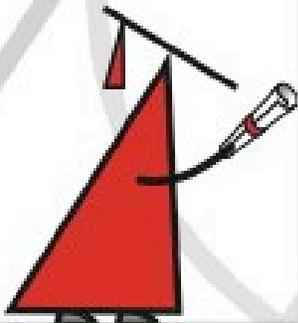


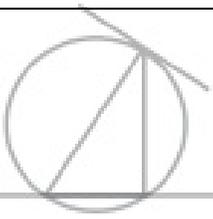
Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE)

Accreditation Manual  
for  
AuD Academic Programs



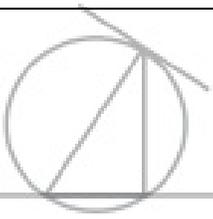
October 2021

acae



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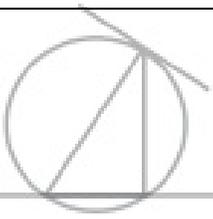
## Section 1: Introduction to the ACAE

### **History of the ACAE**

The Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) was founded in 2003 by the American Academy of Audiology (AAA) and the Academy of Dispensing Audiologists, now the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA), to develop educational standards for academic institutions offering the AuD degree in the United States. The transition of the profession to doctoral level education necessitated establishing standards specific to this level of training, as well as a process for assuring that academic programs met their obligations to appropriately educate the next generation of audiologists.

Thus, the ACAE was founded and charged with developing academic standards that assured the public, the government, other health professions, and the patients they serve that the next generation of audiologists will be educated and trained to the highest standards. In January 2003, the ACAE filed its Articles of Incorporation and was officially recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation.

Since its founding, the ACAE has developed and adopted educational standards as well as policies and procedures consistent with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) guidelines and the United States Department of Education (USDE). The ACAE also created the first web-based computerized accreditation system in specialized/programmatic accreditation. The ACAE has been recognized by CHEA since 2012.



## Section 2: Mission and Goals

### **Mission**

The ACAE serves the public by establishing, maintaining and applying standards to ensure the academic quality and continuous improvement of audiology education reflecting the evolving practice of audiology.

### **Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1:** To serve the public and other stakeholders by ensuring the continued effectiveness of the ACAE.

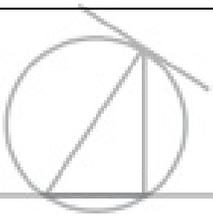
#### **Objectives:**

- Maintain an independent and objective accreditation process.
- Inform the public and other stakeholders regarding the accreditation status of AuD programs.
- Develop and implement policies with integrity and high ethical standards.
- Seek continuously the most cost-effective way to provide the services of the ACAE.
- Develop and disseminate information that demonstrates the effectiveness of the ACAE's operations.
- Maintain liaison between the ACAE and its constituents.
- Inform stakeholders of current trends and developments in specialized accreditation.
- Serve as a resource on accreditation.

**Goal 2:** To develop, maintain, apply, and regularly review the ACAE's accreditation processes and the standards for accreditation of audiology education and training programs.

#### **Objectives:**

- Review audiology education and training programs and make accreditation decisions in accordance with the ACAE standards and procedures and the program's mission, goals, and objectives.
- Publish and disseminate manuals detailing the ACAE's standards, policies, and procedures.
- Review the standards of accreditation on an ongoing basis and complete a comprehensive review every seven to ten years.
- Solicit suggestions from accreditation site-visitation teams and other stakeholders relative to standards, procedures, and processes.
- Identify highly qualified individuals to participate in accreditation site visits and provide appropriate training.
- Evaluate the performance of site visitors in identifying areas needing improvement in site-visitor training.
- Monitor programs between evaluation visits through the use of annual reports, interim reports, and, if necessary, interim visits.



**Goal 3:** To foster continuous improvement of audiology education by assisting ACAE constituents in remaining current regarding the evolving nature of audiology practice, health care policy and delivery, health professions education, and higher education.

**Objectives:**

- Collect, review, and disseminate information to ACAE stakeholders relating to audiology practice, health care policy and delivery, health professions education, and higher education that impact on audiology accreditation.
- Maintain dialogue with representatives of audiology organizations, health care delivery systems, health professions, and higher education.
- Ensure that the orientation and training for ACAE officers, directors, staff, and consultants includes relevant information on audiology practice, health care policy and delivery, health profession education, and higher education.

**Goal 4:** To foster continuous improvement of audiology education by encouraging innovation and creativity in audiology education programs.

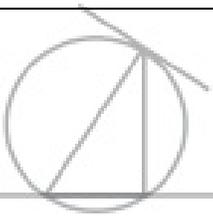
**Objectives:**

- Communicate to its stakeholders that the ACAE encourages innovation and creativity in audiology education programs.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures of the ACAE encourage innovation.
- Ensure that the ACAE and consultants perceive innovation as a necessary and positive approach to foster continuous improvement in audiology education.

**Goal 5:** To assure the effectiveness of the accreditation process by the development and application of continuous quality assurance, and self-assessment of the ACAE.

**Objectives:**

- Follow the Codes of Good Practice of Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) and the American Academy of Audiology (AAA) – See Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
- Maintain Council for Higher Education (CHEA) Recognition for ACAE Accreditation.
- Engage in on-going planning and conduct periodic self-assessments.
- Evaluate and test the validity and reliability of the ACAE’s processes.
- Maintain a committee structure that involves ACAE directors and other experts in planning, quality improvement and self-assessment.
- Seek regular input from stakeholders relative to planning, quality improvement, and self-assessment.



## **Section 3: Organization of the ACAE**

### **Authority**

The ACAE is incorporated as an independent 501(c)(3) organization in the Commonwealth of Virginia. As an independent agency, the Board of Directors is solely responsible for adopting standards and criteria by which AuD degree programs are evaluated, for establishing accreditation policies and procedures, for making accreditation decisions, and for overseeing the affairs of the Commission.

### **Geographic Scope**

The ACAE accredits doctoral-level programs in audiology, i.e., the AuD, within the United States. The ACAE has explored international activities and will continue to do so in the future.

### **Board of Directors**

The governing body of ACAE is the Board of Directors which is comprised of members who represent academic programs, administrators, professional practice, and the public. The Executive Director, who serves as Chief Operating Officer of the ACAE, is an ex-officio member of the ACAE Board of Directors. The Bylaws of the ACAE describe the responsibilities of the Board of Directors, election procedures, terms of office, and the process for removal from office.

### **Officers of the ACAE**

The Officers of the ACAE are the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary-Treasurer. These officers comprise the Executive Committee of the ACAE. The Bylaws of the ACAE describe the duties of the officers including election procedures, terms of office, and the process for removal from office.

### **ACAE Committees**

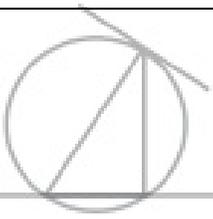
The Board of Directors and/or Chair of the ACAE create committees to fulfill necessary functions of the Commission. Standing committees include the Executive Committee, which consists of the officers of the Board along with any other member of the Board appointed by the Chair; the Program Accreditation Review Committee, which reviews all Site Visit Reports and program responses and makes a recommendation regarding an Accreditation status to the ACAE Board; the Standards Review Committee charged with developing, regularly reviewing, and proposing revisions to the standards; and the Finance Committee, charged with developing and monitoring a budget for the Commission and other matters of a financial nature.

### **Executive Director and Staff of the ACAE**

The Executive Director is responsible for the guidance, management and daily operation of the ACAE and serves as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. The staff of the ACAE reports directly to the Executive Director.

### **Financial Policies**

The financial policies, including the fee structure for accreditation, are set by the Board of Directors.



## Section 4: Overview of Accreditation

### **Accreditation**

Accreditation is a process for recognizing educational institutions and professional programs affiliated with those institutions for a level of performance, integrity, and quality which entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve. In the United States, this recognition is extended primarily through nongovernmental, voluntary institutional or professional associations. These groups establish criteria for accreditation, arrange site visits, evaluate those institutions and professional programs which desire accredited status and publicly designate those which meet their criteria.

In most other countries, the establishment and maintenance of educational standards is the responsibility of a central government bureau. In the United States, however, public authority in education is constitutionally reserved to the states. This system of voluntary nongovernmental evaluation, called accreditation, has evolved to promote both regional and national approaches to the determination of educational quality. Although accreditation is basically a private, voluntary process, accrediting decisions are used as a consideration in many formal actions by governmental agencies, scholarship commissions, foundations, employers, counselors and potential students. Accrediting agencies, therefore, come to be viewed as quasi-public entities with certain responsibilities to the many groups which interact with the educational community.

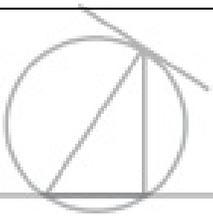
In the US, accreditation at the postsecondary level performs a number of important functions, including the encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness. The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their goals, activities, and achievements; to consider the expert criticism and suggestions of a visiting team; and to determine internal procedures for action on recommendations from the accrediting agency. Since accreditation status is reviewed on a periodic basis, recognized institutions and professional programs are encouraged to maintain continuous self-study and improvement mechanisms. [Directory of Recognized Accrediting Agencies and Supporters of Accreditation, Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA), 1995.]

### **The Accreditation Process**

**Self-Study:** Institutions and programs prepare an extensive written summary of the program's performance in meeting applicable accreditation standards.

**Peer Review:** Accreditation is determined primarily by faculty and administrative peers in the profession. These colleagues review the self-study and serve on visiting teams that review institutions and programs after the self-study is completed. Peers constitute the majority of members of the accrediting commissions or boards that make judgments about accrediting status.

**Site Visit:** Accrediting organizations typically send a visiting team to review an institution or program. The self-study provides the foundation for the team visit. Teams, in addition to the peers described above, may also include public members. All team members are volunteers.



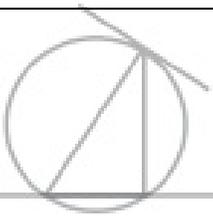
**Accreditation decision:** Accrediting organizations have decision-making bodies (commissions) made up of administrators and faculty from institutions and programs as well as public members. These commissions may affirm accreditation for new institutions and programs, reaffirm accreditation for ongoing institutions and programs, and deny accreditation to institutions and programs.

**Periodic external review:** Institutions and programs continue to be reviewed over time on cycles of up to ten years. They normally prepare a self-study and undergo a site visit each time.

**Accreditation at a glance:**

- Accreditation is about quality assurance and quality improvement.
- It is private (nongovernmental) and nonprofit – an outgrowth of the higher education community and not government.
- It is a process to scrutinize institutions and programs.
- It has a complex relationship with government, especially in relation to funding higher education.
- It adds value to society through assuring quality, enabling government to make sound judgments about the use of public funds, aiding the private sector in decisions about financial support, and easing transfer of credit.

*[Accreditation and Recognition in the United States (Excerpts), Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), July 2006 (pdf)].*



## **Section 5: ACAE Accreditation Eligibility and Fees**

### **Eligibility**

For an AuD program to be eligible for accreditation by the ACAE, a university department, school or college of Audiology must:

- Demonstrate the feasibility of an AuD degree program in terms of demographics, public need, student interest, and availability of clinical facilities;
- Be part of a nonprofit institution that is devoted primarily to education and regionally accredited or nationally recognized by the Council for Higher Education (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education (USDE). For programs in institutions outside of the United States, the institution is recognized by the appropriate governmental agency;
- Be legally authorized by the appropriate authorizing agency in the state in which the program is located to confer the AuD degree upon graduates in recognition of their successful completion of study in Audiology; and
- Have appointed a Program Director qualified as specified in ACAE's standards (Standard # 6) responsible for the administration of the AuD degree program.

ACAE will not grant Accreditation or Developing Status to a program if the program's host institution is subject to:

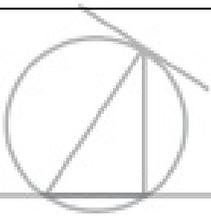
- A pending or final action by a state agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide post-secondary education;
- A pending or final action brought by an accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation or pre-accreditation; or
- A pending or final action brought by an accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to place the institution on probation or an equivalent status unless there is good cause, consistent with ACAE's Standards, to grant accreditation.

### **Entry Points for ACAE Accreditation**

#### **Developing Status (new AuD) Programs:**

Academic institutions who have new AuD programs and have not yet begun admitting students may apply for ACAE Developing Status. Developing Status refers to the first stage of appraising the quality of academic programs in development. These are programs that have already attained recognition by their academic institutions.

The Board of Directors of the ACAE awards Developing Status to programs that demonstrate the potential to achieve compliance with the ACAE Standards within 3 and up to a maximum of 5 years. Awarding Developing Status allows an academic program in audiology at the AuD level to begin its program and accept an initial class of students. Developing Status does not indicate that a program is accredited, nor does it guarantee or imply accreditation of that program by the ACAE. It acknowledges that the program is moving in the right direction and will provide additional evidence on its initial outcomes to ACAE on a regular basis.



The ACAE Board of Directors has approved a streamlined plan that is straightforward and requires responses to questions that determine if a potential program is headed in the right direction for providing an academic audiology program at the doctoral level, i.e., AuD. The developing program must be approved by the ACAE Board before the program admits its first class of students.

**Ongoing (established AuD) Programs:**

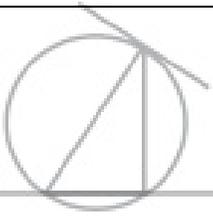
Academic institutions that currently have ongoing, established AuD programs may apply for full accreditation. These are formal audiology programs that have graduated at least one cohort of students and may have received an accreditation status from another agency. These audiology programs are usually located within a college or school of a university that has been regionally or nationally accredited and are not currently in Developing Status.

**Accreditation Fees**

<b>Developing Status</b>	
Non-Refundable Deposit (submitted with Letter of Intent)	\$2,000
Plan Fee (submitted with copy of Feasibility Plan)	\$3,000
Fact-Finding Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Due prior to the Fact-Finding Visit</li> </ul>	\$3,500
<b>Total Fee:</b>	<b>\$8,500</b>

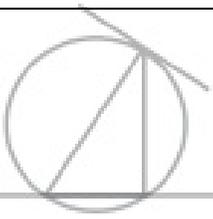
<b>Accreditation (for ongoing programs &amp; those programs coming from developing status)</b>	
Non-Refundable Deposit (submitted with Letter of Intent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○</li> </ul>	\$2,000
Application Fee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This fee is due prior to the initiation of the online Application and Self-Study</li> </ul>	\$3,000
Site Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Due prior to the Site Visit</li> </ul>	\$5,000
<b>Total Fee:</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

<b>Annual Fee</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fee paid by accredited programs each year following accreditation (waived when applying for reaccreditation in the same year)</li> </ul>	\$2,500



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<b>Reaccreditation</b>	
Reaccreditation Fee	\$2,500
Reaccreditation Site Visit Fee	\$5,000
<b>Total Fee:</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>



## Section 6: ACAE Developing Status – Application and Process

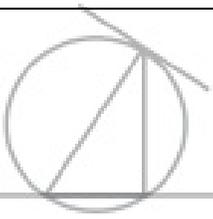
### Requirements for New AuD Programs Seeking Developing Status

- 1) **Expression of Interest:** Submit online Expression of Interest form through this [web link](#).
- 2) **Developing Status Application:** Submit responses to an online application form.
- 3) **Letter of Intent** (uploaded in online application): Submit a Letter of Intent signed by the appropriate institutional administrator responsible for overseeing the Audiology Program and the Program Director if already designated through a document upload in the Expression of Interest form. The Letter of Intent must be brief, but must include the following:
  - A declaration of intent of the institution to develop and seek accreditation for the AuD program.
  - A statement that the institution agrees not to admit students into the AuD program until after the Developing Status for the Program is approved.
  - The month and year the first class is projected to enter the program (after the Developing Status for the Program is approved).
  - The month and year the first class is projected to graduate.

*Note: The process for completing the Developing Status for Programs and the Accreditation may take two years or longer. Programs are advised to develop a timeline to allow completion of the entire accreditation process **before** graduation of the first class.*
- 4) **Copy of the Feasibility Plan** (uploaded in online application): Submit a copy of the feasibility study/plan/application that was presented to the university and/or state. This will include preliminary steps that show progress on hiring a Program Director, the vision for the development of the curriculum and development of a vision for potential faculty, including clinical instructors.
- 5) **Fees** – See Fee Schedule on page 8.

### Steps Following Completion of Initial Application:

- 1) The ACAE Board of Directors appoints a Review Team made up of two trained site visitors to study the application and supporting documents and follow-up with questions to the program.
- 2) The Review Team conducts a Fact-Finding visit. This site visit takes place over one day at the academic institution. The purpose of this Fact-Finding visit is to review previously submitted documents and to discuss, in an informal manner, key topic areas that are important to achieve ACAE accreditation.
- 3) The ACAE Board of Directors reviews the report and recommendation of the Review Team and votes to award or not award Developing Status. The decision will be based on whether the quality and depth of materials submitted provided enough information to determine if the program is on-track to achieve eventual full program accreditation. If the ACAE Board does not award Developing Status, it will offer two options to the program:

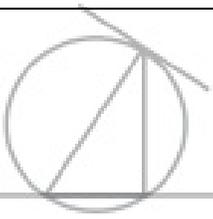


- a. To submit a second updated and revised Copy of the Feasibility Plan after a period of time (to be determined by the Program/University and ACAE)
- b. To discontinue the process by either the Program/University or the ACAE Board

After a decision is made by the ACAE Board, the program will be notified in writing within two weeks. It is anticipated that the entire process of awarding Developing Status will take no more than six to eight months.

**Steps Following Award of Developing Status:**

- 1) The program will submit to the ACAE Board an online progress report every four (4) months until the first class of students is enrolled.
- 2) Once the first class of students is enrolled, the program will submit an online progress report every six (6) months in January and July.
- 3) It is expected that the program will begin the application process for ACAE Accreditation by the beginning of the final year of full-time clinical instruction (externship) for the first class of students so that a decision on accreditation can be made before graduation of this first class. See Section 7 for the Accreditation Application Process.



## Section 7: ACAE Accreditation – Application and Process

### Requirements for Ongoing (established) AuD Programs Seeking Accreditation

- 1) **Expression of Interest:** Submit online Expression of Interest form through this [web link](#).
- 2) **Letter of Intent:** Submit a Letter of Intent signed by the appropriate institutional administrator overseeing the Audiology program and the Program Director through a document upload in the Expression of Interest form. The Letter of Intent should be brief but must include the following:
  - A declaration of intent of the institution to seek ACAE accreditation.
- 3) **Completion of online Application and Self-Study Components** (as described below).
- 4) **Fees** – See Fee Schedule on page 8.

### Online Accreditation Platform

ACAE uses Zengine, a web-based accreditation platform, for all stages of the accreditation process. Programs access the “submittal portal” to complete application forms, profiles, evaluate compliance with ACAE standards and upload supporting documents. The Evaluation Team uses the “review portal” to view each program’s submittal and evaluate compliance with ACAE standards. The Evaluation Team’s report is moved back to the “submittal portal” for the Program’s review and response. A platform user guide is available to programs and evaluators throughout the process.

### Primary Application and Profiles

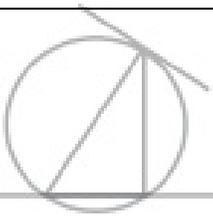
The program will enter data (e.g., demographic, applicant, student, graduate, clinical instruction, resources, faculty, as well as complete profiles for each faculty, clinical educator, clinical site, committee and course in the curriculum.

### Self-Study

The purpose of the online ACAE self-study is to assess the results of the program’s efforts in pursuit of its mission and goals. Whereas mission and goals statements indicate the desired outcomes, statements of objectives should serve as specific criteria by which outcomes may be assessed.

The self-study is a key component in the ACAE accreditation process and cannot be overemphasized. The primary purpose of the self-study is to involve the stakeholders of the audiology school or college in “looking at itself” for the purpose of self-improvement and long-term planning. It engages members of the community in a critical review of institutional mission, goals and programs; in considering the impact of societal and economic changes affecting the institution; and in identifying institutional strengths and weaknesses in the achievement of intended outcomes. This is accomplished primarily through evaluating how the program measures itself in compliance with the ACAE Standards.

Moreover, the self-study report orients the evaluation team to the program. The self-study describes the audiology program’s mission, goals, objectives, and the extent to which they are being met; resources; its constituencies; its physical plant; and other factors. The self-study should enable the

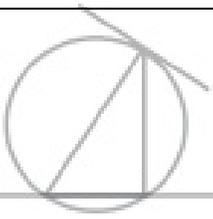


evaluation team to obtain a deep understanding of the program's essence and should provide the site team substantial knowledge of the program's faculty, administrators, students, financial integrity, and the intricacies of its governance.

### **Guidelines for the Self-Study Process**

The following recommendations will help foster the constructive attitudes and participation essential for an effective self-study:

- a. Program administration should effectively communicate the reasons for the self-study to all concerned constituencies.
- b. In order for faculty and students to participate enthusiastically in the process, the program administration must reinforce the concept of continual self-improvement represented by the self-study process. The program administration can bolster morale by helping to create "ownership" of the process.
- c. Adequate human, technical, and financial resources should be assigned for the self-study process. Program administration sends a clear message to faculty and students that the self-study is an important institutional and programmatic priority when adequate resources are allocated to assure its timely and effective completion. In a web-based system, this approach should be considered an ongoing activity.
- d. All appropriate constituencies should be involved in the self-study process. Inclusiveness facilitates a more accurate assessment of many issues. Along with the entire program faculty, the participation of students, alumni, support staff, trustees, employers, and representatives from the community in which the program is located helps develop a view of the program being studied that benefits both the program and all involved individuals.
- e. The self-study should be undertaken and continued with an openness and willingness to identify problems and concerns. Program administration should realize and make it clear to those involved that the self-study is an important opportunity for institutional planning and improvement. One valuable benefit of the self-study process is the identification of weaknesses and potential solutions.
- f. The process should identify the accomplishments and positive elements of the program. This is an opportunity to highlight the accomplishments of the program to date and indicate the direction and future achievements available to the program.
- g. Adequate time should be provided for local administrative review before the self-study is submitted to ACAE. Review and comment on the self-study by the appropriate sector of the institutional community, such as the President, Provost, Dean of Academic Affairs or specific College Dean or other institutional senior administrator/consultant, helps to affirm that the compiled data represent the views of the faculty, students, and staff. A final review also helps to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the data.



## Site Visit

The ACAE Site Visit Evaluation Team reviews the information contained in the self-study and verifies that the information provided in the self-study is accurate. The team's responsibility is to study the information provided by the education program and the requirements for accreditation. Afterwards, they are to carry out an objective and impartial assessment of the quality of the AuD program seeking or renewing accreditation. Prior to the selection of the Site Visit Evaluation Team for a specific institution, the Program Director is provided with a list of potential evaluators from the ACAE Team pool. The Program Director has the option to strike the names of up to two individuals who are perceived to have a conflict of interest with the program.

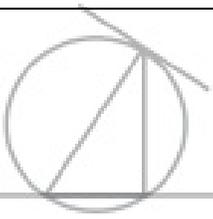
The selected team will be composed of two to four members from the pool, representing both academic and clinical interests as well as the option of an administrative person from the field. Members of the Board of Directors and ACAE staff may serve in the ACAE Evaluation Team pool. A Team Chair is designated by the ACAE and serves as the official spokesperson for the team during the evaluation process.

The ACAE Site Visit is divided into two parts:

- a. **Pre-Site Visit:** The Pre-Site Visit is an online evaluation that usually takes up to four weeks. Under special circumstances discussed between the program and the ACAE, the pre-site visit could take longer, i.e., 1-2 months. The site visit team interacts online and through virtual conference calls in its initial review of the program's submission. Questions or specific statements about Standards are clarified and/or answered. At the end of this first part of the evaluation, the team has a thorough working knowledge of the program and submits a report that evaluates the program's compliance with ACAE Standards. Additional evidence may be requested to be uploaded prior to the site visit, or to be provided during the site visit. The primary purpose of the physical on-site visit is to validate and verify what they have reviewed.
- b. **Site Visit:** The Site Visit is a two-and-a-half-day opportunity for the Site Visit Evaluation Team to physically observe the academic program that was described in detail (via the Application, Profiles and the Self-Study) over the course of the previous year. It is a time to interact with the Program Director, faculty, administrators, students, preceptors, employers, alumni, and other relevant staff. This physical overview of the program and its professional presence in the institution allows the site visit team to make a recommendation about the program in its Site Visit Report.

## Site Visit Report

During the site visit, the team begins to write a report of its findings. On the final morning of the site visit, highlights of the report, including program strengths and areas of concern, are reviewed with the Program Director and then shared with members of the administration and faculty in a final conference. The completed report is submitted to the ACAE office within a few days and made available to the program for review.



### **Key to Qualitative Statuses for ACAE Standards**

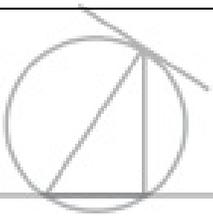
Each of the forty ACAE Standards is awarded an overall qualitative status by the ACAE. This status reflects the evidence or lack of evidence that is presented in a program's self-study for each standard. The four qualitative status designations are outlined below:

1. **Strength**: A standard is designated a Strength when the program has far exceeded the ACAE expectation of compliance for a specific standard.
2. **In-Compliance**: A standard is designated In-Compliance when the program has demonstrated that it satisfactorily meets the ACAE expectations of compliance for a specific standard.
  - **In-Compliance (with Non-Mandatory Suggestions)**: If a standard is designated to be In-Compliance, but there are indications of possible improvements beyond this status, suggestions for improvements may be offered by the ACAE. These suggestions are not mandatory and do not need to be followed by the program. A clear statement about non-mandatory suggestions is specifically made by the ACAE site visit evaluation team during the exit conference of a site visit at the conclusion of the evaluation process and in the final site visit report. The program is told that the suggestions are part of ACAE's continuous quality improvement (i.e., value-added benefit) process.
3. **Partial Compliance**: A standard is designated in Partial Compliance when the program has demonstrated approximately 80% - 90% compliance, but needs to achieve 100% compliance. The program must submit a Plan of Action or Progress Report to the ACAE within a specified period of time, i.e., three to six months, demonstrating that it has complied with the standard or has developed a plan and is making progress in that direction. The program has up to two years to come into compliance, as determined by the ACAE. The timeline is provided in the ACAE Final Board Report.
4. **Non-Compliance**: A standard is designated in Non-Compliance when the program has demonstrated it is 100% out of compliance. A program applying for initial accreditation that receives a Non-Compliance on any standard will be Denied accreditation. A program applying for reaccreditation that receives a Non-Compliance on any standard will be placed on Probationary Accreditation. See related paragraphs on page 17 for corrective action timelines.

After a fourteen-day period, in which the program has the opportunity to correct any factual errors in the report and respond to the findings and recommendations contained in the report, the ACAE office staff forwards it to the Program Accreditation Review Committee.

### **Program Accreditation Review Committee**

A committee of three members appointed by the ACAE Board of Directors makes up the Program Accreditation Review Committee. The committee reviews the program's submittal and the visiting team's report and prepares a presentation and recommended accreditation status for the ACAE Board. At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the ACAE Board, the committee presents and offers its recommendation. Additionally, the Board reviews the report and program response and then, by majority vote, decides on an accreditation status for the program.



### **ACAE Board Decision**

The Board will review the total educational effectiveness of the program in light of the program's specific mission and objectives to determine compliance with the ACAE Standards. Following a majority vote of the Board, the ACAE Chairperson and Executive Director prepare an Accreditation Status Notification letter, which is the official correspondence regarding the Board's decision. The Board Report is sent to the chief operating officer of the institution and the Program Director within four weeks and contains comments on the program's compliance with the ACAE Standards, its strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for program enhancement and ACAE website is updated accordingly. (See page 16, Accreditation Status Categories for types of board decisions on accreditation.)

### **Annual Reports**

**Annual Reporting:** On an annual basis, programs are required to update the following:

- Demographic data on applicants and enrolled students;
- graduation rates;
- completion rates;
- pass rates on national examinations;
- finances;
- reporting accurate information about competencies that demonstrate student achievement; and
- how the program fulfills its mission, stated goals and objectives during the preceding academic year.

These reports will be the tools to assist ACAE with monitoring and evaluating the program's continued compliance with the Standards in between evaluation visits. At the Year 5 Annual Report, there is an opportunity to update Course Profiles.

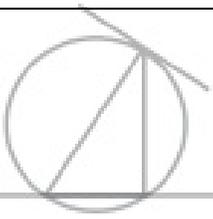
Additionally, if there are any substantive changes made within the program, the program will need to follow the policy for substantive changes on an annual basis (see page 32, Substantive Changes for additional information).

The platform for submitting the Annual Report to ACAE will be opened in August of each year and the program will have until the end of October of that year to complete its Annual Report for the most recently completed academic year. After the report has been submitted to ACAE, the ACAE staff will verify the data entered for accuracy. If questions arise, the staff will contact the Program Director for clarification. If a program's Annual Report indicates areas of non-compliance or deficiencies, ACAE may take appropriate remedial action, including among other things, self-studies, focused visits, interim reports, and Show Cause orders in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section K.

Once the verification process is finished, the ACAE Board of Directors, at its next regularly scheduled meeting, will review the Annual Reports.

### **Accreditation Status Categories**

**Accreditation:** A classification granted to a program indicating that the program meets the ACAE Standards for Accreditation. This classification indicates that the program has no areas of Non-Compliance



(deficiencies or weaknesses) that compromise the educational effectiveness of the total program. This is usually granted for a ten-year term. If the program is given a status of Accreditation, with one or more of the Standards identified as Partial Compliance, the ACAE Board may require the program to prepare an interim report due within a specified period of time not to exceed one year describing its compliance with the identified Standards. The timeline begins after receipt of the decision letter and Board Report from ACAE. If the ACAE Board has concerns about the educational effectiveness of the total program and thinks the program would benefit from an onsite visit in 2, 3, or 5 years, it will grant accreditation for a specific term.

**Developing Status:** A classification that indicates that a proposed, new AuD program's resource allocation and plan for development appear to demonstrate the ability to meet the ACAE Standards if fully implemented as planned. Developing Status must be granted before students may be admitted or notified of admission to the program.

**Reaccreditation:** An Accreditation classification that is awarded to a program every ten years, or earlier if determined by the ACAE Board of Directors. A program conducts a self-study evaluation similar to the one it followed in the accreditation process. A self-study document is submitted online, a virtual pre-site visit evaluation takes place, and the process culminates in a physical site visit to the academic program. The process follows the same steps outlined in this section above.

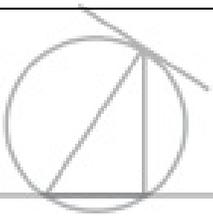
**Probationary Accreditation:** The issuance of Probationary Accreditation is a classification assigned to a program with major deficiencies or weaknesses with reference to the ACAE Standards. This classification indicates that the educational effectiveness of the program is in jeopardy. Programs with this classification will be required to submit regular progress reports, as determined by the ACAE Board of Directors, and shall undergo a full site evaluation within one year of being placed on probationary status. A program on Probation will have no more than two (2) years to remedy any identified areas on Non-Compliance (deficiencies or weaknesses) before the ACAE Board initiates an adverse accreditation action.

### **Withdrawal/Denial/Revocation Categories**

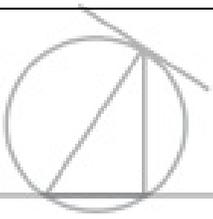
**Voluntary Withdrawal from Accreditation:** A classification assigned to a program that voluntarily withdraws its application at any time before a final decision is made. A written submission of its intention to withdraw from consideration will be submitted to the ACAE Executive Director. Any previously accredited program wishing to have its name removed from the ACAE list of accredited programs must notify the ACAE in writing. The ACAE Board of Directors will report that the program has voluntarily withdrawn its accreditation on its next annual listing of accredited programs.

**Denial of Accreditation:** A classification assigned to new programs or other programs that neither comply with a substantial number of the ACAE Standards nor meet the requirements for ACAE accreditation. The program may reapply after a period of one year. The program has the opportunity to appeal the denial decision of the ACAE within 30 days after receiving its decision letter and Board Report and must follow the Appeal Procedures outlined in the Manual (see page 18, "Appeals Procedure").

**Revocation of Accreditation:** A classification assigned to accredited programs that no longer meet the ACAE Standards. The programs no longer retain an accredited status with the ACAE and will have its name



removed from the ACAE list of accredited programs, but may reapply for accreditation again after a period of one year. The program has the opportunity to appeal the revocation decision of the ACAE within 30 days after receiving its decision letter and Board Report and must follow the Appeal Procedures outlined in the Manual (see page 18, “Appeals Procedure”).



## **Section 8: Guidelines**

### **Appeals**

#### **Appeals Procedures**

An institution may appeal an adverse accreditation decision by the ACAE Board to deny or revoke accreditation by submitting in writing its objections, together with supporting data and a request for reevaluation. Neither the award of Probationary Accreditation nor a Show Cause (see page 23) order by the ACAE Board are adverse actions and, therefore, they are not subject to appeal.

#### **Initiation of an Appeal**

All correspondence referred to herein shall be submitted electronically and simultaneously sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. All days refer to business days.

The ACAE Accreditation Status Notification letter, which is provided to the appropriate chief operating officer of the institution and the Program Director, contains a specific statement of reasons for any adverse accreditation decision, as well as a copy of these appeal procedures. The ACAE may reconsider any adverse accreditation decision on its own motion, or upon the petition of a program.

The program may appeal an adverse accreditation decision by the ACAE Board (i.e., to deny or revoke accreditation). Appeals may be based only on the contention that the decision of the ACAE Board was arbitrary and capricious or not supported by substantial evidence in the record or that the ACAE Board failed to follow its established procedures. The program bears the burden of proof on appeal. While an appeal is pending the program retains the accreditation status it had before the adverse accreditation action was made.

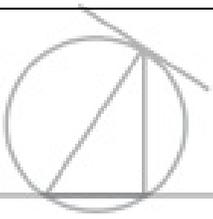
The request for an appeal must be submitted in writing and include a statement setting forth the program's objections and a concise statement of the basis on which the accreditation decision is being contested. The request must be received by the ACAE Executive Director within 15 days after the program receives the decision letter and ACAE Accreditation Status Notification letter denying or revoking accreditation.

#### **Appeal Documents**

Once a request for an appeal has been received, the program will have 30 days to submit its full written grounds for appeal, including any supporting data and documentation. Only information that was part of the record reviewed by the ACAE Board prior to making its adverse accreditation action will be considered on appeal.

#### **Criteria for Selecting an Appeals Hearing Panel**

All appeals will be heard before an appeals hearing panel. The panel shall be composed of three individuals who are familiar with the accreditation process and who have a working knowledge of the



ACAE Standards and the administration and functional components of the specific type of institution sponsoring the program under review (e.g., college, university, free-standing institution). No individual is eligible for membership on an appeals hearing panel who is or has been previously involved with the sponsoring institution, its program, the accreditation review activity that led to the specific ACAE Board action, or who is a current member of the ACAE Board.

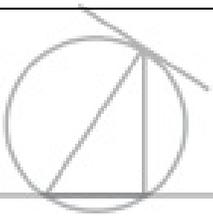
#### **Process for Selecting an Appeals Hearing Panel**

A list of five (5) individuals qualified to serve as members of an appeals hearing panel shall be prepared under the direction of the ACAE Board from recommendations submitted by the ACAE Executive Director. The list shall be sent to the institution within ten (10) days of the ACAE's receipt of the request for a hearing. Within ten (10) days of receipt of the list, the program shall select three (3) individuals from the list to constitute the appeals hearing panel and shall notify the ACAE Board of the names of the persons selected.

#### **Appeals Hearing Date and Participants**

The hearing shall be held within 45 days of the selection of the appeals hearing panel. After consultation with the program appealing the accreditation decision and the panel members, the ACAE Executive Director shall establish the date, time, and place for the hearing. As soon as possible, but no later than ten (10) days before the hearing, the institution shall be notified by the ACAE Executive Director of the date, time and place of the hearing.

- Panel Preparation Summary:
  - The panel will elect a chairperson.
  - The panel will review the Pre-Site Visit Report, the program's response to the Pre-Site Visit Report, the Site Visit Report, the program's response to the Site Visit Report, the Program Accreditation Review Committee Report, the program appeal documents, and the ACAE Standards, policies, and procedures.
  - The panel shall meet as necessary in advance of the hearing to prepare and shall be assisted in its preparation by the ACAE Executive Director.
- Hearing Format:
  - The chairperson will describe the procedures to be followed during the hearing.
  - The hearing will be transcribed.
  - The program shall be given an opportunity to make a presentation and respond to questions from the panel.
  - The Appeals Panel chairperson may recess the hearing at any time.
- Program's Presentation:
  - A verbal presentation, approximately 30 – 40 minutes in length, may be made by the program's representative. The program may be represented by legal counsel. The program may offer testimony that is relevant to the issues to be decided by the panel (i.e., the existence of the areas of Non-Compliance (deficiencies or weaknesses) and observation of proper accreditation procedures). The presentation shall be limited to the issues related to the adverse accreditation decision of the ACAE.



- Conclusion of Hearing:
  - The chairperson will offer the program an opportunity to make a final statement before concluding the hearing.

### **Evidence Supporting the Appeal**

All evidence submitted in the appeal must include a reference to where that information or documentation can be found in the record that was before the ACAE Board when the adverse action was taken. The appeals hearing panel will determine the relevance of any information presented to it.

### **Appeals Hearing Panel Decision**

The appeals hearing panel may take action by majority vote in executive session after the hearing or, if necessary, by telephone conference no later than seven (7) days after the hearing. The panel members shall decide on the issues presented in the appeal. They shall issue their findings and decision as follows: The panel must determine, whether the ACAE Board's final decision was arbitrary and capricious or not supported by substantial evidence in the record. As part of this determination, the panel will consider each finding of the ACAE Board that is raised by the program on appeal.

The panel will also consider whether the procedures used by the ACAE Board to reach the adverse accreditation action were contrary to established ACAE procedures, policies or practices and whether the procedural error prejudiced the ACAE Board's decision.

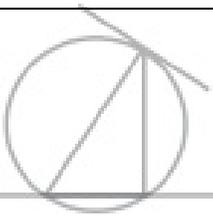
The panel then will draft a report detailing its findings and will issue a decision to affirm or remand the adverse accreditation action of the ACAE Board.

The findings and decision of the appeals hearing panel shall be submitted by its chairperson to the ACAE Board Chairperson, the ACAE Executive Director, and the program within seven days of the hearing.

Under extraordinary circumstances, the specified time limits may be extended with the mutual consent of the ACAE, the Chairperson of the appeals hearing panel, and the program.

### **Final Action and Notification**

If the appeals hearing panel affirms the adverse action of the ACAE Board, the decision becomes final as of the date of the decision of the panel and is not subject to further appeal. The ACAE Board will meet in person or by telephone conference as soon as practical to review a decision of the appeals hearing panel to remand its decision. The ACAE Board's decision on remand is final and not subject to further appeal. The ACAE Executive Director shall notify the program in writing of the ACAE Board's final action. In addition, the appropriate regulatory authorities and the appropriate accrediting agencies will be notified of final ACAE Board decisions to deny or revoke accreditation at the same time as the program but no later than 30 days after the Board reaches the decision. The public will be notified of final adverse actions via the ACAE's web site within 24 hours of confirmation that the program has received notification of the ACAE Board's final decision.



### **Financial Responsibility for Appeals Hearing**

The program shall assume the expense involved in the development and presentation of its appeal. In addition, all expenses associated with the hearing, such as those for the meeting room, transcription of the hearing, travel, meals, and lodging for members of the appeals hearing panel, shall be the sole responsibility of the program.

### **Confidentiality**

Because premature and/or unauthorized disclosure of information reflecting the site visit team's or the ACAE's conclusions and recommendations concerning accreditation status of a program may seriously jeopardize the program, the ACAE policy specifies that evaluation reports are confidential and are not disclosed except to the program involved and its host institution. The ACAE Board expects the Program Director to make available to faculty members, members of the institution's governing board and others directly concerned the full ACAE evaluation reports.

The ACAE directors and site visit team members are not authorized under any circumstances to disclose information obtained during site visitations or during the ACAE meetings to anyone other than those involved with the evaluation of a specific program. The extent to which publicity is given to evaluation reports is determined by the appropriate chief operating officer of the institution hosting the program and the Program Director. If the evaluation report is disseminated through any medium, it must be given in full and only after a final accreditation decision is made and must include the specific program covered by ACAE accreditation and the ACAE's name, address and telephone number. ACAE will correct any incorrect and misleading information an accredited program releases about its accreditation status, the contents of an evaluation report, and the ACAE Board's actions with respect to the program.

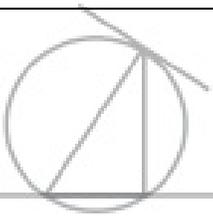
It is the obligation of the ACAE to maintain the confidentiality of its relationships with institutions and not to announce publicly any action with respect to an institution other than its accreditation classification.

### **Complaints**

The ACAE, through its established procedures of evaluation and monitoring, attempts to ensure that AuD degree programs maintain high standards of educational quality.

The ACAE was not created to serve and will not serve as an arbiter or mediator of disputes that may arise between the AuD degree programs and other parties. However, the ACAE is interested in hearing from groups or individuals who may have specific comments relating directly to a program's lack of compliance with the ACAE Standards and requirements.

The institution shall inform its students of the ACAE's mailing address and/or telephone number (Address: Director, ACAE, 11480 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 220, Reston, VA 20191. Telephone: 202-986-9500), the procedures for filing complaints with ACAE (as described below), and that only complaints relating directly to the lack of compliance with the Accreditation Standards and requirements of accreditation will be considered by the ACAE. Upon advice of counsel, the Board retains



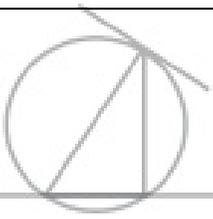
the right to withhold public disclosure of information if potential legal action is involved in the complaint.

**Procedures for Filing a Complaint to the ACAE:**

1. An individual or group desiring to file a complaint with the ACAE shall submit the complaint in writing, signed by the complainant, to the Executive Director. The complaint should be specific in detail and include whatever documentation is available to support the complaint. Upon request and at the discretion of the ACAE Executive Director, ACAE may withhold or protect the identity of the complainant.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Executive Director will forward within 10 business days, a copy to the Program Director, for response and appropriate documentation. If the name of the complainant is being withheld/protected, the Executive Director shall strike any personally identifiable information from the complaint prior to forwarding to the institution or program.
3. The Program Director will have 30 business days to respond to the complaint, including providing appropriate documentation to support the response. The ACAE Executive Director may grant an extension of time to respond to the complaint if in the Executive Director's discretion an extension is warranted. A request for delay must be submitted in writing. If a site visit is scheduled within the response time frame, the response may be provided as set forth below.
4. If a site visit is scheduled within two months of the receipt of the complaint, the Executive Director will also refer the complaint to the chair of the evaluation team visiting the program for investigation and action during the regular course of the evaluation process. The program will have an opportunity to respond during the course of the evaluation process.
5. The complaint and program response, including any supporting documentation will be turned over to the ACAE Board for its review. Simultaneously, the Executive Director, if feasible, will encourage informal efforts to resolve the matters that led to the complaint.
6. The ACAE Board shall take appropriate action, including but not limited to, dismissing the complaint, requiring a virtual site visit or scheduling a full in-person site visit.
7. Following review of the findings and complainant's written comments, if any, the ACAE Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting shall make a determination with respect to the allegations of the complaint. Within 15 business days following the decision, a written report shall be prepared specifying the factual findings of the ACAE Board and the actions, if any, that the ACAE Board will take with respect to the complaint. The program and complainant(s) will be provided with a copy of the ACAE Board decision.
8. The ACAE will maintain the confidentiality of the information and documents submitted to it related to any complaint.

**Procedures for Complaints Not Related to Accreditation Decisions:**

1. A complaint or inquiry regarding the ACAE Board, one of its officers, a Committee Member, Site Team Evaluator, employees, staff, agents, or consultants may be initiated by filing a written complaint with the ACAE Executive Director. The complaint must identify the specific matter(s)



of complaint, set forth in detail the facts and reasons to support the allegations, and must include copies of all pertinent documents in the complainant 's possession that support the complaint.

2. Upon receipt of a written complaint regarding ACAE actions or personnel, the ACAE Executive Committee will review the complaint within 10 days and determine whether further investigation is warranted. If it is determined that an investigation should proceed, the ACAE Board will have 45 days to conduct the investigation. If it is determined that no investigation is warranted, the complainant shall be so informed. The investigation may include, without limitation, interviews with persons having information regarding the allegations and a review of materials relevant to the complaint.
3. Following review of the findings and complainant's written comments, if any, the ACAE Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting shall make a determination with respect to the allegations of the complaint. Within 15 business days following the decision, a written report shall be prepared specifying the factual findings of the ACAE Board and the actions, if any, that the ACAE Board will take with respect to the complaint. The complainant(s) will be provided with a copy of the ACAE Board decision.
4. The ACAE will maintain the confidentiality of the information and documents submitted to it related to any complaint.

### **Conflict of Laws**

It is the policy of ACAE that any program that experiences a conflict between a requirement imposed by one of ACAE's Standards of Accreditation or a policy or procedure of ACAE and a state or local law, should immediately notify ACAE of the conflict. ACAE will work to resolve the conflict immediately.

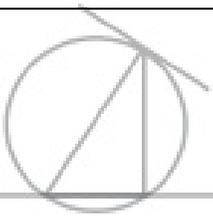
### **Disclosure**

#### **Disclosure of Program Conflicts:**

- Upon notification of appointment to the ACAE Board and/or a Site Visit Evaluation Team, a member shall submit to the ACAE Executive Director a listing of all educational programs with which a conflict of interest exists. See Appendix 3, page 39. The ACAE Executive Director shall maintain a record of this conflict of interest listing.
- During tenure as a member, a member shall advise as above, in writing, of the commencement of any new affiliation with a program that creates an additional conflict of interest.

#### **Disclosure of Program Conflicts Related to Consultation:**

- At any time during an individual's tenure on the ACAE Board or the Site Visit Evaluation Team, if the individual accepts or performs a service that creates a conflict of interest, the individual shall notify the program for which the services are to be provided that a conflict of interest exists.
- In addition, the ACAE shall be notified in writing of the consulting activity. Such notification shall include:
  - The program at which consultation is being provided and subsequent declaration of a conflict of interest with that program.
  - The nature of the consultation (e.g., consultant, advisory board, council, etc.)



- The frequency and duration of the consultation.
- Whether the appropriate persons at the program(s) were provided with the ACAE disclaimer.

For a period of two (2) years following the conclusion of their service to the ACAE and/or the Site Visit Evaluation Team, former ACAE Directors and Site Visit Evaluation Team members who serve as a consultant to an institution or program must send a letter addressed to the Program Director or other program representative stating that the advice given is personal advice and does not represent the opinion of the ACAE Board. A copy of this letter shall be forwarded to the ACAE Board as well.

### **Due Process**

The ACAE allows a program a reasonable period of time to comply with any requests it makes of the program to provide ACAE with information and documents.

The ACAE provides a program with an opportunity to respond in writing to any identified areas of Non-Compliance (deficiencies or weaknesses) in the site visit report before taking final action on the program's accreditation.

The ACAE notifies a program in writing of any adverse accreditation action to deny or revoke accreditation, an action to place a program on probation, or the issuance of a Show Cause order. The notice describes the basis for the action.

The ACAE permits a program the opportunity to appeal an adverse decision (deny or revoke accreditation) and the right to be represented by counsel during that appeal (See page 20, "Appeals Procedure" above).

### **Miscellaneous Practices**

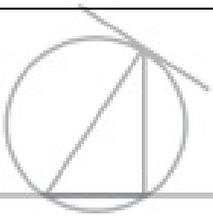
The ACAE maintains on its website materials for the public describing:

- Each accreditation status it awards.
- The procedures that programs must follow when applying for accreditation.
- The standards and procedures it uses to determine accreditation status.
- The programs that the ACAE accredits currently and the year of the next accreditation visit/review.
- The names, academic and professional qualifications, and relevant employment and organizational affiliations of the ACAE Board of Directors and the ACAE's principal staff, including its Executive Director

### **Notification of Accrediting Decisions**

Within 30 days of making its accrediting decisions, the ACAE provides written notice to the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agencies, and the public (via its website) of the following types of decisions:

- A decision to award Accreditation to a program;
- A decision to award reaccreditation to a program;



- A final decision to place a program on Probationary Accreditation, including a summary of any findings made in connection with the action and the official comments of the program (notice is provided to the public within 24 hours of confirmation that the program received notification of the decision);
- A final decision to deny or revoke accreditation and a summary of any findings made in connection with the action together with the official comments of the program (notice is provided to the public within 24 hours of confirmation that the program received notification of the decision);
- Voluntary withdrawal from the accreditation process (notice is provided to the public within 30 days of receiving notification from the program); and
- Lapse of accreditation (notice is provided to the public within 30 days of the date on which accreditation lapses).

The ACAE will, in consultation with programs, inform the public of decisions on accreditation status and will inform the public of the basis for final decisions to accredit or re-accredit programs. In the case of denial or withdrawal of accreditation status, to provide the specific reasons for the decision accompanied by a response, related to the final decision, from the program.

### **Public Disclosure**

The ACAE's Standard 5: Public Disclosure requires that the programs it accredits provide reliable information to the public on their performance on a regular basis, including student achievement. This communication to the public must take place during specific points in the academic year, but on an annual basis at least. Examples of compliance with this policy are the following:

- reporting accurate information about a program's ACAE accreditation status;
- reporting accurate information about graduation rates;
- reporting accurate information about completion rates;
- reporting accurate information about pass rates on national examinations;
- reporting accurate information about competencies that demonstrate student achievement;
- reporting accurate information about how the program fulfills its mission, stated goals and objectives during an academic year.

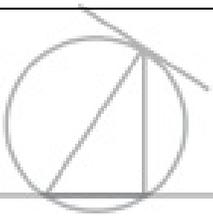
Programs can use program/university publications, websites, hotlines or other openly accessible and reliable means to report the above information to the public.

The ACAE requires that programs will notify and provide evidence to the ACAE about how it complies with this policy on an annual basis. This information will be included in the ACAE annual report or in other specified reports, as determined by the ACAE.

### **Public Member Expectations Policy**

#### **ACAE Bylaws – Article V. Section 2. Composition, Election, Tenure and Qualifications:**

*“The Public Member will serve a one-year appointment with the option of renewal on a year-to-year basis for up to and including six years, as documented by the ACAE Board of Directors.”*



**The role of the ACAE public member is described below:**

- The public member is an individual outside of the audiology profession who is able to provide insights about the needs of the public with regard to the competency of the audiology profession.
- The public member is a voting member of the ACAE Board of Directors and participates in all decisions required of board members.
- The public member, as all board members, reviews and provides input into ACAE's mission, vision, goals and budget, helping to ensure that ACAE is serving the public and profession with the integrity and stewardship of resources.
- The public member will provide the ACAE Board of Directors with an outside perspective that assists and encourages in achieving ACAE's overall goals and objectives.
- The public member possesses skills and talents that provide expertise in areas outside of the audiology profession that will be helpful to the ACAE, e.g., networking, legislative consultation, financial expertise, higher education accreditation, etc.
- The public member is expected to follow a code of ethics that is expected of each ACAE member of the Board.
- It will be helpful to the ACAE Board of Directors if the public member has prior experience in working with non-profit boards and an understanding of governance issues.
- Most importantly, the public member assures the public that the public's position is heard by the organization.

The above list of expectations in the ACAE Public Member Expectations Policy is not exhaustive. The ACAE looks closely at the individual's background experience. It is the desire of the ACAE Board that the public member will be an interested and active member of the board, participating in meetings and relevant activities of the organization.)

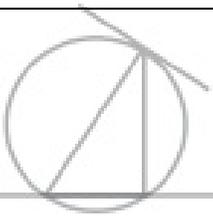
*Public Member: Amended in Bylaws 2008, Role of Public Member November 2012, Updated March 2015, Manual, Section VII, Policies and Procedures, P, Public Member Expectations Policy.*

**Records Maintenance**

The ACAE maintains complete, accurate, and secure records of its last two full accreditation reviews for each program, including the program's self-study, site visit evaluation team reports, and the program's responses to site visit reports, plus any annual reports, any additional periodic reports that the ACAE may require of accredited programs, and any reports of special reviews between regular reviews. The ACAE also maintains complete, accurate, and secure records of all its decisions regarding the accreditation of any program, including all correspondence that is significantly related to those decisions.

**Review of Standards**

It is the ACAE policy to conduct ongoing and comprehensive reviews of its Standards of Accreditation to verify that they are adequate to evaluate educational quality, relevant to the educational and training needs of students seeking a career in audiology, and widely accepted by the audiology community in the



United States. The ACAE uses a combination of annual reviews and longer-term reviews to accomplish this task.

**Annual Reviews:**

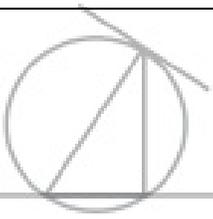
Once a year, the ACAE Board reviews each of the Standards to determine if it is adequate to evaluate the quality of audiology programs. The implications of changes in the field of audiology and the practices of ACAE accredited programs on the Standards are routinely considered during these informal reviews, as are changes designed either to improve quality or to update the language of the Standards. Also considered are, among other things, the results of discussions with ACAE accredited programs during the course of the year, reviews of any complaints received during the year that suggest problems with the Standards and a review by the Board of its ability to apply each Standard consistently. If problems are discovered with the Standards, proposals for revised/edited Standards are developed, sent out for comment to the relevant constituencies for a period of at least 30 days, and then reviewed and voted on at the next regularly scheduled ACAE Board meeting after the comments are received and analyzed.

Through this review of individual Standards, the ACAE has the opportunity to revise and edit existing Standards. In addition, the ACAE, at each of its meetings, devotes a portion of time to discussing how the Standards are applied in programs, what Standards might present problems, and which may require modification. Also, after each site-visit, the ACAE surveys programs about their perceptions of the adequacy and relevance of the Standards. This is particularly helpful to the ACAE Board because the faculty and students can be insightful about the effectiveness of the Standards in their educational program.

**Substantial Reviews:**

Every seven to ten years, the ACAE conducts more substantial review of the Standards to determine if the current Standards, when viewed as a whole and separately, are adequate to evaluate the quality of audiology programs at the AuD level, relevant to the education and training needs of students, and remain widely accepted in the audiology community. This review may begin in the fifth or sixth year of the seven-to-ten-year cycle.

A special Standards Review Committee is appointed by the ACAE to look at the Standards in depth and provide a draft of an updated set of Standards to the ACAE for review and discussion. The Chair of ACAE will appoint a member of the ACAE board to serve as Chair of the SRC, one additional ACAE board member as well as other audiologists interested in education to serve on the SRC. The ACAE Executive Director will serve as staff. To initiate the review process, the ACAE in conjunction with the Standards Review Committee will send a notice to all ACAE's relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to Program Directors, faculty, administrators, students, employers, preceptors, and alumni, alerting them to the commencement of the review process and soliciting comments. The Standards Review Committee will also survey these same stakeholders about any proposed new or revised Standards, including soliciting written comments. The Committee, in conjunction with the ACAE Board of Directors, will also hold public meetings and review new advancements taking place in the profession. This combined activity allows the committee to present up-to-date and applicable educational standards.



If the ACAE determines, at any point during its systematic long-term program review of Standards, that it needs to make changes to them, it initiates action within twelve (12) months and completes the action within a reasonable period of time. Before finalizing any changes to the Standards, the ACAE provides notice to all of its relevant stakeholders of the changes it intends to make, and gives them adequate opportunity to comment on these proposed changes for a period of not less than 30 days. It then takes into consideration the comments made by the various groups and makes, where applicable and desirable, the modifications noted.

### **Show Cause**

The ACAE Board may issue at any time an order to Show Cause when substantial questions or concerns exist about a program's compliance with the ACAE Standards or its adherence to ACAE procedures.

The issuance of a Show Cause order is not an adverse action. It is a statement of serious concern by the ACAE Board. The program must respond to the Board's identified concerns within a specified period of time and show cause why the program's accreditation should not be revoked. The Board will consider the program's response at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and may act to vacate the Show Cause order, continue the Show Cause order and require additional reporting or a focused visit, or may initiate adverse action against the program. Because a Show Cause order is not an adverse action, it is not appealable.

### **Statement of Ethical Responsibilities and Conflict of Interest**

#### **General Ethical Responsibilities:**

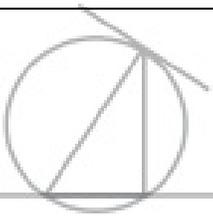
The ACAE and any person(s) connected with this accrediting agency shall:

- Abide by the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) and the American Academy of Audiology's (AAA) Codes of Ethics (see Appendices 1 and 2);
- Act in ways to preserve the confidentiality of the personnel, students, programs, and institutions that are evaluated;
- Expeditiously handle all matters pertaining to accreditation;
- Not provide any service, whether paid or unpaid, to any institution or program in litigation with the ACAE or having an appeal of an ACAE action under active consideration; and
- Not disclose to any person, institution, or program any information related to ACAE actions, which is not publicly available.

#### **Conflict of Interest with Individual Educational Programs: Criteria**

Responsibility for the identification of the existence of a possible conflict of interest with any given educational program lies with the individual board member, public member, or evaluator. The ACAE has the final authority to determine whether a conflict of interest exists. In making a decision regarding conflict of interest, an ACAE Board member, staff member, public member, evaluator or consultant must consider the possibility of perceived conflict of interest as well as actual conflicts of interest as defined as follows:

- A close personal, professional, or financial interest, or other special relationship, including those of a negative nature, in any institution in question.



- A position as employee or consultant to a program, other than the program under review, that provides all or a significant portion of the institution's funding (e.g., a state department of education or a federal or private agency providing significant grants or research funding).
- A current or former student or graduate, or parent of a current or former student or graduate of the program under review or its host institution.
- A current or former candidate for a paid position within the past five (5) years with the program under review.
- A position, whether paid or voluntary, current or within the past five (5) years, to or for the program under review. This includes positions as a consultant, advisor, or faculty member (including clinical or adjunct).
- A residence and/or place of employment in the same state or in close proximity to the program under review. Close proximity is determined by geographic, educational and economic spheres (communities of interest) of influence rather than strict political boundaries.
- A position whether paid or voluntary, current or within the past five (5) years, in a program that is generally viewed by peers as a major competitor to the program under review. This includes positions as a consultant, advisor, or faculty member (including clinical or adjunct).
- An ACAE appeals hearing panelist for the program under review.

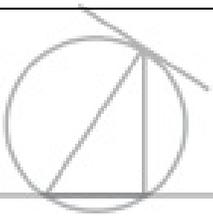
*Note: Each member of the ACAE Board of Directors is required to sign a Conflict of Interest Form before he/ she is accepted on the ACAE Board and thereafter on an annual basis (See Appendix 3).*

**Absenting Oneself from ACAE Deliberations:**

Members of the ACAE Board shall absent themselves from the ACAE's deliberation on a program under review if any of conditions above exist. If any of these conditions apply, or if a member has any doubt or discomfort as to their applicability, the member must immediately request recognition from the ACAE Chair, and ask to be absent from any formal or informal discussion of the program under review. For conference call meetings, the individual should declare the conflict, receive acknowledgement from the Chair, and hang up the phone. When discussion of the program under review is completed, a staff member will call the individual with the conflict and instruct them to rejoin the conference call. The minutes of the official proceedings of the ACAE will reflect the absence, and the absented member will be permitted back into the room or permitted to rejoin the conference call only after discussion about the program ends.

**Abstaining from a Vote During ACAE Meetings:**

Abstaining (or abstention) is a parliamentary term that means that a voting member chooses not to cast a vote. An abstention does not imply or indicate that a conflict of interest exists. Abstentions are to be used only when a voting member of the ACAE Board cannot make an informed decision based on the information presented. The minutes of the official proceedings of the ACAE will record all abstentions as a part of the vote count on all action items.



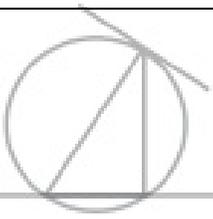
When a motion has been discussed to the satisfaction of the ACAE Board, and the question has been called, the Chair will ask for either a hand or voice vote from those in favor of the motion, those against the motion, and those abstaining from the vote.

### **Substantive Changes**

Through the web-based Annual Report, the ACAE will continuously monitor the general quality of the education provided by accredited programs. An AuD degree program receives its recognition on the basis of evaluation and accreditation of its educational program. Any program that contemplates a substantive change in its AuD degree program should receive concurrence from the ACAE prior to formal adoption thereof. ACAE defines “substantive change,” as new educational policies, practices, curricular changes, or programs that affect:

- Institutional or programmatic mission, goals, and objectives;
- The organizational relationship of the program with the parent institution;
- Name change to department, division, or college;
- Change in the Program Director;
- Substantial changes in the curriculum (i.e., change in course credit hours, change in program length from 4 years to 3 years);
- Substantial increases or decreases in enrollment (i.e., is there a % example?);
- Substantial increases or decreases in faculty (i.e., 20% change in numbers);
- Substantial change in financial resources (i.e., 10% or greater reduction in resources);
- Substantial change in the mission or objectives of the program;
- New affiliations or mergers with other institutions; or
- Addition of international AuD degree programs sponsored by a recognized governmental or university institution within the host country.

Substantive changes must be submitted to ACAE in writing 45 days in advance of the anticipated change so that the request may be assessed and approved prior to implementation of the change. Failure to comply with this policy may result in a request for self-study, interim site visit, or other action by ACAE, including initiation of an action to revoke accreditation in accordance with the procedures set forth on page 17.



## Section 9: Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) Member Code of Good Practice**

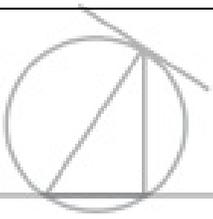
The ASPA Code of Good Practice provides guiding principles for members in conducting the accreditation process. An accrediting organization holding full membership in the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors:

#### **Promotes quality in education through accreditation processes that:**

- Focus on student achievement of knowledge and competence as defined by institutional and programmatic missions, goals and contexts.
- Affirm that teaching and learning are the primary purposes of institutions and programs.
- Evaluate educational quality in a manner unbiased by special interests, politics or educational delivery models.
- Encourage institutions and programs to provide clear and accessible public information about student achievement that is pertinent to their communities of interest.

#### **Conducts accreditation processes with integrity and professionalism that:**

- Maintain autonomy and integrity in governance and operations through appropriate relationships, practices and avoidance of conflict of interest.
- Create, document and implement policies, and procedures to ensure fair and consistent application of standards and objective decision making that includes attention to due process, confidentiality, and expedient response to appeals and complaints.
- Develop, review and revise standards and accreditation procedures with the participation of communities of interest.
- Maintain sufficient financial, personnel, and other resources for effective operations, while ensuring efficient and cost-effective accreditation processes for institutions and programs.
- Cooperate with other accrediting organizations wherever possible to avoid conflicting standards and to minimize duplication of effort by institutions and programs.
- Provide thoughtful analyses to assist institutions and programs in developing their own approaches and solutions, making a clear distinction between accreditation requirements and recommendations for improvement.
- Provide accurate, clear, accessible, and timely information to communities of interest about accreditation standards and procedures and the accreditation status of institutions and programs.
- Maintain a thorough and effective orientation, training, and professional development program for all accreditation personnel.
- Ensure that site teams have the appropriate expertise and experience for each specific review.
- Include periodic self-evaluations of the accreditation process that incorporate input from accredited institutions and programs.

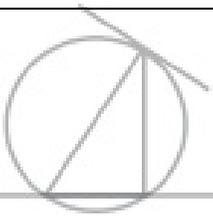


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**Respects institutional independence and freedom in academic decision making through accrediting activities that:**

- Encourage institutional independence and freedom to make academic decisions within the commitment to mutual accountability implicit in participation in accreditation.
- Promote the rights of institutions and programs to determine: missions and goals; educational and assessment methodologies; scholarship, research, and policy agendas; curricular content; and administrative and staffing configurations.
- Encourage experimentation, innovation, and thoughtful change that meets the needs of the profession and the communities served.

Adopted April 2017



## **Appendix 2: Code of Ethics of the American Academy of Audiology**

### **PREAMBLE**

The Code of Ethics of the American Academy of Audiology specifies professional standards that allow for the proper discharge of audiologists' responsibilities to those served, and that protect the integrity of the profession. The Code of Ethics consists of two parts. The first part, the Statement of Principles and Rules, presents precepts that members (all categories of members including Student Members) effective January 1, 2009 of the Academy agree to uphold. The second part, the Procedures, provides the process that enables enforcement of the Principles and Rules.

### **PART I. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND RULES**

**PRINCIPLE 1:** Members shall provide professional services and conduct research with honesty and compassion, and shall respect the dignity, worth, and rights of those served.

**Rule 1a:** Individuals shall not limit the delivery of professional services on any basis that is unjustifiable or irrelevant to the need for the potential benefit from such services.

**Rule 1b:** Individuals shall not provide services except in a professional relationship and shall not discriminate in the provision of services to individuals on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or general health.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Members shall maintain the highest standards of professional competence in rendering services.

**Rule 2a:** Members shall provide only those professional services for which they are qualified by education and experience.

**Rule 2b:** Individuals shall use available resources, including referrals to other specialists, and shall not give or accept benefits or items of value for receiving or making referrals.

**Rule 2c:** Individuals shall exercise all reasonable precautions to avoid injury to persons in the delivery of professional services or execution of research.

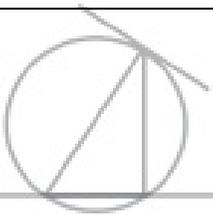
**Rule 2d:** Individuals shall provide appropriate supervision and assume full responsibility for services delegated to supportive personnel. Individuals shall not delegate any service requiring professional competence to unqualified persons.

**Rule 2e:** Individuals shall not knowingly permit personnel under their direct or indirect supervision to engage in any practice that is not in compliance with the Code of Ethics.

**Rule 2f:** Individuals shall maintain professional competence, including participation in continuing education.

**PRINCIPLE 3:** Members shall maintain the confidentiality of the information and records of those receiving services or involved in research.

**Rule 3a:** Individuals shall not reveal to unauthorized persons any professional or personal information obtained from the person served professionally, unless required by law.



**PRINCIPLE 4:** Members shall provide only services and products that are in the best interest of those served.

**Rule 4a:** Individuals shall not exploit persons in the delivery of professional services.

**Rule 4b:** Individuals shall not charge for services not rendered.

**Rule 4c:** Individuals shall not participate in activities that constitute a conflict of professional interest.

**Rule 4d:** Individuals using investigational procedures with human participants or prospectively collecting research data from human participants shall obtain full informed consent from the participants or legal representatives. Members conducting research with human participants or animals shall follow accepted standards, such as those promulgated in the current Responsible Conduct of Research by the U.S. Office of Research Integrity.

**PRINCIPLE 5:** Members shall provide accurate information about the nature and management of communicative disorders and about the services and products offered.

**Rule 5a:** Individuals shall provide persons served with the information a reasonable person would want to know about the nature and possible effects of services rendered or products provided or research being conducted.

**Rule 5b:** Individuals may make a statement of prognosis, but shall not guarantee results, mislead, or misinform persons served or studied.

**Rule 5c:** Individuals shall conduct and report product-related research only according to accepted standards of research practice.

**Rule 5d:** Individuals shall not carry out teaching or research activities in a manner that constitutes an invasion of privacy or that fails to inform persons fully about the nature and possible effects of these activities, affording all persons informed free choice of participation.

**Rule 5e:** Individuals shall maintain accurate documentation of services rendered according to accepted medical, legal and professional standards and requirements.

**PRINCIPLE 6:** Members shall comply with the ethical standards of the Academy with regard to public statements or publication.

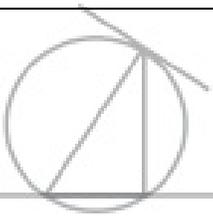
**Rule 6a:** Individuals shall not misrepresent their educational degrees, training, credentials, or competence. Only degrees earned from regionally accredited institutions in which training was obtained in audiology, or a directly related discipline, may be used in public statements concerning professional services.

**Rule 6b:** Individuals' public statements about professional services, products or research results shall not contain representations or claims that are false, misleading, or deceptive.

**PRINCIPLE 7:** Members shall honor their responsibilities to the public and to professional colleagues.

**Rule 7a:** Individuals shall not use professional or commercial affiliations in any way that would limit services to or mislead patients or colleagues.

**Rule 7b:** Individuals shall inform colleagues and the public in an objective manner consistent with professional standards about products and services they have developed or research they have conducted.



**PRINCIPLE 8:** Members shall uphold the dignity of the profession and freely accept the Academy's self-imposed standards.

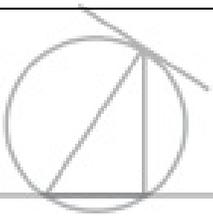
**Rule 8a:** Individuals shall not violate these Principles and Rules nor attempt to circumvent them.

**Rule 8b:** Individuals shall not engage in dishonesty or illegal conduct that adversely reflects on the profession.

**Rule 8c:** Individuals shall inform the Ethical Practices Committee when there are reasons to believe that a member of the Academy may have been in noncompliance with the Code of Ethics.

**Rule 8d:** Individuals shall fully cooperate with reviews being conducted by the Ethical Practices Committee in any matter related to the Code of Ethics.

Rev 2/2018



## **Appendix 3: Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) Conflict of Interest Statement**

### **Statement of Policy:**

No board member or site evaluator shall use his or her position, or the knowledge gained therefrom, in such a manner that a conflict between the interest of the Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) or any of its affiliates and his or her personal interests arises.

Each board member has a duty to place the interest of the ACAE foremost in any dealings with the organization and has a continuing responsibility to comply with the requirements of the policy.

The conduct of personal business between any board member or committee member and the organization and any of its affiliates is prohibited.

Board or committee members may not obtain for themselves, their relatives, or their friends a material interest of any kind from their association with the organization.

If a board member has an interest in a proposed transaction with the organization in the form of a significant personal financial interest in the transaction or in any organization involved in the transaction or holds a position as trustee, director, or officer in any such organization, he or she must make full disclosure of such interest before any discussion or negotiation of such transaction.

### **In Conclusion:**

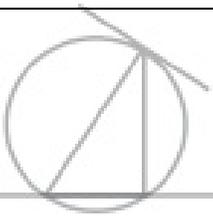
The Conflict of Interest Policy for ACAE is always taken into consideration when there is a potential for conflict, particularly when signing new contracts, assuming related positions, or beginning new professional relationships. Any possible appearance of Conflict of Interest that arises in the course of ACAE business operations is researched to determine the existence of a conflict. If a contract or professional responsibility is made with a related party, it is discussed with ACAE's attorney and shared with the board. The ACAE board determines the outcome of the disclosure. If ACAE staff members identify a conflict of interest, the Executive Director shares this information with the ACAE Executive Committee and Board for its action.

Any board or committee member who is aware that they may have a potential conflict of interest with respect to any matter coming before the board or committee shall recuse themselves and not be present or partake in any discussion of or vote in connection with the matter.

### **Disclosure:**

To implement this policy, board members and/or site evaluators of the organization will submit annual reports on the attached forms and, if not previously disclosed, will make disclosure before any relevant board or committee action.

These reports will be reviewed by the Board or an appointed Committee of the Board, which will attempt to resolve any actual or potential conflict(s) and, in the absence of resolution, refer the matter to the Board of Directors.



**Potential Conflict of Interest Statement:**

I have read the statement of policy regarding conflicts of interest. To the best of my knowledge and belief, except as disclosed herewith neither I nor any person with whom I have or had a personal or business relationship is engaged in any transaction or activity or has a relationship that may represent a potential competing or conflict interest, as defined in the statement of policy.

Further, to the best of my knowledge and belief, except as disclosed herewith, neither I nor any person with whom I have or had a personal business, or compensate professional relationship intends to engage in any transaction, to acquire any interest in any organization or entity, to become the recipient of any substantial gifts or favors that might be covered by the statement of policy regarding conflicts of interest.

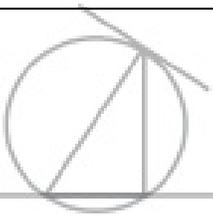
(A) Without exception

(B) Except as described in the attached statement

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 4: ACAE Forms

### Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACA) Board of Directors Nomination Form

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Check Preferred address)*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fax #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address;** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fax #** \_\_\_\_\_

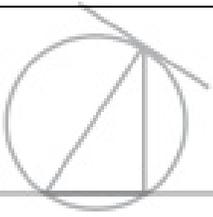
**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Identify category of nominee:

\_\_\_\_\_ Educator    \_\_\_\_\_ Practitioner    \_\_\_\_\_ Public Member    \_\_\_\_\_ Higher Education  
Administrator

#### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Name of School, City and State	Yr of Grad.	Certificate or Degree	Area of Study



**EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND**

Employer	Address/Phone/E-mail	Position	From (Year)	To (Year)

ACAE Board of Directors Nomination Form (continued)

**ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Name of Organization	Title/Member/Consultant	From (Year)	To (Year)

**Identify potential conflict of interest:**

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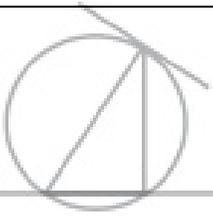
**STATEMENT** (Write a short paragraph about your interest in serving and why you would be qualified for the position)

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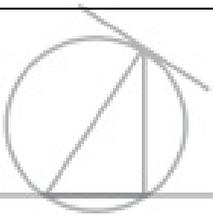


**LIST TWO PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

Name	Address/Phone/E-mail	Position

(Signature of Applicant) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return via fax or email to: Director, ACAE  
11480 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 220  
Reston, VA 20191  
FAX: 703-790-8631  
Email: [astafford@audiology.org](mailto:astafford@audiology.org)  
[www.acaeaccred.org](http://www.acaeaccred.org)



## Site Evaluation Nomination Form

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Check Preferred address)*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fax #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address;** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Fax #** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Identify category of nominee:**

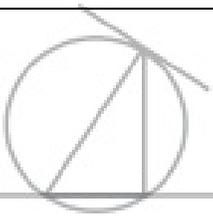
\_\_\_\_\_ Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Practitioner

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Name of School, City and State	Yr of Grad.	Certificate or Degree	Area of Study

### EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND

Employer	Address/Phone/E-mail	Position	From (Year)	To (Year)



**ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Name of Organization	Title/Member/Consultant	From (Year)	To (Year)

**Identify potential conflict of interest:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**STATEMENT** (Write a short paragraph about your interest in serving and why you would be qualified for the position)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**LIST TWO PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

Name	Address/Phone/E-mail	Position

(Signature of Applicant) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Please return via fax or email to: Director, ACAE  
11480 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 220  
Reston, VA 20191  
FAX: 703-790-8631  
Email: [astafford@audiology.org](mailto:astafford@audiology.org)  
[www.aceaccred.org](http://www.aceaccred.org)