

# Report Preface (PRE)

## Introduction

This section provides the opportunity for an institution to highlight points of distinction and upload an executive letter to accompany its STARS report.

PRE 1	Executive Letter	Required *
PRE 2	Points of Distinction	Optional

\* Not applicable to every institution.

# PRE 1: Executive Letter

## Required to submit a scored report; optional for unscored reports

This section allows an institution to upload a letter from the institution's president, chancellor, or other high ranking executive. Typically written on official letterhead, the executive letter serves as an introduction or cover letter for the institution's STARS report. As such, the letter may include a description of the institution's commitment to sustainability, background about the institution, key achievements or highlights from the report, and/or goals for future submissions. The letter also serves as indicator of administrative support for sustainability and the STARS process. Institutions are expected to submit a new executive letter when there has been a change in leadership or the institution is submitting for a higher rating.

## Reporting Fields

### Required

- ☐ Executive letter (upload)

## PRE 2: Points of Distinction

### Optional

This optional section provides an opportunity for an institution to highlight up to three programs, initiatives, or accomplishments that best reflect its leadership for sustainability. Completing this section will help inform how AASHE publicizes the institution's STARS rating.

### Reporting Fields

#### Required

- ☐ Name of the institution's featured sustainability program, initiative, or accomplishment
- ☐ A brief description of the institution's featured program initiative, or accomplishment
- ☐ Which of the following impact areas does the featured program, initiative, or accomplishment most closely relate to? (Select up to three.)
  - ☐ Curriculum
  - ☐ Research
  - ☐ Campus Engagement
  - ☐ Public Engagement
  - ☐ Air & Climate
  - ☐ Buildings
  - ☐ Energy
  - ☐ Food & Dining
  - ☐ Grounds
  - ☐ Purchasing
  - ☐ Transportation
  - ☐ Waste
  - ☐ Water
  - ☐ Coordination & Planning
  - ☐ Diversity & Affordability
  - ☐ Investment & Finance
  - ☐ Wellbeing & Work

#### Optional

- ☐ Website URL where more information about the institution's featured program, initiative, or accomplishment may be found
- ☐ STARS credit in which the featured program, initiative, or accomplishment is reported (if applicable)
- ☐ A photograph or document associated with the featured program, initiative, or accomplishment (upload)
- ☐ Name of a second highlighted program/initiative/accomplishment
- ☐ A brief description of the second program/initiative/accomplishment
- ☐ Which impact areas does the second program/initiative/accomplishment most closely relate to?
- ☐ Website URL where more information about the second program/initiative/accomplishment may be found
- ☐ STARS credit in which the second program/initiative/accomplishment is reported (if applicable)
- ☐ A photograph or document associated with the second program/initiative/accomplishment (upload)

- ☐ Name of a third highlighted program/initiative/accomplishment
- ☐ A brief description of the third program/initiative/accomplishment
- ☐ Which impact areas does the third program/initiative/accomplishment most closely relate to?
- ☐ Website URL where more information about the third program/initiative/accomplishment may be found
- ☐ A photograph or document associated with the third program/initiative/accomplishment (upload)
- ☐ Data source(s) and notes about the submission
- ☐ Contact information for a responsible party (an employee who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

# Institutional Characteristics

Institutional characteristics include data related to an institution's boundary (defining the campus for purposes of reporting), its operational characteristics (the context in which it operates) and its demographics and academic structure. This information provides valuable context for understanding and interpreting STARS data.

Some of the values reported in PRE-4 and PRE-5 are also required to pursue specific STARS credits. Such reporting fields may be populated from the data provided in the Institutional Characteristics section of the online Reporting Tool.

PRE 3	Institutional Boundary	Required
PRE 4	Operational Characteristics	Required
PRE 5	Academics and Demographics	Required

# PRE 3: Institutional Boundary

## Required for submission

Each institution is expected to include its entire main campus when collecting data. Institutions may choose to include any other land holdings, facilities, farms, and satellite campuses, as long as the selected boundary is the same for each credit. If an institution finds it necessary to exclude a particular unit from its submission, the reason for excluding it must be provided in the appropriate reporting field, below.

## Reporting Fields

### Required

- ☐ *Institution type* (Associate/Short-cycle, Baccalaureate, Doctoral/Research, Master's, Other)
- ☐ Institutional control (Public, Private for-profit, or Private non-profit)
- ☐ A brief description of the institution's main campus and other aspects of the institutional boundary used to complete this report
- ☐ Which of the following features are present on campus and which are included within the institutional boundary?
  - ☐ Agricultural school
  - ☐ Medical school
  - ☐ Other professional school(s) with labs and clinics (e.g., dental, nursing, pharmacy, public health, veterinary)
  - ☐ Museum
  - ☐ Satellite campus
  - ☐ Hospital
  - ☐ Farm larger than 2 hectares (5 acres)
  - ☐ Agricultural experiment station larger than 2 hectares (5 acres)

If there are features present that are not included within the boundary, provide:

- ☐ The rationale for excluding any features that are present from the institutional boundary

### Optional

- ☐ Additional documentation to support the submission (upload)
- ☐ Data source(s) and notes about the submission
- ☐ Contact information for a responsible party (an employee who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

## Standards and Terms

### Institution type

Each institution is classified into one of five basic types based on the general level of educational programs offered and number and type of degrees awarded. An institution may be classified as one type and still offer programs and award degrees at various levels, as described below. An institution in the U.S.

must report its Basic Carnegie Classification, with the exception of Special Focus and Tribal institutions, which must select the most appropriate of the five types listed.

Type	Description	Corresponding UNESCO Level
Associate/ Short-cycle	Includes tertiary institutions where all degrees, certificates, and/or diplomas are between secondary education and baccalaureate degree level (e.g., associate degrees), or where baccalaureate degrees account for less than 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees. This may include community colleges, further education colleges, (higher) technical colleges, technician or advanced/higher vocational training, and similar institutions.	ISCED 5
Baccalaureate	Includes tertiary institutions where baccalaureate degrees represent at least 10 percent of all undergraduate degrees and where fewer than 50 master's degrees or 20 doctoral degrees are awarded annually. (May include some institutions above the master's degree threshold.)	ISCED 6
Master's	Generally includes tertiary institutions that award at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees annually.	ISCED 7
Doctoral/Research	Includes tertiary institutions that award at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees or at least 30 professional practice doctoral degrees in at least 2 programs annually (e.g., doctoral-level degrees that qualify recipients for entry into professional practice, such as the JD, MD, PharmD, DPT, and so on).	ISCED 8
Other (non-higher ed.)	Includes secondary schools and other non-tertiary institutions. This may include college preparatory schools, primary professional and technical education designed for direct entry into the labor force, and adult education institutions primarily focused on social, recreational, or self-development goals.	ISCED 2-4 and other entities

An institution should report the institution type that is most appropriate given its context and with consideration for the criteria outlined above. For example, a U.S. Carnegie-classified Special Focus institution or Tribal College should select the institution type that best reflects the level of programs offered and the number and type of degrees awarded.

# PRE 4: Operational Characteristics

## Required for submission

Operational characteristics are variables that provide information about the context in which the institution operates. Report the most recent data available within the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission.

## Reporting Fields

### Required

- ☐ *Endowment* size (US/Canadian dollars)
- ☐ Total campus area (i.e., the total amount of land within the institutional boundary) (hectares or acres)
- ☐ *Locale* (Large city, Urban fringe of large city, Mid-size city, Urban fringe of mid-size city, Large town, Small town, or Rural)
- ☐ *IECC climate zone* (1 - Very Hot; 2 – Hot; 3- Warm; 4 – Mixed; 5 – Cool; 6 – Cold; 7 - Very Cold; 8 - Subarctic)
- ☐ *Gross floor area of building space* (gross square metres or feet)
- ☐ Floor area of *laboratory space* (square metres or feet)
- ☐ Floor area of *healthcare space* (square metres or feet)
- ☐ Floor area of other *energy intensive space*, e.g., data centers, food production space, convenience stores (square metres or feet)

### Optional

- ☐ Additional documentation to support the submission (upload)
- ☐ Data source(s) and notes about the submission
- ☐ Contact information for a responsible party (an employee who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

## Standards and Terms

### Endowment

Consistent with the U.S. Department of Education, endowment funds are defined as “funds whose principal is nonexpendable (true endowment) and that are intended to be invested to provide earnings for institutional use. Also includes term endowments and funds functioning as endowment.”

### Energy intensive space

Energy intensive space includes “laboratory space”, “healthcare space”, and “other energy intensive space”, which is reported separately and may include restaurants and food production facilities, convenience and grocery stores, and data centers.

Other facilities that the institution has determined to have an average energy use intensity (EUI) that is at least twice that of office/administrative space may also be counted as “other energy intensive space”,



however classrooms, offices, residence halls, auditoriums, gymnasiums, arenas/stadiums, clinics, storage facilities, and convention centers would NOT typically qualify.

Energy use intensity is a unit of measurement that represents the energy consumed by a building relative to its size, e.g., 1,000 MMBtu per square metre. For more information, see ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager Technical Reference: U.S. Energy Use Intensity by Property Type.

### **Gross floor area of building space**

Gross floor area of building space refers to the total amount of building space that is included within the institutional boundary. Any standard definition of building space may be used (e.g. ASHRAE, ANSI/BOMA, IECC) as long as it is used consistently. Parking structures are included. For guidance on calculating gross square footage of a building, you may also consult 3.2.1 Gross Area of the U.S. Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual.

Buildings within the overall STARS boundary that the institution leases entirely (i.e. the institution is the only tenant) should be included.

Buildings that are not owned by the institution and in which the institution is one of multiple tenants may be excluded. If the institution chooses to include such buildings, it must include all multi-tenant buildings that are included in the institution's overall STARS boundary and in which the institution is a tenant; institutions cannot choose to include some leased spaces and omit others. If an institution chooses to include leased spaces, the institution should count only the square footage of building space it occupies and not the entire building.

### **Healthcare space**

The total amount of building space within the institutional boundary that may be categorized as "Health Care Facilities" (e.g., codes in the 800 series under the Space Use Codes in the U.S. Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual). To simplify reporting, an institutions with a hospital may report all floor area within the hospital as healthcare space.

### **IECC climate zone**

Climate zones are consistent with the climate designations used by the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). The zones correspond to these generalized climate categories:

1 - Very Hot; 2 – Hot; 3 – Warm; 4 – Mixed; 5 – Cool; 6 – Cold; 7 - Very Cold; 8 - Subarctic

For further guidance, see [ANSI/ASHRAE/IESNA Standard 90.1-2007](#) (international) or [IECC/ASHRAE Climate Zones](#) (U.S).

### **Laboratory space**

The total amount of building space within the institutional boundary that may be categorized as "research laboratories" (e.g., code 250 under the Space Use Codes in the US Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual). To simplify reporting, an institution may report all floor area within buildings that are predominantly comprised of research laboratories as laboratory space.

### **Locale**

The locale or setting of institution's main campus may be classified as one of the following:

- Large City: A central city of a consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CMSA) or metropolitan statistical area (MSA), with the city having a population greater than or equal to 250,000.
- Mid-size City: A central city of a CMSA or MSA, with the city having a population less than 250,000.
- Urban Fringe of a Large City: Any territory within a CMSA or MSA of a Large City and defined as urban by a national census bureau or the equivalent.
- Urban Fringe of a Mid-size City: Any territory within a CMSA or MSA of a Mid-size City and defined as urban by a national census bureau or the equivalent.
- Large Town: An incorporated place or census-designated place with a population greater than or equal to 25,000 and located outside a CMSA or MSA.
- Small Town: An incorporated place or census-designated place with a population less than 25,000 and greater than or equal to 2,500 and located outside a CMSA or MSA.
- Rural: Any territory designated as rural by a national census bureau or the equivalent.

# PRE 5: Academics and Demographics

## Required for submission

This section includes variables that provide information about the institution's academic programs, students, and employees. Report the most recent data available within the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission. Some population figures are used to calculate *weighted campus user*, a measurement of an institution's population that is adjusted to accommodate how intensively certain community members use the campus.

## Reporting Fields

### Required

- ☐ Number of *academic divisions* (e.g., colleges, schools)
- ☐ Number of *academic departments* (or the equivalent)

### Headcounts

Report the unduplicated total number of students enrolled and workers employed over a 12-month period (e.g., as reported on the U.S. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System 12-Month Enrollment and Human Resources forms) or else representative *headcounts* (e.g., autumn figures).

- ☐ Number of *students enrolled for credit*
- ☐ Total number of *employees* (academic + non-academic staff)

### Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)

Report the institution's best estimates, annualized as feasible and/or calculated according to relevant national, regional, or international standards (e.g., as reported on the U.S. IPEDS 12-Month Enrollment form or calculated using the IPEDS formulas). *Non-credit students* may be included.

- ☐ Total *full-time equivalent* student enrollment (undergraduate and graduate)
- ☐ Full-time equivalent of students enrolled exclusively in *distance education*  
(If not regularly tracked, an institution may estimate FTE attributable to distance education, e.g., by multiplying the percentage of students that are enrolled exclusively in distance education by total FTE enrollment.)
- ☐ Full-time equivalent of employees (academic + non-academic staff)

### On-Campus Residents

Report annualized headcounts as feasible or else representative snapshots (e.g., autumn headcounts).

- ☐ Number of students *resident on-site*
- ☐ Number of employees resident on-site
- ☐ Number of other individuals resident on-site, e.g., family members of employees, individuals lodging on-site (by average occupancy rate), and/or *staffed hospital beds* (if applicable)

### Optional

- ☐ Additional documentation to support the submission (upload)

- Data source(s) and notes about the submission
- Contact information for a responsible party (an employee who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

## **Standards and Terms**

### **Academic departments**

An academic department is an administrative division of a college, university, or school faculty that is devoted to a particular academic discipline (e.g., Economics, Environmental Science, Sociology) or a closely related set of disciplines (e.g., Asian Studies or Physics & Astronomy). Departments may exist under other nomenclature and with coarser or finer divisions, depending upon each institution's context. Fields of study, programs, subject areas or the equivalent may be considered to be "departments" in the absence of traditional administrative divisions.

### **Academic divisions**

An academic division is an administrative division of a college, university, or school faculty that is devoted to a subset of students (e.g., Undergraduate School) or a particular academic degree program or discipline (e.g., School of Architecture). Divisions may exist under other nomenclature and with coarser or finer divisions, depending upon each institution's context.

### **Annualized**

An annualized population figure is the average of all periods (e.g., quarters, semesters, months) during an academic or calendar year (e.g., adding fall, winter, spring and summer enrollment figures and dividing by 4).

Consistent with the U.S. IPEDS, an institution may calculate and report annual FTE student enrollment based on instructional activity (i.e., the credit and/or contact hours reported by the institution over a 12 month period) rather than annualized counts.

Likewise, an institution may calculate and report annual FTE employees based on level of service rather than annualized counts. For example, an institution may define one "annualized FTE" as 12 months of service at 100 percent time. When an appointment is less than 12 months service or less than 100 percent time, the annualized FTE would be reduced proportionately. See also "Full-time equivalent".

### **Distance education**

Consistent with U.S. IPEDS, distance education is education that "uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously".

A distance education course is one in which "the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education."

A distance education program is one for which "all the required coursework for program completion is able to be completed via distance education courses". Distance education students are students who are enrolled in distance education programs, or else exclusively in distance education courses.

### **Employees**

Employees are defined as personnel paid by the institution and include full-time and part-time workers (as defined by the institution), and both academic staff (i.e., “faculty members”) and non-academic staff.

### **Full-time equivalent**

Consistent with Eurostat, full-time equivalent (FTE) is defined as follows:

A full-time equivalent, sometimes abbreviated as FTE, is a unit to measure employed persons or students in a way that makes them comparable although they may work or study a different number of hours per week.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) further elaborates in regard to FTE students:

A full-time equivalent (FTE) measure attempts to standardize a student’s actual course load against the normal course load. Calculating the full-time/part-time status requires information on the time periods for actual and normal course loads. For the reduction of headcount data to FTEs, where data and norms on individual participation are available, course load is measured as the product of the fraction of the normal course load for a full-time student and the fraction of the school/academic year.

[ FTE = (actual course load/normal course load) \* (actual duration of study during reference period/normal duration of study during reference period). ]

When actual course load information is not available, a full-time student is considered equal to one FTE. An institution should report its best estimates for FTE figures, annualized as feasible and calculated according to relevant national, regional or international standards (e.g., as calculated or reported on the U.S. IPEDS 12-Month Enrollment form and using the IPEDS formulas).

### **Headcount**

Consistent with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), headcount is defined as:

The number of individuals [...] counted, regardless of the intensity of participation/length of their program. In other words, a headcount measures the total number of students or employees, irrespective of course-load or employment status.

### **Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System**

The [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System](#) (IPEDS) is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). IPEDS gathers information from every college, university, and technical and vocational institution that participates in the federal student financial aid programs.

### **Non-credit students**

Non-credit or community education students are students who are enrolled in courses for personal or professional interest and are not seeking a degree or formal award, for example:

- Students enrolled exclusively in courses that cannot be applied towards a formal award
- Students enrolled exclusively in Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Students exclusively auditing classes

### **Resident on-site**

Individuals are resident on-site when they are living in a housing facility within the institutional boundary that is owned or controlled by the institution. To avoid double-counting, count student resident assistants (RAs) as students, even if they are also considered to be employees. The number of staffed hospital beds is used as a proxy for the number of hospital patients resident on-site.

### **Staffed hospital beds**

Consistent with Practice Greenhealth, staffed hospital beds:

...are those in-service and patient-ready for more than half of the days in the reporting period.

Staffed beds does not include beds ordinarily occupied for less than 24 hours, such as those in the emergency department, clinic, labor (birthing) rooms, surgery and recovery rooms and outpatient holding beds.

### **Students enrolled for credit**

Consistent with U.S. IPEDS, students enrolled for credit include all students enrolled in courses or programs that can be applied towards the requirements for a postsecondary degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award, regardless of whether or not they are seeking a degree or certificate. This includes:

- Students enrolled for credit in off-campus centers
- High school students taking regular college courses for credit
- Students taking remedial courses if the student is degree-seeking for the purpose of student financial aid determination
- Students from overseas enrolled in U.S. courses for credit (e.g., online students)
- Graduate students enrolled for thesis credits, even when zero credits are awarded as these students are still enrolled and seeking their degree.

### **Weighted campus user**

Weighted campus user is a measurement of an institution's population that is adjusted to accommodate how intensively certain community members use the campus. This figure is used to normalize resource consumption and environmental impact figures in order to accommodate the varied impacts of different population groups. For example, an institution where a high percentage of students live on campus would witness higher greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, and water consumption figures than otherwise comparable non-residential institution since students' residential impacts and consumption would be included in the institution's totals.

STARS calculates the figure according to the following formula. Please note that users will not have to calculate this figure themselves; the result will be calculated automatically when the data are entered into the online Reporting Tool.

$$\text{Weighted campus users} = (A + B + C) + 0.75 [ (D - A) + (E - B) - F ]$$

A = Number of students resident on-site

B = Number of employees resident on-site

C = Number of other individuals resident on-site

D = Total full-time equivalent student enrollment

E = Full-time equivalent of employees

F = Full-time equivalent of students enrolled exclusively in distance education