

Guidelines for Conducting Virtual Site Visits

CAA will provide the Zoom Software Virtual Platform

- The CAA will provide the platform to host the virtual site visit. The accreditation staff will provide Zoom meeting information for each site visit team to use for the duration of the site visit.
 - All Zoom meetings will require a password to participate. This platform will be used to provide a private meeting space for the site team and to provide space for the team members to meet with institutional and program representatives and representatives of other groups including but not limited to current students, alumni, external clinical supervisors, and members of the public.
- Programs and site visit teams must ensure all participants have the technology requirements and access and ability to use the selected platform(s):
 - internet connection – broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
 - audio device that may include speakers and microphone; phone
 - webcam built-in or USB plug-in
- As part of the planning, testing of all platforms must be conducted in advance of site visit to ensure sufficient bandwidth and familiarity with the platform(s).
- Accreditation staff will work with the site visit team chair to provide and/or identify tech support if needed for the dates of the visit.
- The site visit team and the program director should determine alternatives as part of a contingency plan, e.g. telephone, in the event the platform cannot be accessed or there is a disruption to internet service. All participants should be advised to have hard copies of the dial-in-numbers available to support the contingency plan.
- All participants should be seen as well as heard by the site visit team, and vice versa during interviews and meetings where appropriate.
- There are multiple avenues for accessing Zoom videoconferencing, including via PCs, laptops, tablets, and cell phones.

Preparation for Virtual Site Visit/Agenda Development

- The site visit chair and program director should meet in advance to set the agenda, consistent with current site visit planning practices. This should include testing the platform and reviewing requirements to ensure access is available as needed, such as for student or public meetings, as appropriate.
 - An agenda template for the virtual site visit has been provided as a starting point. Please adjust it as needed.
 - Programs will be required to provide a participant list to the site visit team with name, phone number and email address of all scheduled participants one week in advance of visit. The site visit

team will need participants lists for the site visit, the public meeting, the student meeting and the exit meeting.

- Agenda set-up
 - The total time spent for the virtual visit should approximate that for an on-site visit.
 - Consider time differences of all participants, as not all may be in the same time zone, and what may be reasonable start and end times each day. Time zones should be noted on the agenda.
 - Factor in appropriate time to switch to the next group/individual being interviewed in the agenda. Adding time between interviews may help with ensuring confidentiality of those being interviewed.
 - Incorporate appropriate time for breaks, time for lunch, informal team meetings before and during the site visit, etc.
 - All accreditation standards are expected to be reviewed and assessed, regardless of the format of the site visit.
- Zoom Details
 - Approximately 30 days before the site visit, the accreditation staff will provide zoom meeting access information for 2 meetings: the site visit team pre-meeting and the two-day site visit. This information will include a Zoom URL, a password and a meeting ID number.
 - The site visit team will insert the Zoom info into the agenda aligned with assignments.
 - The site visit team will send appointments to the scheduled participants with the Zoom info; or share agenda with scheduled participants. We recommend, to avoid confusion or mix-ups in terms of who is logging in to what meeting, that you only provide the Zoom login details specific to the participants that will be attending each meeting.
 - Approximately two weeks in advance of the site visit, the site visit team will provide accreditation staff with the following information:
 - The start times of the site visit including the time zone so that staff can coordinate the initiation of the Zoom meeting for each day of the site visit.
 - The date and time (or approximate date range) of the site visit team pre-meeting so that Accreditation staff may adjust the meeting dates and times if needed.
- Confidentiality
 - The program must ensure confidentiality of all meetings. Login information may **NOT** be shared beyond scheduled participants in each meeting.
 - No one other than individuals listed on the participant list may be present for the meetings/interviews with the members of the site visit team. Only scheduled participants will be admitted to the Zoom meetings.

TIPS for the Site Visit Chair:

- Advise the program director that the Chair is their primary point of contact.
- Contact the program director frequently and have a scheduled call the week prior to the site visit in order to go over final details.
- Set a prepared document cutoff date in advance of the schedule site visit date.
- Encourage team members to review the documents made available in advance of the site visit to allow the team adequate time for reviewing materials acquired during the visit.
- Consider assigning team members as leads for different standards, and clarify responsibilities in responsibilities in advance of the visit.

Site Visit Team Pre-Meeting

- Accreditation staff will set up this meeting so that staff do not have to open the meeting for the site visit team. Please be aware that there is no waiting room, but security is still managed by sharing the Zoom password only with the site visit team.
- Meeting topics should include:
 - assignment of team roles such as who will be the Zoom host and manage the breakout rooms and who will monitor the waiting room to let in the scheduled meeting participants
 - a review of the Zoom functionality for the designated zoom host to assign meeting participants to break out rooms for individual meetings.
 - a discussion of a back-up plan for using conference calling.
 - how the team will communicate informally or privately during the site visit, e.g. via Zoom Chat, text messages, email, etc.
 - All participants should be advised to have hard copies of the agenda and the participants including their phone numbers and email addresses. The phone numbers will be helpful to identify meeting participants that call in to the zoom meeting. Callers names are typically not displayed on Zoom, just their phone number.
- Please note that the site visit team pre-meeting has been set up as a “hostless” meeting so that you can meeting during non-business hours without the need for the staff to open the meeting for you. Unfortunately, this setting doesn’t allow you to practice using the Zoom breakout rooms because that requires someone to be a designated “host”.
 - The Zoom website has a helpful 3 minute video tutorial on break out rooms here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms>
 - If you would like practice with the breakout room function in zoom, please let the Accreditation staff know (accreditation@asha.org) . We can arrange to open your site visit early to give you a quick tutorial and practice for your designated host. Plan on about 15-20 minutes. If you’d prefer not to wait until the first day of your site visit, let staff know if you’d like a training session scheduled prior to your site visit. Staff is available during business hours (Eastern Time) Monday-Friday.
- When the meeting is complete, please be sure to “end meeting for all” when exiting Zoom for this meeting. This frees up the Zoom account to be used for other meetings.

TIPS for managing the Pre-Meeting:

- The team’s pre-meeting scheduling is flexible and can be tailored to the team’s various schedules.
- Use the Zoom pre-meeting appointment for any pre-meetings with the program; this will help everyone familiarize themselves with Zoom.
- The final pre-meeting should be sooner than the day/evening before the site visit in case additional research or preparation is needed for first day interviews.

During the Virtual Site Visit

- An Accreditation staff member will be “on-call” during the site visit to act in a support capacity for the team regarding the use of technology and logistical considerations. Staff will not be actively participating in any component of the visit unless the program and site visit team are advised otherwise.
- The team should plan to be online at least 15 minutes ahead of the first meeting to work out any technical issues.
- To begin each day of the site visit, accreditation staff will open the zoom meeting and move the site visit team out of the waiting room. The staff will then make the SV Chair or designee the “host” of the Zoom meeting and the rest of the site visit team will be designated as “co-hosts”. Staff will then sign off from the Zoom platform.
- Should there be technical issues with the Zoom platform during the site visit, the contingency plan is to move to conference calls. Please have hard copies available of all meeting participant names, phone numbers and email addresses.
 - Note: If the Zoom host is in a breakout room for an interview, he or she may not be immediately available to let someone in from the waiting room.
- All participants entering the meeting will enter a waiting room, where they will not be able to hear or see any meetings in progress. The team member, working off the approved attendee list provided, will allow entry into the meeting room at the appointed time.
- All participants should have a quiet space with minimal distractions and a reliable internet connection.
- All participants should consider using headsets to minimize background noise, improve your audio, and to ensure privacy.
- Make sure all participants have audio and video functioning properly.
- Site visit team members should comport themselves in the same manner as for an onsite visit by:
 - dressing professionally.
 - engaging fully in the site visit and not multi-tasking or participating in other work or activities.
 - keeping their eyes on the camera and focusing on the conversations.
 - speaking clearly and keeping in mind voice and video delays.

TIPS for managing the Site Visit:

- Set up breakout rooms at the beginning of the site visit with each site visitor assigned to different rooms. Team members can be easily reassigned to a breakout room when scheduled as part of joint interview.
- Ask that participants arrive 5 minutes early for their interview and add participants to breakout rooms as they enter the waiting room, as appropriate.
- Use the breakout transition time for introductions.
- If meeting with students from both professional areas, consider breaking them into separate breakout rooms.
- The site visitors can collect data on students by running the pre-set Poll for attendees basic information, so the team can focus on the meeting.

Confidentiality of Interviews/Meetings and Recordings

- Individual and group interviews can be conducted using telephone or via Zoom. Consideration must be given as to whether to set up separate meetings controlled by the team for each interview, especially if simultaneous interviews are being conducted by members of the team; or individual telephone calls.
- It is not recommended that site team members use the private chat function of the platform during the virtual visit – texting or private calls during breaks are possible options.
- To ensure the confidentiality of all meetings, a comprehensive list of participants should be provided by the program a minimum of 1 week prior in order to ensure that only the appropriate individuals are online for their respective interviews/meetings. (also see information below about Managing Group Meetings). Any modifications following the provision of the final list should be discussed with the Site Visit Chair.
- The program should ensure that all meeting participants understand the guidelines for participating in the Zoom meetings.
- When using Zoom, a site visitor will be designated to monitor attendees. The Zoom meeting will be set up so that all attendees will enter a waiting room. A site visitor will admit the scheduled participants from the waiting room into the meeting.
- No recordings will be permitted by either the site visitors, program, or any individuals participating in the visit. Zoom meetings settings will NOT permit meeting recordings.

Managing “Group” Meetings

- The site visit agenda must include opportunity for students and members of the public to meet with the team, whether the site visit is conducted on campus or as a virtual visit. It is the responsibility of the program to schedule and promote public and student meetings.
- When the site visit team is not on campus, determine how group meetings, e.g., students, public meeting, will be managed.
 - Plan for appropriate protocols consistent with local social distancing practices in place for location.
 - If student/public gathering is not possible on the campus, consider whether the program can identify and furnish lists of potential students or public representatives to be contacted to interview (similar to how alumni or externship supervisors are contacted).
 - If needed, work with program to include virtual meeting information in invitations.
 - Consider having the site visit team join scheduled a class to meet with students, if possible.
- The program will provide at least 15 days of advance notice of the public meeting. This may be done via a “save the date” announcement with all pertinent details and a note that Zoom links will be provided. Programs will state that the public meeting will take place on a virtual platform rather than taking place live, on campus.
- To avoid zoom bombing, encourage programs NOT share the Zoom meeting URL and password on a widely distributed flyer. The program should determine a system for those interested in attending the public meeting to RSVP to the program. The program would then gather a list of attendees, provide them with the URL and password and then furnish that list to the site visit team with participant names, phone numbers and email addresses. The site visit team will need this information to know who to admit from the Zoom waiting room into the public meeting.

Tour

- When site visitors are not on campus, the program must execute an alternative method to support a physical tour of the visit (e.g., classrooms, program offices, student labs, clinical space, etc.). The program director and site visit chair can discuss options, which could include:
 1. a live tour with a program representative connected via the meeting platform;
 2. a pre-recorded video of the areas to be toured; or
 3. a narrated PowerPoint with still photos of various areas (noted below).

Pre-recorded videos could be made available to the team in advance or could be viewed with program representatives during the visit and allow for the program to address questions from the team (pause video to allow the program to answer).

For any of these options, there are key areas that should be included in what the site visit team should review as relevant to documenting compliance with CAA's Standards for Accreditation.

Below is a comprehensive list of areas to include in the virtual tour. Note that this list may not apply to all programs, so adapt it as needed.

Areas to Include for Virtual Tour of the Physical Facilities

- Typical faculty office
 - Typical supervisor office
 - All faculty and student lab/research spaces
 - Typical classroom with description of technology
 - Entrances to key areas (the building, the clinic area, faculty offices) showing accessibility
 - Clinic waiting area
 - Any postings in clinic area (e.g., re equitable treatment)
 - Typical clinic room(s) with description of what is in each room (e.g., cabinet with gloves, cleaning supplies, etc.)
 - Accessible lavatory/washroom space and how close it is to clinic
 - Nearest sink for clinic use (e.g., disinfecting toys, washing hands). Placement of hand sanitizers.
 - Light and sound fire alarms throughout area
 - Nearest elevators and approximate distances for students and clients
 - Where academic records are kept (safety and security) and procedures for accessing records
 - Where clinic records are kept (safety and security) and procedures for accessing records
 - Student computer lab and workspaces
 - Where materials and supplies are kept (to go with the materials and equipment lists provided electronically)
 - Audio booths and any ramps
 - Parking for clients
 - Observation areas. How supervisors or others observe students in clinic.
 - Acknowledgement of any areas that do not meet current standards for accessibility. For example, if faculty offices are up a flight of stairs not served by an elevator.
- On the **Site Visit Report**, the site visit team should indicate that the tour of the facilities was pre-recorded or handled via video, etc.
 - Questions about satisfaction with and adequacy of the physical space also will be posed to students and faculty.

Documentation/Materials

- The CAA requires materials to be made available **30 days in advance** of the site visit and during the time of the visit. (See <https://caa.asha.org/site-visits/review-materials/>). For virtual site visits, the CAA recommends that most documents be available to the team 30 days before the scheduled visit. Any materials that cannot be made available 30 days in advance, e.g. actual student or alumni files, the program must work with the Site Visit Chair to identify those documents and expectations for access during the site visit.
- The program is expected to provide documentation in advance of the visit, as per current policy, and to ensure access by the site visitors to files and other documents under appropriate protocols.
 - The program will provide the Site Visit Chair with a **comprehensive list of students** (current and past 3 years) no later than 30 days before the site visit. The Chair will then select which student files the site visit team needs to review. The program will then ensure that those files are available in digital format and share them with the site visit team via a secure software platform.
- **Confidential materials** (student, faculty files) that would be available for review onsite should be available virtually through a secure document sharing application. Always consider the most secure way to share documents or files, e.g., only share documents with specific individuals, do not post link in a document. The program should remove access to these materials at the conclusion of the virtual visit.
 - Under FERPA, which allows for accrediting bodies to access student educational records, we have determined that the Zoom platform may be used to appropriately share student educational records as long as the video meeting session has reasonable security settings in place such as password protection. The site visit team and program should ensure that no one without appropriate authorization, such as anyone outside of the program officials and the site visit team, are in any Zoom meetings where student files are shared.
- In the **Site Visit Report**, the site visit team should add a statement in the introduction, closing, appendix or elsewhere in the report indicating that the site visit was conducted using virtual technologies, including Zoom and any other technology/software.