MSA-CESS Accreditation Readiness Checklist

25 leadership questions before a formal self-study and peer review pathway

Framework note. MSA-CESS describes accreditation as an ongoing improvement and accountability process involving self-study, evaluation and peer review. Schools should confirm the appropriate protocol directly with MSA-CESS.

How to use. Mark each question as Confident, Partial or Gap. Treat the result as an internal leadership screen, not as an official eligibility, authorization, registration or accreditation decision.

1. Purpose, eligibility and leadership

[ ]	Can leadership explain why MSA-CESS accreditation fits the school's mission and improvement priorities?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Has the school confirmed eligibility, membership expectations and the appropriate self-study protocol with MSA-CESS?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Is there an executive sponsor with authority to resolve cross-school issues during the self-study?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Is one internal coordinator accountable for the timetable, evidence map and communication?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can leadership explain what should improve because of accreditation, not only what should be submitted?	Confident Partial Gap

2. Standards and organizational capacity

[ ]	Has the school reviewed the current MSA-CESS Standards for Accreditation for Schools and identified priority gaps?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can governance, leadership, finance, facilities, staffing and student-support systems be evidenced in current practice?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are policies current, approved, implemented and supported by records that show they are actually used?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can the school show how resources are aligned to its stated educational priorities and student needs?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are legal, safeguarding, health, safety and operational responsibilities controlled through reliable systems?	Confident Partial Gap

3. Teaching, learning and student performance

[ ]	Can the school show a coherent relationship between curriculum, instruction, assessment and expected student performance?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Does leadership use student-performance evidence to identify priorities and evaluate whether improvement actions work?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are professional learning and staff evaluation connected to identified learning needs and school goals?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can students and families describe a learning experience consistent with the school's written commitments?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can the school evidence support for student well-being, inclusion and access in day-to-day practice?	Confident Partial Gap

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Readiness questions - continued

4. Self-study and improvement planning

[ ]	Is the self-study designed as honest institutional inquiry rather than a document-collection exercise?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are multiple stakeholder groups involved in evaluating strengths, needs and priorities?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can the school distinguish evidence of compliance from evidence of impact and improvement?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are improvement goals measurable, owned by named leaders and connected to timelines and evidence?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Can the school show that previous review findings led to completed actions and changed practice?	Confident Partial Gap

5. Peer-review readiness and sustainability

[ ]	Can staff retrieve current evidence quickly without relying on one person or one shared folder expert?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Would interviews, observations, records and leadership explanations tell the same institutional story?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Are leaders prepared to discuss genuine weaknesses and the actions being taken to address them?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Has the school tested readiness through a realistic mock review or evidence challenge?	Confident Partial Gap
[ ]	Is there enough capacity to sustain improvement work after the visit and throughout the accreditation term?	Confident Partial Gap

Vallorne readiness signal	If several answers are Partial or Gap, sequence the work before locking an external-review timetable. A framework-specific diagnostic should identify priority risks, evidence owners and the practical work plan.

Official reference points used for this edition

MSA-CESS: Accreditation Process and Standards: https://msa-cess.org/accreditation-process-and-standards/

MSA-CESS: Standards for Accreditation School Edition 2021: https://msa-cess.org/standards-for-accreditation-school-edition-2021/

Independent advisory note: Vallorne Educational Group does not award accreditation, authorization or registration and does not represent or imply endorsement by MSA-CESS, Cognia, the International Baccalaureate Organization or Cambridge International Education. Formal requirements, timelines and decisions remain with the relevant organization. Requirements can change; schools should verify the current official guidance before acting.