# Appendix G: Process Checklist

The process checklist is meant to be used by peer reviewers from the Reviewing OIG to conduct the external or modified peer review. This checklist is flexible both with regard to the steps performed and the order of their accomplishment and should be adjusted, as appropriate.

##### Preliminary steps:

* 1. Obtain the names of the points of contact (POCs) and signatures from senior executives from the Reviewing OIG and Reviewed Organization on the memorandum of understanding (MOU) prior to the training/coordination session.
	2. Review the CIGIE Guide for Conducting Peer Reviews of Inspection and Evaluation Organizations of Federal Offices of Inspectors General.
	3. Review the CIGIE Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation (the Blue Book), which is the basis of the review.
	4. Attend the required training/coordination session provided by the CIGIE Training Institute’s Audit, Inspection, & Evaluation Academy (the Academy).
	5. Review the list of reports issued by the Reviewed Organization and select representative reports for review:
		1. One report from each report category/type.
		2. Reports with varying topics, lengths, methodologies, etc.
		3. An appropriate number of reports as time and resources permit.[38](#_bookmark65)
		4. Documentation of the basis or methods used to select reports for review.
	6. Complete the Work Plan Template (Appendix F), establishing a general approach with the timeframe for completing the peer review established in the MOU.
	7. Document any changes to checklist(s), scope, or methodology as agreed on with the Reviewed Organization.

##### During or shortly after the Academy’s training/coordination session, request and review these materials from the Reviewed Organization and determine how they may be used in the peer review:

* 1. All relevant policies, procedures, guidelines, and manuals related to processes the I&E organization follows in conducting I&E projects, reporting project results, and ensuring work product quality.

38 The Reviewing OIG should select a sample of reports (typically two reports for small OIGs, three reports for medium OIGs, and four reports for large OIGs) issued by the Reviewed Organization covering the one-year period prior to the start of the peer review cycle. However, the Reviewing OIG may expand this period to the three years prior to the start of the peer review cycle in order to select a representative sample of reports.

* 1. The I&E annual work plan or similar document, if one exists.
	2. The previous external peer review report, if applicable.
	3. A written description of corrective action(s) taken in response to the previous peer review recommendations, the status of any open recommendations or corrective actions, and an explanation for the open status.
	4. Additional information required or useful to conducting the peer review.

##### Prior to beginning the peer review work, obtain the following from the Reviewed Organization:

* 1. Access to electronic materials.
	2. Access to facilities or workspace needed for onsite review.
	3. Access to the Reviewed Organization’s IT resources, e.g., intranet, if needed.
	4. Access to organization staff in order to conduct interviews.
	5. Assurances that staff are aware an external peer review is being conducted.

##### Arrange and hold an entrance meeting with the Reviewed Organization:

* 1. Describe the scope of the review, including the seven covered Blue Book standards.
	2. Identify which reports will be reviewed.
	3. Provide projected onsite start and end dates, if planned.
	4. Obtain additional documentation or information, as needed, from written materials or briefings.

##### Review the Reviewed Organization’s Policies and Procedures (see Appendix D):

* 1. Assess, discuss, and reach a conclusion about whether the Reviewed Organization’s policies and procedures generally address or cover each of the seven Blue Book standards and other covered standard(s), if any. When possible, this should be completed before the review of the selected reports.
	2. Document the review, including conclusions and proposed recommendations and note any suggestions for improvement, and/or best practices identified.

##### Review the Reviewed Organization’s Reports (see Appendix E):

* 1. Assign reports to peer reviewer(s) for review.
	2. Request project designs/plans, work papers, and other supporting materials for the reports selected.
	3. Determine the process to be used to review the individual reports.
	4. Review the selected reports against:
		1. covered Blue Book standards,
		2. policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, and/or I&E organization quality assurance processes, and
		3. Report Review Checklist (Appendix E).
	5. Examine work papers/documentation to trace:
		1. findings,
		2. conclusions, and
		3. recommendations.
	6. Interview the I&E project teams to gain insight on reports and supporting documentation, as necessary.
	7. Review other documentation or conduct other interviews necessary for team members to fully assess whether the Reviewed Organization has generally complied with the seven covered Blue Book standards and any other standards that were assessed.
	8. Document the reviews of the selected reports.
	9. Discuss individual review findings and conclusions.
	10. Summarize overall findings, conclusions, and recommendations for the selected reports. Note suggestions for improvement or best practices identified in the selected reports.
	11. Document the overall summary of the reviewed reports and supporting documentation.

##### Review the Reviewed Organization’s corrective action(s) taken in response to the previous peer review recommendations:

* 1. Request written descriptions of corrective action(s) taken in response to the previous peer review recommendations, the status of open recommendations or corrective actions, if any, and explanations for open status.
	2. Assess, discuss, and reach a conclusion about whether the Reviewed Organization’s written description accurately and completely describes the status of the previous peer review report recommendation(s).
	3. Document this assessment, including the conclusions reached and proposed recommendations, if any.

##### Conduct an exit meeting with the Reviewed Organization:

* 1. At, or in advance of the exit meeting, provide the Reviewed Organization with a preliminary written point paper, discussion draft report and, if appropriate, letter of comment, or draft report and , if applicable, the letter of comment that includes peer review results, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
	2. Present a summary of findings and/or note other pertinent observations, including best practices, that are not included in the draft report or letter of comment, if appropriate.
	3. Discuss process and issuance dates for the draft and final reports. Request that the Reviewed Organization provide written comments to the review team within the agreed- to timeframe in the MOU. Permit the Reviewed Organization at least 15 calendar days after receipt of draft report and letter of comment, if applicable, to provide comments The peer reviewer(s) may provide the draft report and letter of comment, if applicable, at the exit meeting.
	4. Revise the review’s findings, conclusions, recommendations, if appropriate, based on information from the exit meeting.

##### Prepare a draft of the Peer Review Report and, if appropriate, the Letter of Comment for the Reviewed Organization. This may be done immediately after completing the review work or after the exit meeting.

* 1. Use the Peer Review Report Template (Appendix A) to prepare a draft Peer Review Report. If appropriate, use the Letter of Comment Template (Appendix B) to draft the Letter of Comment. Provide the official draft Peer Review Report and, if appropriate, the Letter of Comment to the Reviewed Organization’s officials for review and written comment. Request that the Reviewed Organization’s officials provide written comments by the agreed-to date.

##### Finalize Peer Review Report and, if issued, the Letter of Comment:

* 1. Review the Reviewed Organization’s written comments and determine any associated changes to the draft Peer Review Report or, when applicable, the Letter of Comment.
	2. Finalize the report and letter of comment, if applicable, by attaching written comments, making necessary changes, and obtaining the Reviewing OIG IG’s or I&E organization executive’s signature.
	3. Deliver the final Peer Review Report and, if issued, the Letter of Comment to the Reviewed Organization IG or I&E organization executive no later than the agreed-to date or after resolution or clarification of issues discussed in the Reviewed Organization officials’ comments.
	4. Provide copies of the final Peer Review Report and, if issued, the Letter of Comment to the Chairs of CIGIE and the I&E Committee through its designated representatives.[39](#_bookmark66)[40](#_bookmark67)

39 The I&E Peer Review Working Group is the I&E Committee’s designated representative. The final Peer Review Report and, if issued, the Letter of Comment should be e-mailed to iepr@cigie.net.

40 For peer review reports that are classified, an unclassified summary and recommendations will be forwarded to the I&E Committee.