of programs and services in determining hiring priorities.
- Evidence that the institution has a reasonable means for deciding what employee qualifications are needed for each position.
- Evidence that the institution uses a clear and reasonable process for determining personnel selection criteria.
- Evidence that hiring procedures are written and consistently applied.
- Evidence that the institution verifies employee degrees, experience, and references of newly hired personnel.
- Evidence of a systematic process for determining personnel evaluation criteria.
- Evidence that evaluation criteria are based on job responsibilities.
- Evidence that evaluation processes are written and followed.
- Evidence that evaluations are conducted regularly.
- Evidence that the institution uses the results of personnel evaluations for improvement.
- Evidence that the institution evaluates the effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes of teachers, tutors, and others involved in the teaching-learning process.
- Evidence that the institution applies an ethics document or documents for all personnel.
- Evidence that the institution employs a core of full-time faculty.
- Evidence that the institution employs qualified administrators and support staff in sufficient numbers.

- Evidence that the institution administers its personnel policies consistently and fairly.
- Evidence that the institution maintains personnel records safely.
- Evidence about how the institution provides employees access to their records.
- Evidence that the institution has written policies on equity and diversity.
- Evidence that the institution is sensitive to issues of equity and diversity.
- Evidence that programs and services are designed to provide for the range of personnel needs at the institution.
- Evidence about how the institution tracks, analyzes, and uses its employment equity record.
- Evidence about how the institution treats its personnel and students.
- Evidence about how the institution uses identified teaching and learning needs to determine professional development opportunities.
- Evidence that the institution evaluates professional development needs of its personnel.
- Evidence that the institution bases its programs on identified needs.
- Evidence about how participants are involved in the programs' evaluation.
- Evidence that the institution assesses the use of its human resources.
- Evidence that institutional plans determine human resource allocation priorities.
- Evidence that human resource decisions are based on the results of evaluation of program and service needs.

B. Physical Resources

- Evidence about how the institution evaluates the safety and sufficiency of its facilities.
- Evidence that the institution provides adequate facilities for its programs and services.
- Evidence that off campus sites are adequate to support programs conducted at those sites.
- Evidence that equipment supports the needs of its programs and services.

- Evidence that equipment supports the needs of the distance modes of delivery the college offers.
- Evidence about how the institution plans and maintains its facilities.
- Evidence that the institution has considered the total cost of ownership when making decisions about facilities and equipment.
- Evidence that the institution's bases its building plans on the needs of programs and services.
- Evidence that the institution has replacement and maintenance plans for equipment.
- Evidence that the institution uses its facilities and equipment effectively.
- Evidence about how the institution constructs and maintains its facilities at all locations.
- Evidence about how the institution evaluates its facilities.
- Evidence about how the institution evaluates the physical resources needs of its programs and services.
- Evidence about how the institution plans its facilities.
- Evidence about how the institution makes decisions about equipment purchases.
- Evidence that long range capital projects are based on institutional planning.
- Evidence that the institution assesses the use of its physical resources.
- Evidence that institutional plans determine physical resource priorities.
- Evidence that physical resource decisions are based on the results of evaluation of program and service needs.

C. Technology Resources

- Evidence about how the institution evaluates how well its technology meets the needs of its programs and services.
- Evidence about how the institution evaluates how well its technology meets the need for college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.
- Evidence about how the institution makes decisions about technology services, facilities, hardware, and software.
- Evidence about how the institution evaluates the effectiveness of its technology.

- Evidence that the institution assesses the need for information technology training for students and personnel.
- Evidence that training is designed to meet the needs of students and personnel.
- Evidence about how the institution plans and maintains its technology, infrastructure, and equipment.
- Evidence that the institution bases its technology plans on the needs of programs and services.
- Evidence that the institution has replacement and maintenance plans for its technology.
- Evidence about how the institution uses and distributes its technology resources.
- Evidence about how the institution assesses the technology needs of its programs and services.
- Evidence that the institution assesses the use of its technology resources.
- Evidence that institutional plans determine technology resource priorities.
- Evidence that technology resource decisions are based on the results of evaluation of program and service needs.

D. Financial Resources

- Evidence that includes copies of annual budget, audits for past three years, financial plans associated with institutional plans, budget documents prepared to grant and other external funding, data showing financial planning is regularly evaluated and the results of that evaluation, documents showing institutional fiscal commitments for foreseeable future, including contracts for services, employee agreements, loans and other debt.
- Other debt includes actuarial plans for the repayment of Other Post Employment Retirement Benefits (OPEB) and funding plans to address the obligation.
- Evidence that the mission and goals are used in short and long-range financial planning, such as a list of financial goals, a grid showing financial contributions to meeting goals, or an introductory text to fiscal documents such as annual budgets, long-range capital plans, long-range financial plans, etc., that show relationship to educational goals as identified through institutional assessment and planning.
- Evidence showing the fiscal planning follows institutional planning in time sequence, and that funds are used to achieve institutional plans.

- Evidence that fiscal planning is evaluated on the basis of its contribution to achievement of institutional goals, not solely on the basis of accounting principles of good practice. Evidence that the financial plans, including annual budget, capital plans, long term fiscal plans undergo periodic review and evaluation.
- Evidence of a fiscal planning process and documents describing the financial planning and budgeting processes and minutes or other records showing the institution has followed those processes.
- Evidence that the institution monitors student financial aid obligations such as student loan default rates and compliance with all federal regulations that impact the institution.