# Administrative Assessment

## Handbook for Program Coordinators

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Last revised: July 2025

More info at: https://srinfo.sulross.edu/ie/administrative-assessment/

SR SUL ROSS
INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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# Administrative Assessment Program Coordinator

## Role and Responsibilities

### What is Assessment?

Assessment is the ongoing and systematic process of identifying objectives and means to measure them, gathering measurements of the objectives, using the information to make decisions about improvement, and implementing improvements based on the data gathered. Administrative assessment program coordinators understand the usefulness of such information and inspire others to engage in this continuous cycle of improvement.

**Responsibilities**

1. Review, analyze, and evaluate the assigned administrative program's outcomes and assessment from the previous and current assessment year.
    - The current assessment year for Administrative Assessment Reports is September 1 to August 31.
    - Throughout the year, the administrative assessment program coordinator should consider the administrative program's outcomes and assessment methods to ensure ease of reporting at the end of the assessment year.

2. Use collected assessment data from colleagues within an administrative program to complete the Administrative Assessment Report in the Watermark system.
    - Administrative Assessment Reports are due August 31 of each year.

3. Administrative program outcomes and assessments may align with a strategy outlined in the "Strategic Plan 2022-2027: Our Student-Centric Focus." Through the Watermark system, administrative assessment program coordinators are asked to align at least one of their department or division's Administrative Assessment outcomes to one or more of the strategies listed in the strategic plan.

4. Keep in contact with the Institutional Effectiveness office (contacts at the end of this handbook) regarding due dates and technology issues.

5. Attend professional development and assessment training or meetings.

**Your service to Sul Ross State University is greatly appreciated.**

# Importance of Administrative Assessment

## Purpose of Assessment

1. **To improve** – The assessment process should provide feedback to determine how the administrative unit can be improved.

2. **To inform** – The assessment process should inform department heads and other decision-makers of the contributions and impact of the administrative program to the development and growth of students.

3. **To prove** – The assessment process should encapsulate and demonstrate what the administrative entity is accomplishing to students, faculty, staff, and outsiders.

4. **To support** – The assessment process should provide support for campus decision-making activities such as unit review and strategic planning, as well as external accountability activities such as accreditation.

## Supporting Accreditation Requirements

### SACSCOC 7

An institutional planning and effectiveness process involves all programs, services, and constituencies; is linked to decision-making processes at all levels; and provides a sound basis for budgeting decisions and resource allocations.

### SACSCOC 7.3

The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved.

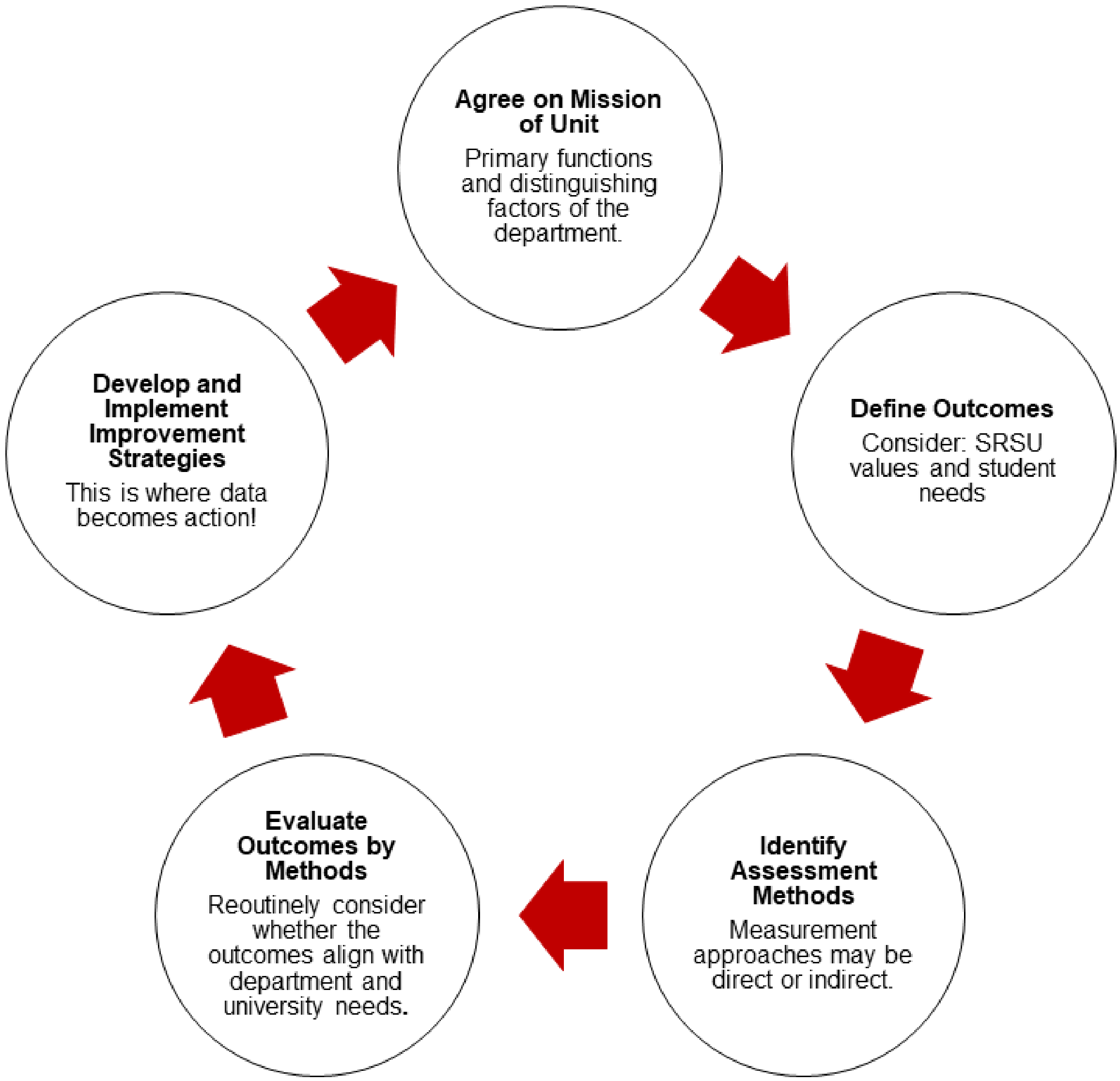
### SACSCOC 8.2.c

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of results for academic and student services that support student success.

### SACSCOC 12.1

The institution provides appropriate academic and student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission. The expectation is that the institution maintains descriptions of the various programs outlined above, as well as a narrative relating to the impact of these programs, services, and activities.

## The Sul Ross Administrative Assessment Process




**This five-step cycle promotes continuous improvement.**

# Applying the Administrative Assessment Process Flow Chart

## Preplan: Organize for Assessment

Before assessment can begin, key staff, faculty, committees, and structures must be identified. One or more persons may lead the administrative program assessment process, but it is critical for all staff to assume the responsibility of designing, implementing, and carrying out the assessment process.

1. **Define the Mission Statement**
   A mission statement is a description of what a department, division, unit, or office does, and what philosophy and principles guide it. The department or division mission statement must be succinct, and convey how the unit supports the overall mission of the institution. Mission statements should not be easily rewritten.
2. **Define the Desired Outcomes**
   Administrative outcomes should reflect the program's most important initiatives or improvements over the course of an assessment year. Programs should not use the department or division's normal operations as part of the assessment initiatives but should focus on improvements and special projects that will enhance the entity. Programs are encouraged to identify outcomes that align with the institution's most recent strategic plan to increase the overall assessment of the institution.

   Outcomes are statements of intention, describing a task to accomplish or a goal to meet. They are specific, measurable, and quantifiable statements that can be used to determine progress toward the overall mission of the entity. Outcomes should be reasonably achieved within an expected timeframe and with available resources.

   A general formula for writing an outcome can be employed, although it is not required.

   **Outcome = Target/Subject + Verb/Action+ Object + Modifiers**

   **Outcome Example using Registrar's Office:**

   The Office of Records and Registration provides accurate student, class, and faculty data reports to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as required by statute.

   **Outcome Example using the Library:**

   The Library enhances student success and retention by providing an environment conducive to learning.

# Applying the Administrative Assessment Process Flow Chart

3. **Define and Identify Assessment Methods**
   An assessment method identifies evidence and processes the administrative assessment program coordinator will use to determine whether the program is achieving the expected results. Assessment methods should be quantitative and show performance compared to criteria for success in relation to expected outcomes.

   In collecting this evidence, the program should learn two things: (1) whether the outcome is being met, (2) where there is room for improvement. For each outcome, at least one to two assessment methods must be identified to gather this needed information, ideally one direct and one indirect.

   **Direct methods** of assessing operational or strategic outcomes include measurements of the demand, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of key functions and services. Direct methods include key terms such as number of, percentage, level, average, etc.

   **Indirect methods** of assessing operational or strategic outcomes include measurements of constitutes' perceptions of or satisfaction with key functions and services. Indirect methods can support and contextualize direct methods of assessment. Indirect method data may be found in surveys, focus groups, documented feedback, etc.

4. **Evaluate Outcomes by Assessment Methods**
   At the end of the assessment year, each unit must write an assessment report which consists of the findings, action plan(s), and analysis. The first step is to collect the findings (or results) associated with each measure. Findings are merely quantifiable data, without any analysis, that result when the measures listed in the assessment plan are completed.

   Report your findings and whether the target was met, not met, or partially met. The analysis section will then provide you with the opportunity for a more comprehensive response to your findings. The analysis of findings should be comprehensive in how it impacts your department, division, and/or the university.

5. **Develop and Implement Improvement Strategies**
   The analysis of unit outcomes during an assessment year should be used to guide future outcomes and methods in an effort to achieve desired results and improvements. Outcomes should be considered and adjusted in preparation for the next assessment year.

# Using the Watermark Platform for Administrative Assessment Reports

Log in with Single Sign-On (SSO) at https://srinfo.sulross.edu/ie/administrative-assessment/. Select the Planning & Self-Study option.

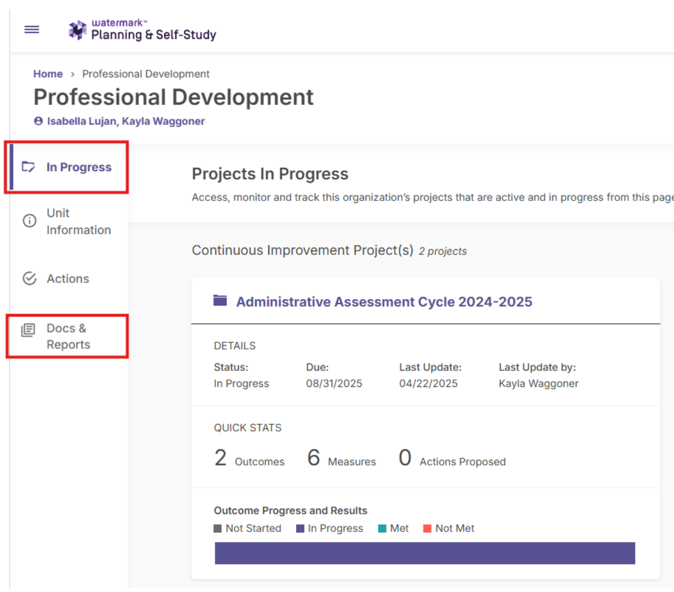
## Assessing a Plan

For every Department that a Coordinator is assigned to as a Lead, there will be a Department card listed on the user's home page.


*The Department Card as presented on the user's home page.*

The Department card presents two options for accessing the Plan.

1. On the Department card, there is a section titled "Projects in Progress". If the Plan is still open, it will be listed here, and the user can click on its name to enter it. (skip to the next page in this handbook)
2. Alternatively, the user can click **Enter Unit** to be brought into the Departments area. From here, there will also be an **In Progress** tab on the left, under which any open Plan can be selected.

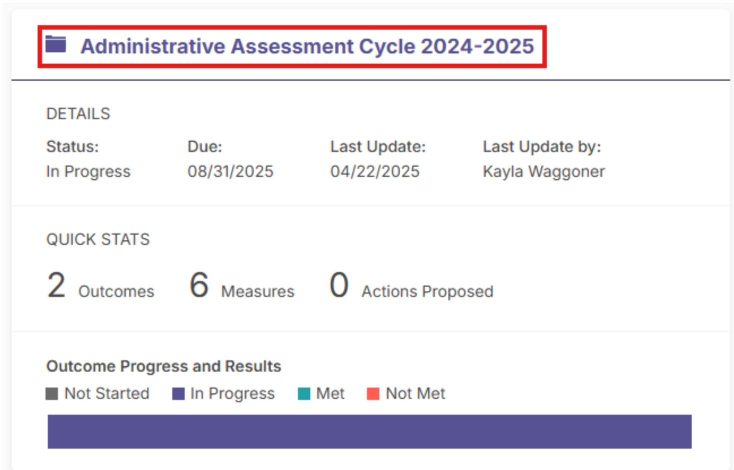



*The Department area, with In Progress and Docs & Reports tabs highlighted.*

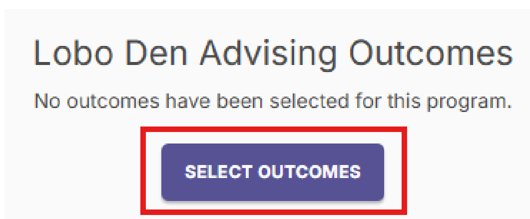
**Note - if the Plan has been closed, a report containing its data can be located in this area, under the **Docs & Reports** tab.*

## Entering Results, Findings, and Actions in an Assessment Plan

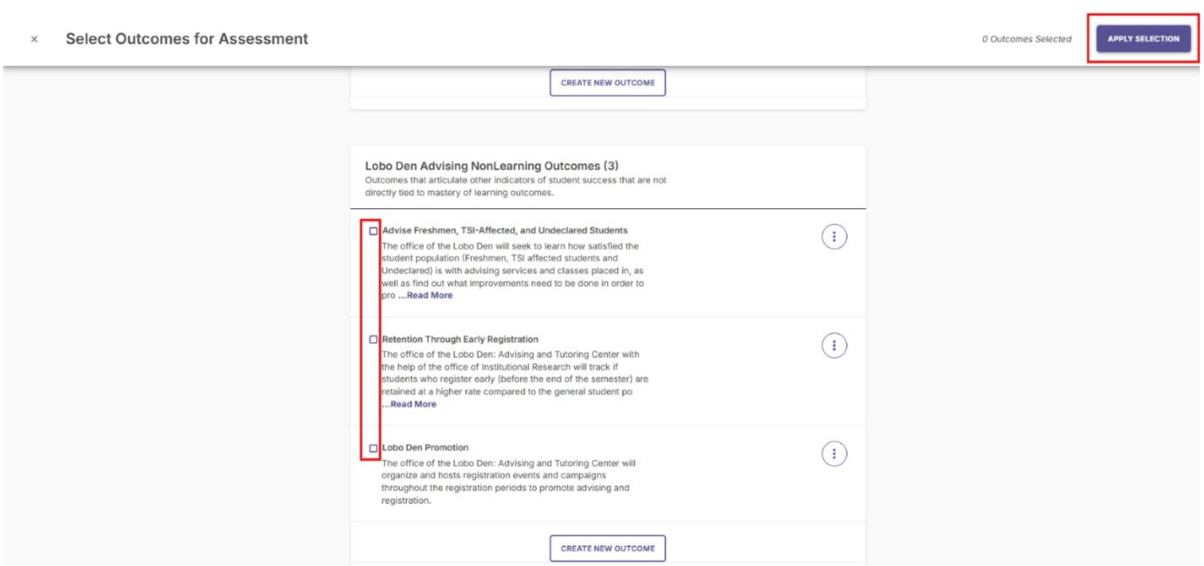
To begin, select the **Administrative Assessment Cycle 2024-2025**



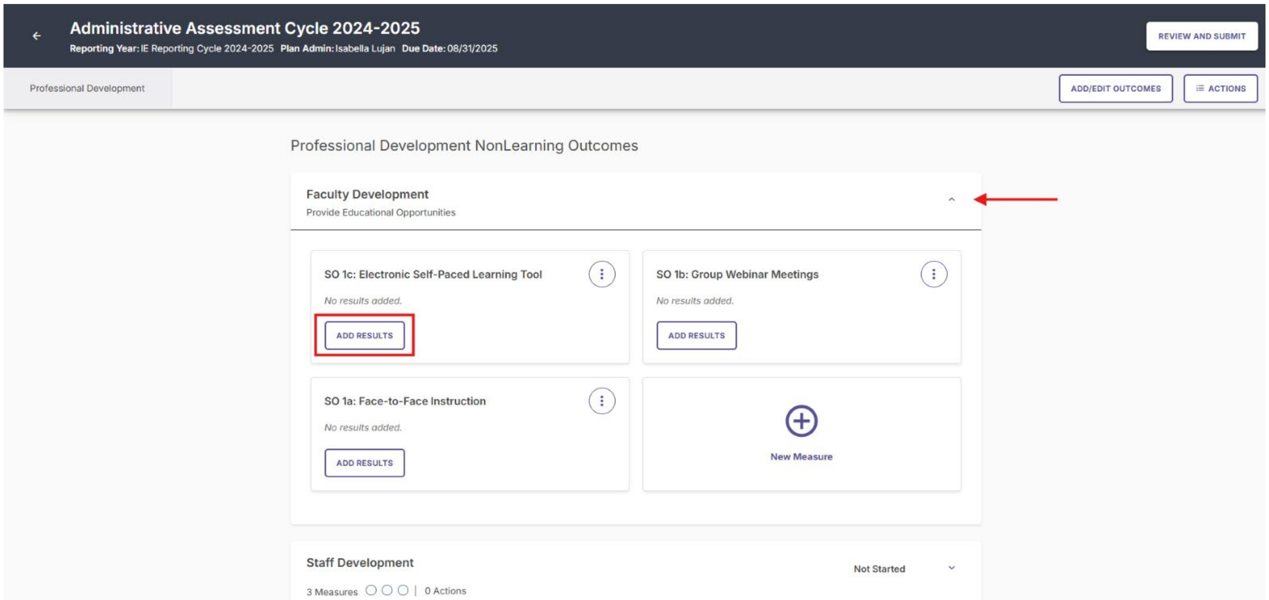

For a new assessment cycle you will need to **Select Outcomes** that you are assessing (All should be selected unless otherwise discussed with Institutional Effectiveness).



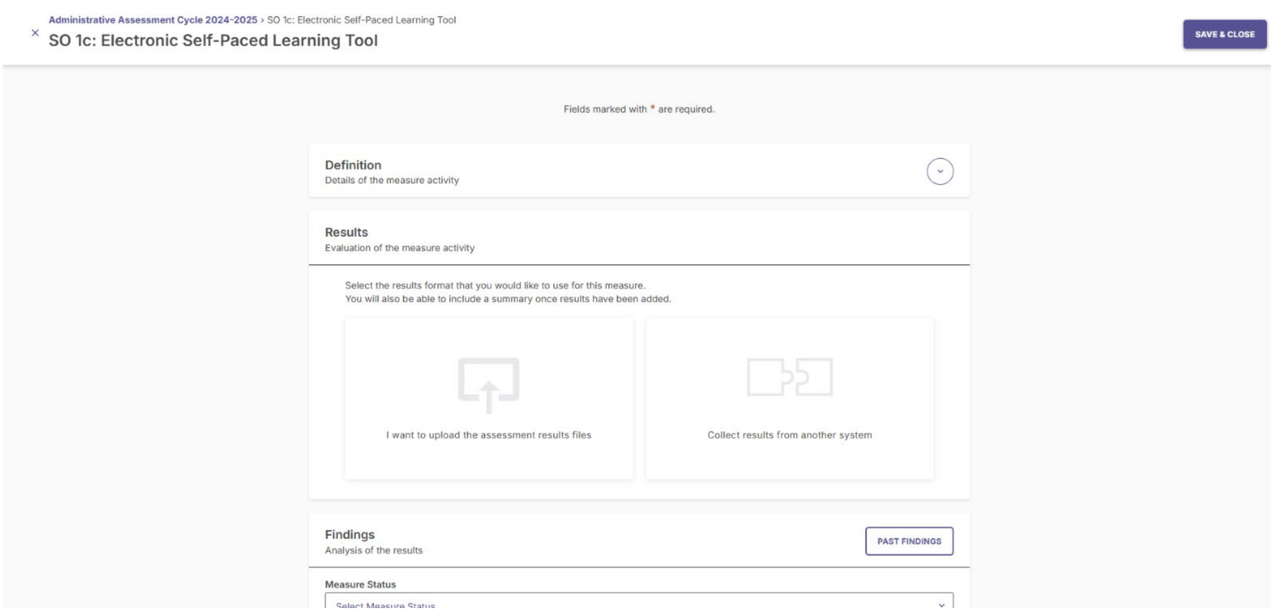

Select the Outcomes and select **Apply Selection**



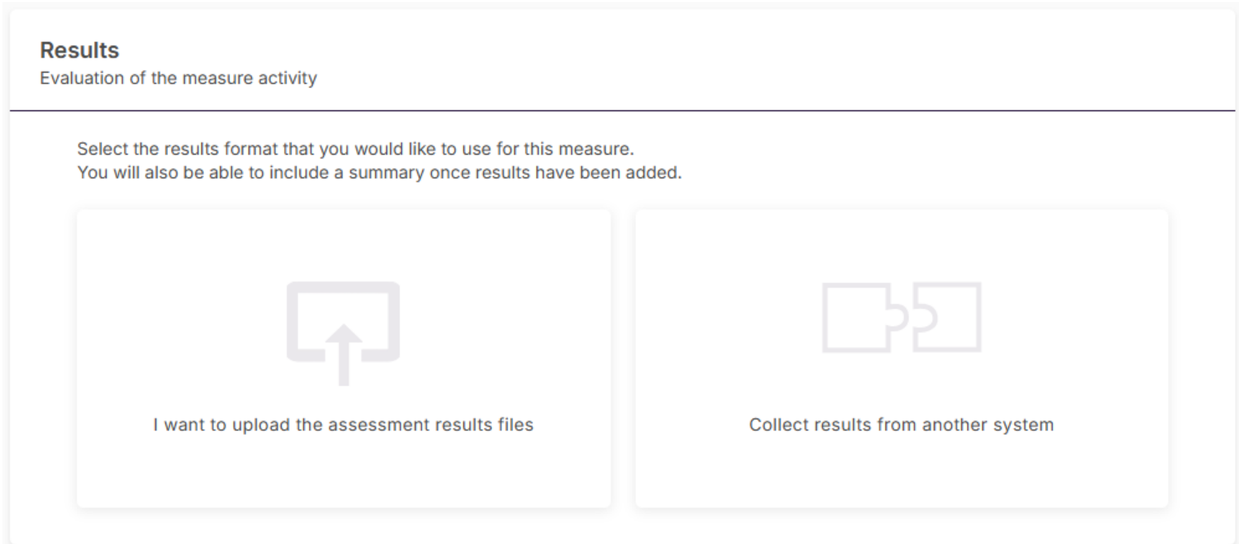
Drop down the Outcome you wish to add results to and click the **Add Results** button for the Measure.




This will present a page from which the Results format can be selected.




*Please note that you may not see all of the following options, based on the type of Outcome assessed and details associated with the Measure.*




*Please note that, while you cannot change the Results method without deleting the data that has already been collected, the Results that were entered for the chosen method can be edited at a later point. In other words, if the option to enter Counts is selected, the actual Counts themselves can be edited later on.*

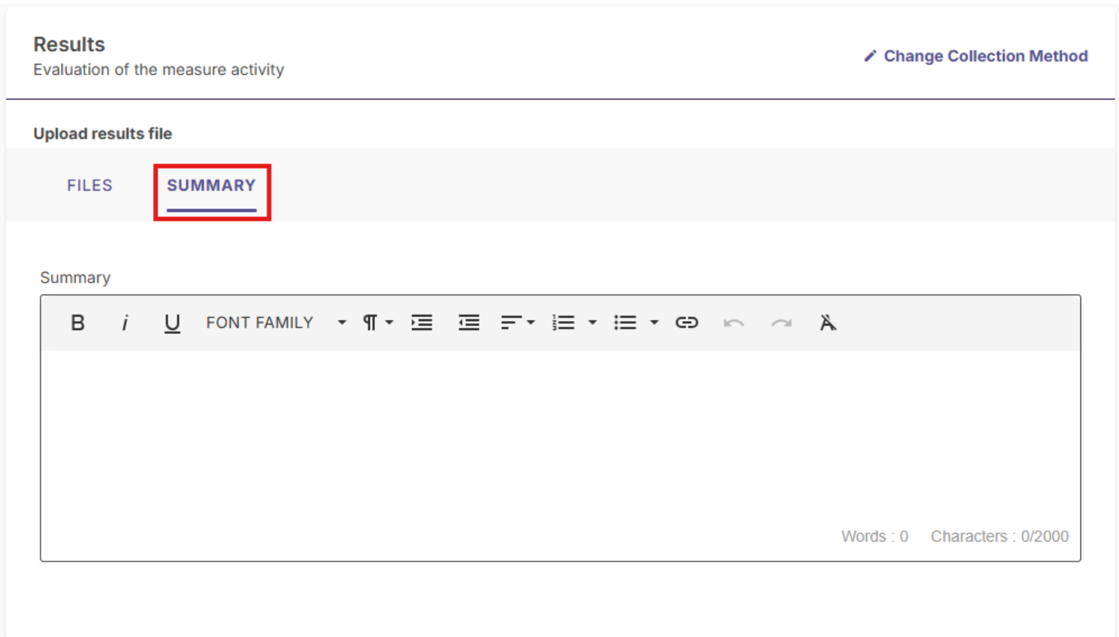
<u>Results Options Explained:</u>

- **I want to upload the assessment results files**: This will allow the user to upload a data file as evidence. *(Optional)*

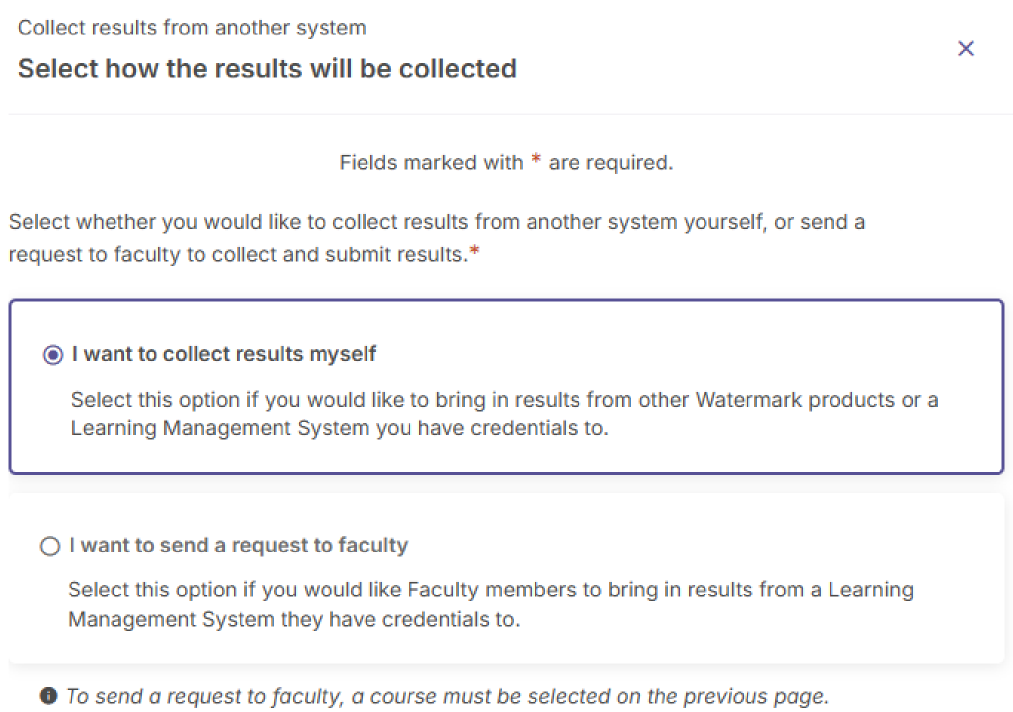
If selecting, **I want to upload the assessment results files, Files** tab, click the **Upload New File** button. This will produce the computer's file directory, from which a single or multiple files can be selected for upload.


*After the file(s) is uploaded, it will appear with options to download or remove it.*

There is also the option of the **Summary** tab, where additional Narrative information relevant to the Results can be added. *(Required)*

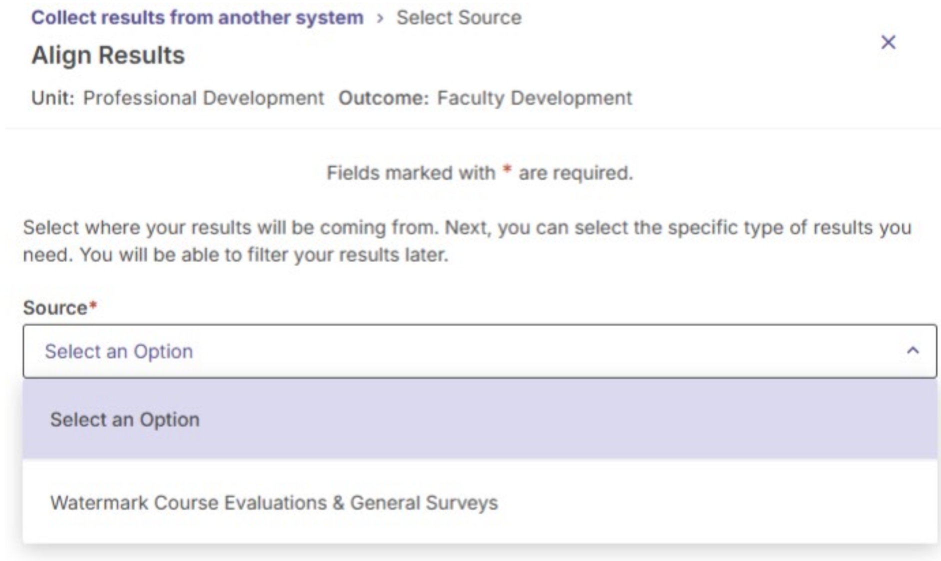



- **Collect results from another system:** This option allows adding Results that were collected in Blackboard Ultra OR from additional Watermark products.
    - For information on adding Results from Course Evaluations & Surveys, please click [HERE].



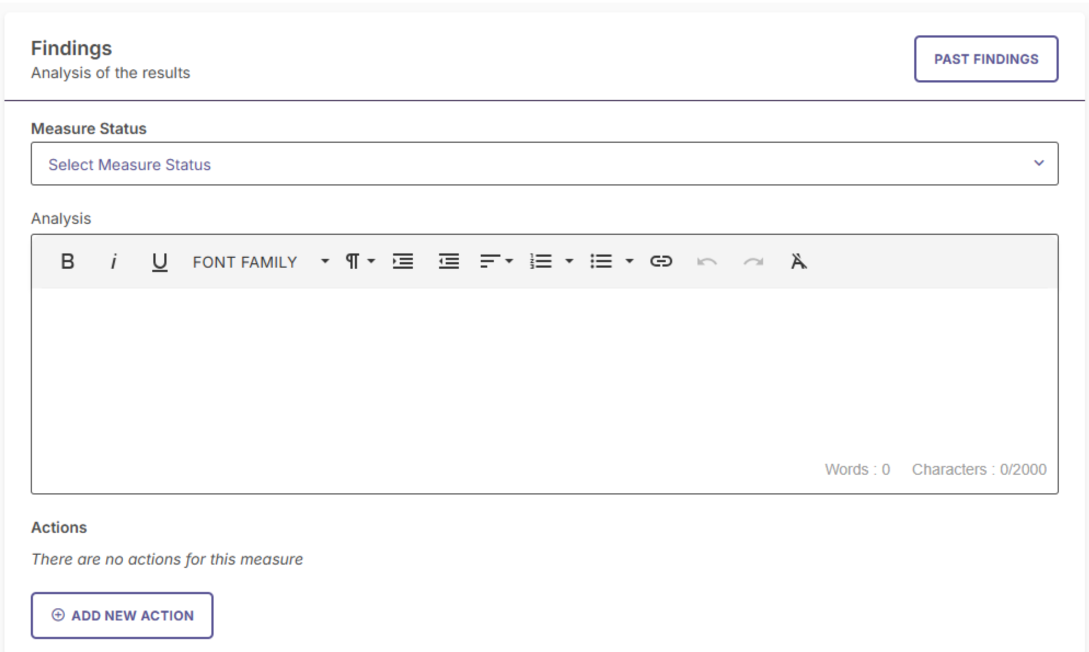

*To send a request to faculty, a course must be selected on the previous page.*

Selecting, “I want to collect results myself” from **“Collect results from another system”**, and click **Next**. Selecting this option will allow you to bring in results from other Watermark products or Blackboard you have credentials to.



## Analyzing Results with Findings

Once the Results have been documented, the next step is to enter the Findings.



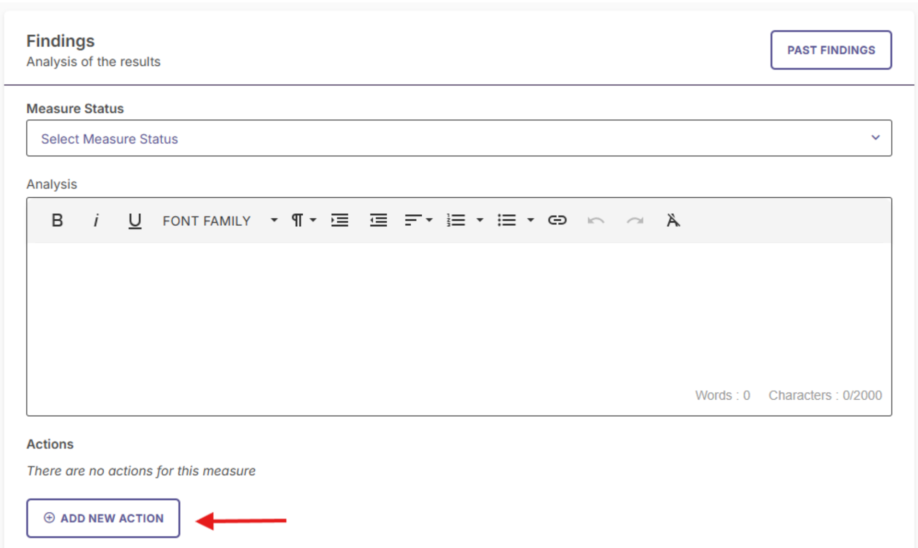

The first option in this category is to document the Measure Status for this Measure. From the dropdown menu, a user can select whether the criteria for this Measure was Met or Not Met, based on the Results.

After selecting the Measure Status, there is the option to enter a narrative Analysis, as shown in the screenshot above.

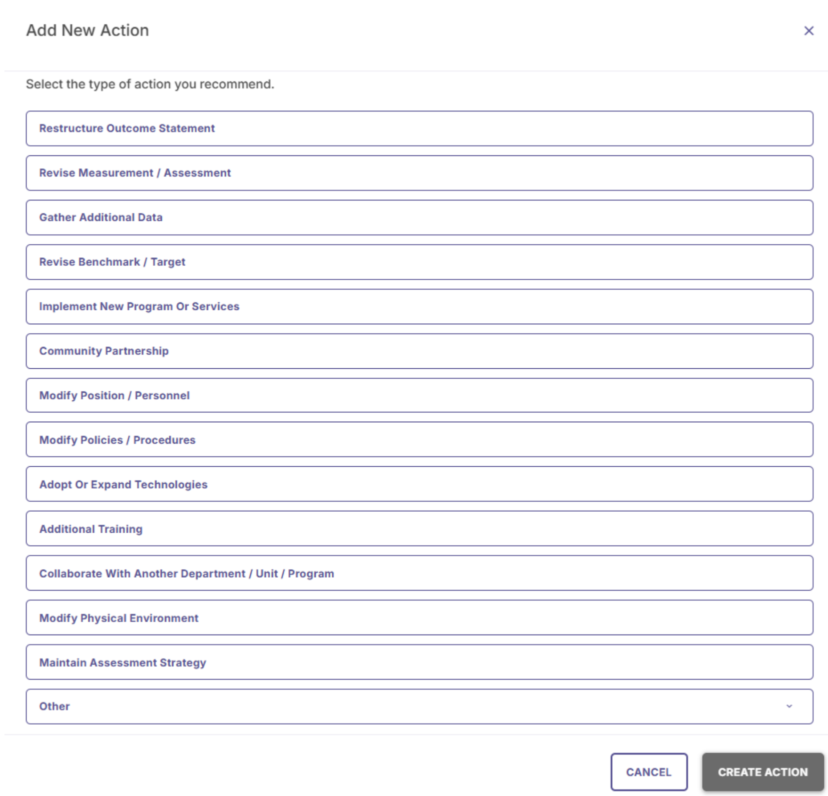
To view **Past Findings**, there would have to be previous years built out in Watermark. As of April 2025, Institutional Effectiveness has worked with Coordinators to change their Outcomes and Measures; therefore, no previous data will be accessible to compare.

## Adding Actions

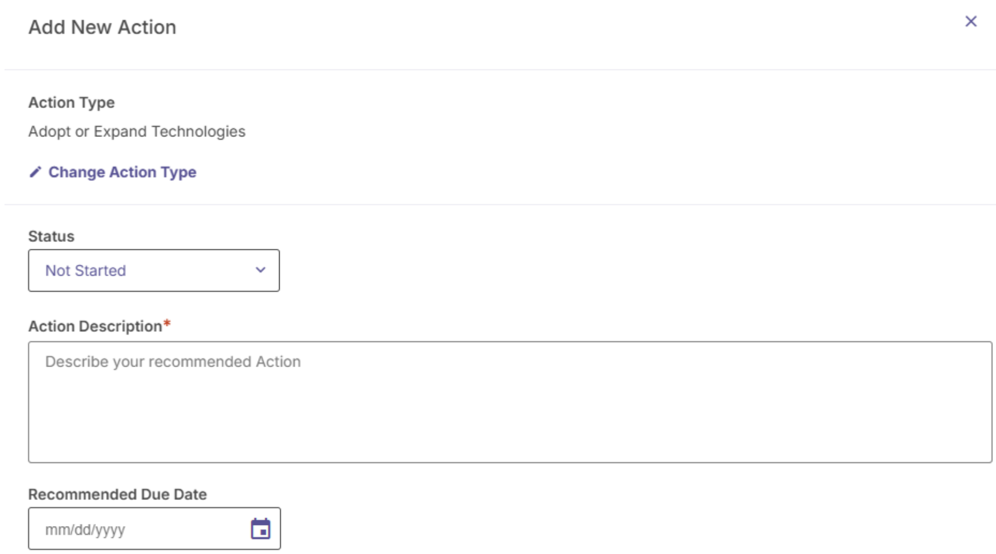
Once Results and Findings have been documented, you have the opportunity to create Actions, thereby closing the loop on assessment planning. Selecting **Add Actions** under the Measure title will begin the process.



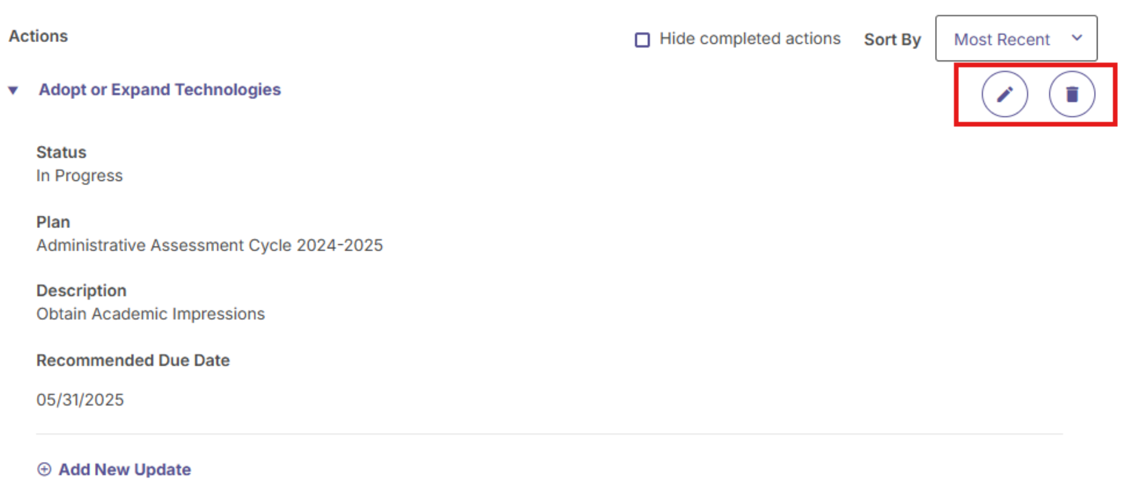

This will open the Actions panel on the right-hand side of the page, in which the user would select the type of Action they would like to document:



Once the Type is selected, the Action Status, Description, and optional Due Date can be entered.



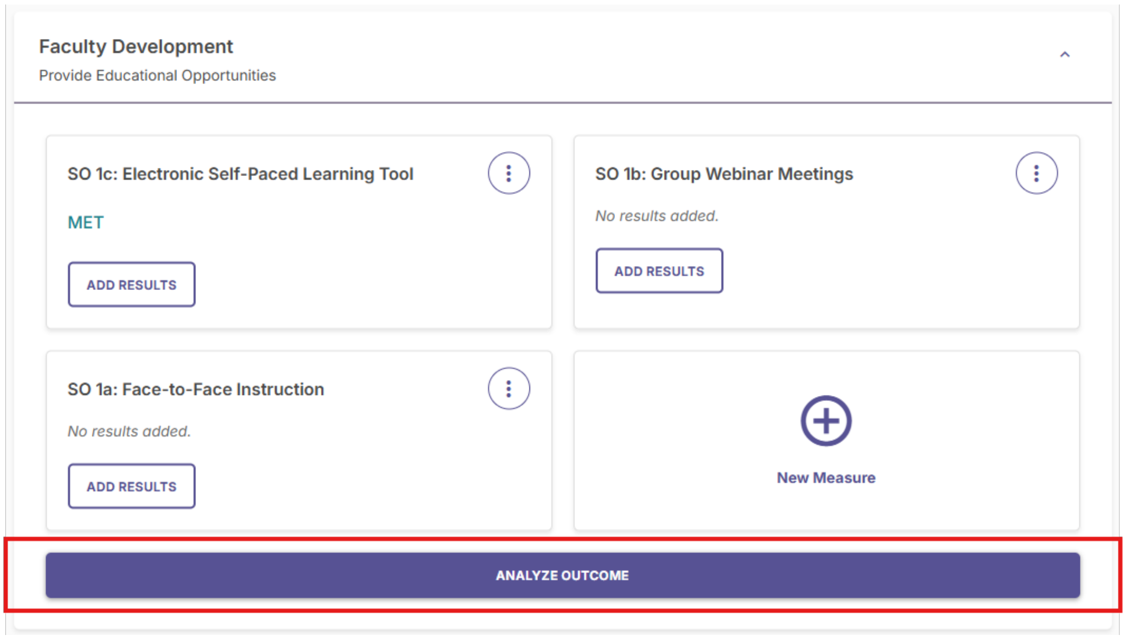

Once the Action is created, it will appear below the Findings entry area. Actions can be edited or deleted at any time by selecting either the Edit or Delete options to the right of the Action Name.




Once the Results, Findings, and Actions are added, select **Save & Close** in the top-right.

## Analyze Outcomes

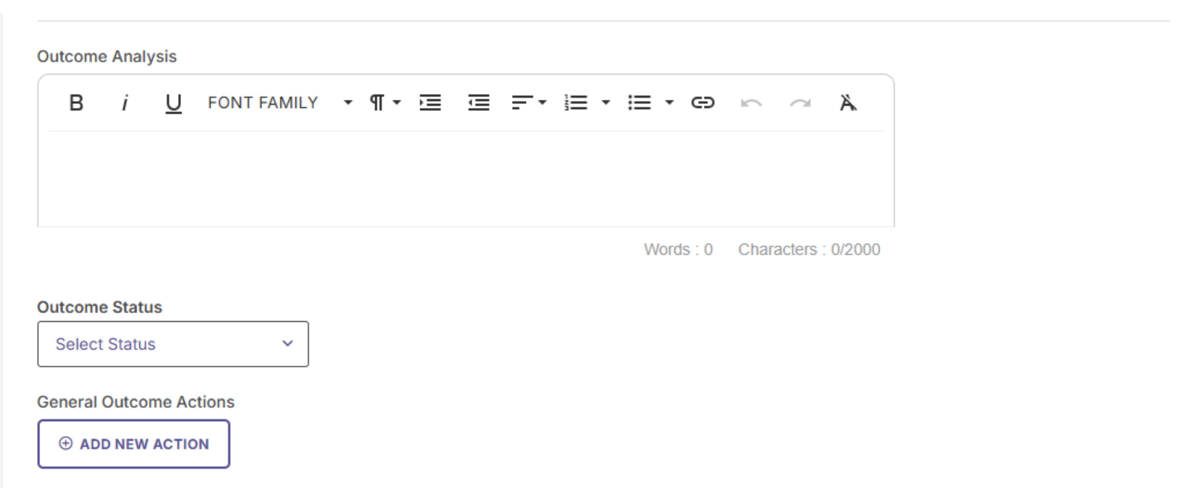
After all Outcome's Measures have been created, and their Results, Findings, and Actions have been documented, an overall Analysis of the Outcome itself may be desired.




This will present an Outcome Analysis text entry area, as well as an Outcome Status drop-down.

The Outcome Analysis area allows for relevant Narrative to be added, while the Outcome Status drop-down is where users would select whether the institution met or did not meet the criteria called for by the Outcome.

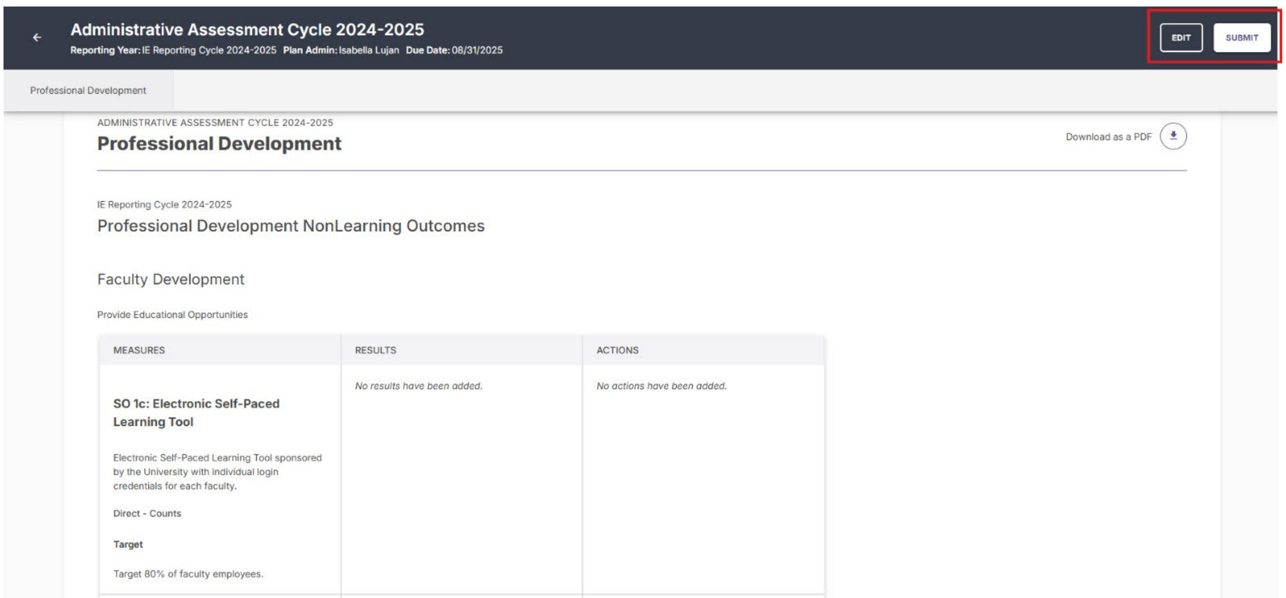
Lastly, there will also be the opportunity to document any Actions that are not specifically tied to a Measure.



## Reviewing and Submitting

After all Outcomes are updated click **Review and Submit** in the top-right.


Review your assessment report for this Program. You can continue to edit in the outcomes workspace by clicking **Edit**. Once satisfied with all reported, click **Submit.** Once submitted, you will still be able to edit this report until it is permanently closed by Institutional Effectiveness. Submitting will allow you to comment to reviewers and tag administrators.




**For any questions you may have, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at ie@sulross.edu or 432-837-8224.**

**For more Watermark Resources, visit:**

Creating an Assessment Plan

Accessing the Assessment Plan

Selecting Outcomes to Include in a Plan

Adding Measures to an Outcome

Measures - Editing, Revising, Removing, Deleting

How to Enter Results, Findings, and Actions in an Assessment Plan

## Support

ie@sulross.edu

### Use and Navigation of the Watermark Platform

**Isabella Lujan**, Coordinator for Institutional Effectiveness
Isabella.lujan@sulross.edu
432-837-8224

### Assessment Strategies, Report Writing, and Training

**April Aultman Becker,** Assistant VP for Institutional Effectiveness
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432-837-8121

## Works Cited

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