



Specialized Accreditation and Employer Engagement

January 2018; CHEA Conference, Washington, DC

What's the big deal about employer engagement?

- Perceived skills gap - mismatch in which job seekers lack the skills or qualifications for the jobs employers need to fill.
- Implication of a disconnect between the education system and industry.
- Are accreditors and educational programs not interacting with employers to ensure students are equipped with necessary competencies?
- Testing this disconnect, the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) asked:
 - how accreditors interact directly with employers and,
 - how are programs required to engage with employers.

Who is ASPA?

- Collaborative forum and collective voice for accreditors of specialized and professional higher education programs/schools in USA
- Established 1993
- 62 members
 - Nursing, architecture, engineering, physical therapy
 - >23,000 programs accredited
- Twice yearly conferences: business + professional development

What do specialized and professional accreditors do?

- Set educational standards that protect the public interest by producing safe and competent practitioners in the students' chosen professions or fields of study.
- Accreditation standards and process is inclusive - developed with input from expert stakeholders in the profession:
 - practitioners,
 - employers and industry,
 - educators,
 - professional associations, and
 - other communities of interest.

Employer Engagement

Programmatic Accreditation Practices

December 2017

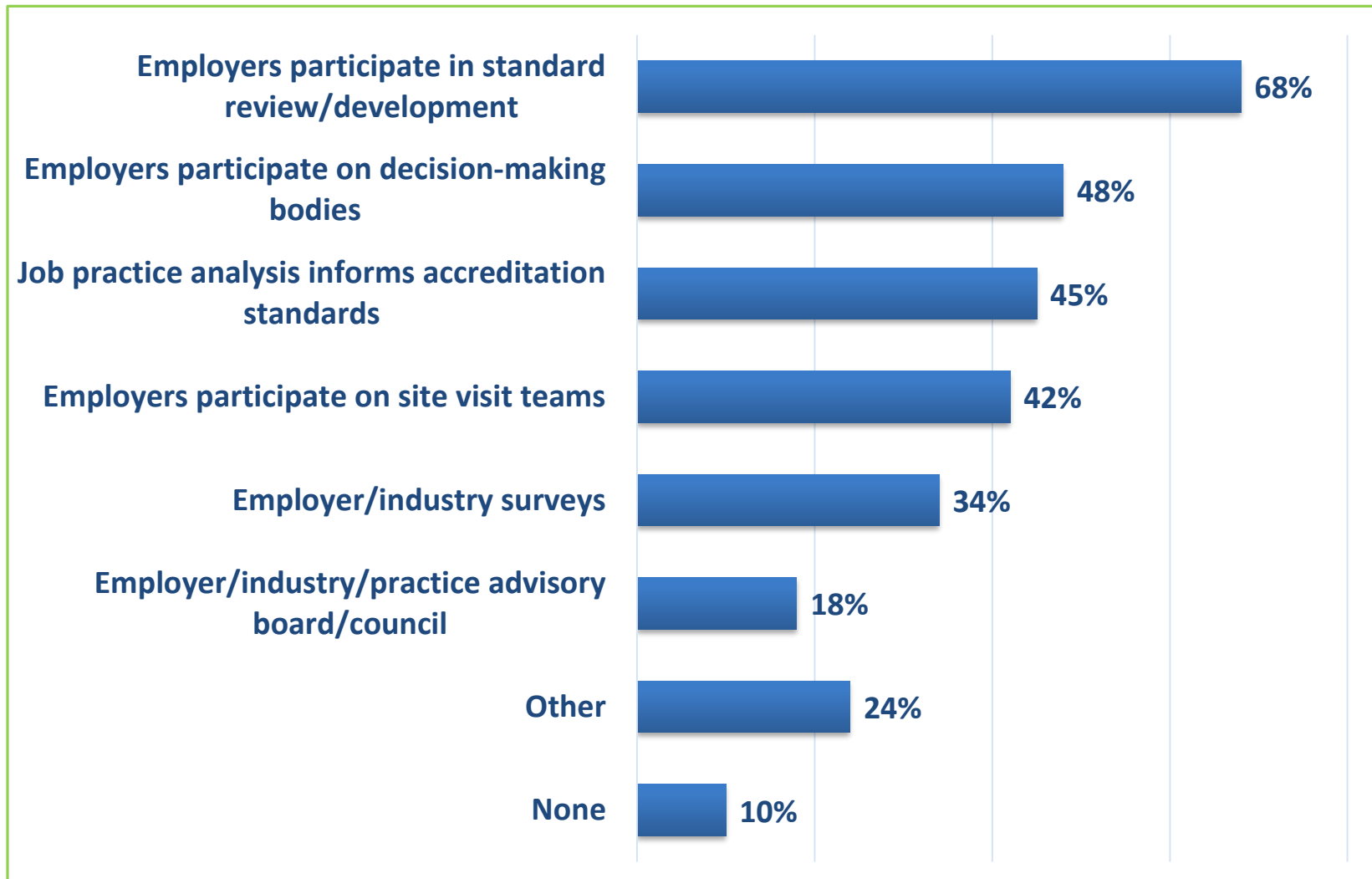
Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors



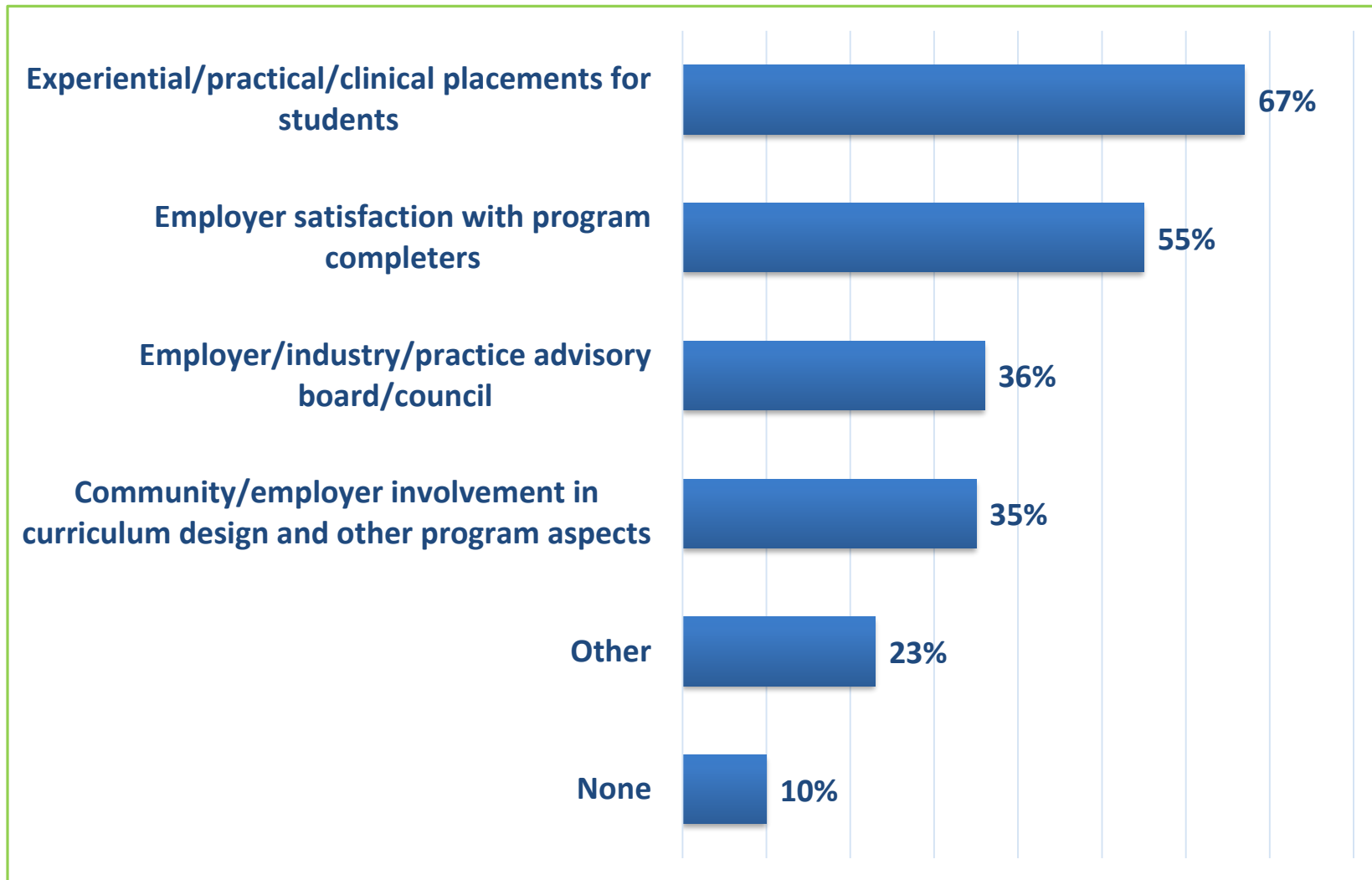
Findings (n=62)

- Ninety percent (90%) of ASPA member accreditors directly engage with employers.
- Ninety percent (90%) of ASPA member accreditors require accredited programs to engage with employers.
- Overall, 100% of ASPA member accreditors of programs whose mission is linked to employment have mechanisms in place for employer engagement.

How Accreditors Engage with Employers



How Programs Engage with Employers



Questions – at end

