



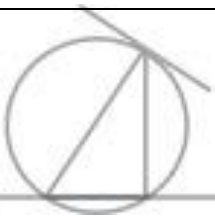
Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE)

Accreditation Manual  
for  
AuD Academic Programs

October 2017

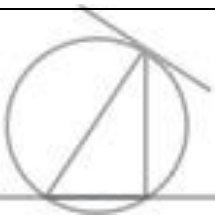


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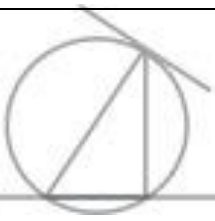
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## Section 1: Introduction to the ACAE

### **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.

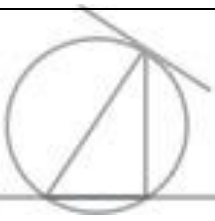
Thus, the ACAE was founded and charged with developing academic standards that assured the public, the government, other health professions, and the patients served that the next generation of audiologists will be educated and trained to the highest levels. Additionally, the ACAE was an opportunity for audiologists to fully integrate the educational foundation of the profession into a vision for autonomy.

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 being founded, the ACAE has developed and adopted educational standards, developed policies and procedures consistent with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation guidelines (CHEA) and the United States Department of Education (USDE), and has created a web-based computerized accreditation system that is unique in specialized/programmatic accreditation.

### **Benefits of ACAE Accreditation**

- Automatic access to categorized current and historical accreditation data;
- Ability to enter data once, update it as necessary, and have permanent and immediate access to it;
- Innovative and interactive electronic partnership with academic programs and other stakeholders;
- Instantaneous access to a national database for comparative purposes;
- Ability to provide national trends and analyses;
- Constructive online interaction between academic programs and site visit evaluators;
- Cooperative relationships with programs, resulting in improved outcomes for students and the teaching environment;
- Efficient utilization of staff resources;
- Assurance to public that programs have been evaluated through a rigorous verification process.



## Section 2: Mission and Goals

### **Mission**

The Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (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 the community of interest by ensuring the continued effectiveness of the ACAE.

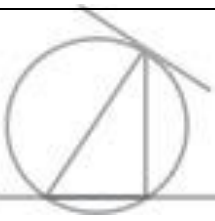
#### **Objectives:**

- Maintain an independent and objective accreditation process.
- Inform the public and communities of interest regarding the accreditation status of AuD programs.
- Develop and implement policies with integrity and high ethical standards.
- Continue to seek 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.
- Keep the community of interest informed 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.
- Comprehensively review the standards of accreditation on an ongoing basis and complete a formal review every seven to ten years.
- Solicit suggestions from accreditation site-visitation teams and other communities of interest 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 to ACAE members information 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 process for ACAE directors, members, 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.

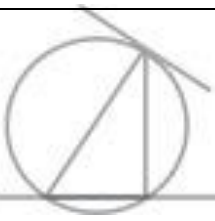
**Objectives:**

- Communicate to the community of interest that the ACAE encourages innovation and creativity in audiology education programs.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures of the ACAE do not inhibit 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.
- 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 the communities of interest 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 and will explore international activities in the future.

### **Composition**

The governing body of ACAE and the ACAE Commission is the Board of Directors which comprises of members who represent academic programs, administrators, professional practice, and the public. The Director, who serves as Chief Operating Officer of the ACAE, is an ex-officio member of the ACAE Board of Directors. The responsibilities of the Board of Directors are described within the Bylaws of the ACAE. Election to the Board, terms of office, and process for removal from office are also described within the Bylaws.

### **Officers of the Board of Directors/Commission**

The Officers of the ACAE Board of Directors and the ACAE Commission are the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers comprise the Executive Committee of the ACAE. The duties of the officers are described within the Bylaws of the ACAE. Election to the Board, terms of office, and process for removal from office are also described within the Bylaws.

### **ACAE Committees**

The Board of Directors and/or Chairperson 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 Review Committee, which reviews all Site Visit Reports and program responses and makes a recommendation regarding an Accreditation status to the ACAE Board; 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.

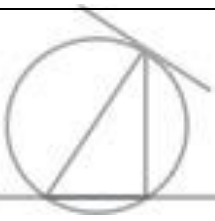
### **Director and Staff of the ACAE**

The 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 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.

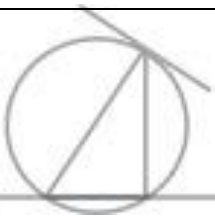
In the US, accreditation at the postsecondary level performs a number of important functions, including the encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness. The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their goals, activities, and achievements; to consider the 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.]

### **How Does Accreditation Operate?**

**Self-Study:** Institutions and programs prepare a written summary of performance based on institution's accreditation standards.

**Peer Review:** Accreditation is conducted 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 Visits:** Accrediting organizations normally 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



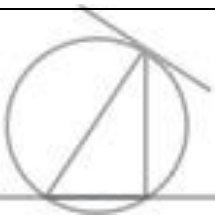
above, may also include public members. All team members are volunteers and are generally not compensated. Judgment by accrediting organization: Accrediting organizations have decision-making bodies (commissions) made up of administrators and faculty from institutions and programs as well as public members. 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 that range from every few years to ten years. They normally prepare a self-study and undergo a site visit each time.

### **In Summary:**

- 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 Process**

### **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:

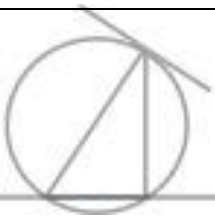
- A pending or final action by a state agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide post-secondary education;
- A pending or final action brought by an accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to suspend, revoke, 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 a progression towards ACAE accreditation and have 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. More information on the Developing Status application process can be found in Section 6.

### **Ongoing (established AuD) Programs:**

Academic institutions that currently have ongoing, established AuD programs may apply under this category for 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.

## **Components of the ACAE Accreditation Process**

### **Academic Training**

For ongoing programs and programs who have achieved developing status, after an ACAE Letter of Intent and Deposit are received at the ACAE office, the ACAE requires that the Program Director and faculty of each applicant program receive training on how to use the web-based integrated system, Computerized Accreditation Program (CAP). An ACAE staff member will provide a comprehensive overview of CAP's concept and each of its components via webinar. The ACAE team will answer questions about the process, anticipate and review problems that might arise, and enable program faculty to become comfortable with the management of the CAP system. The training will take place at a mutually convenient time for the program and the ACAE team prior to beginning the accreditation process. Also, at this point, a timeline for completing the accreditation process will be agreed upon between ACAE and the program.

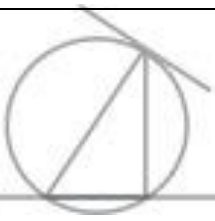
### **Profile Reports**

The program will enter data (e.g., demographic, applicant, student, faculty, preceptor, curriculum resources and program director data) upon which subsequent annual report and periodic reports will be based.

### **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 entire community of the school or college in audiology 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.

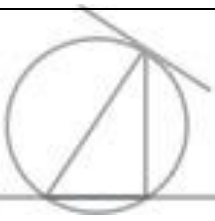


Moreover, the self-study report orients the evaluation team to the program. The self-study describes the audiology program's mission, goals, objectives, and the extent to which they are being met; resources; its constituencies; its physical plant; and other factors. The Self-Study should enable the evaluation 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 the 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 past years 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 concerning 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. If necessary, the Program Director has the option to strike the names of no more than two individuals who are perceived to have a conflict of interest with the program.

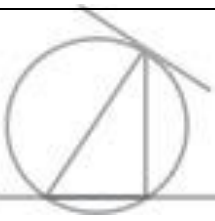
The selected team will be composed of two to four members from the pool, representing both academic and clinical interests as well as the option of an administrative person from the field. Members of the Board of Directors and ACAE staff may serve in the ACAE Evaluation Team pool. A Team Chair is designated 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. **Interactive (Virtual) Site Visit:** The Interactive Site Visit is an online evaluation that usually takes place over several weeks. Under special circumstances discussed between the program and the ACAE, the interactive site visit could take longer, i.e., 1-2 months. The site visit team interacts online with the Program Director. During an intensive dialogue, questions or specific statements about Standards are clarified and/or answered. The team members are also able to interact with each other and obtain, at the end of this first part of the evaluation, a thorough working knowledge of the program. Any additional questions will be answered on-site and one major piece of the physical on-site visit will be a validation and verification of what they have reviewed.
- b. **Physical Site Visit:** The Physical 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 Profile Reports 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 evaluation of the program, the site visit team begins to write a report and completes it before the final conference of the on-site visit. Prior to the conference, the report is given to and reviewed carefully with the Program Director. It is then distributed to the members of the administration and faculty who attend the conference. The report is simultaneously sent to the ACAE office. 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 a Review Committee of the ACAE Board.

### **Review Committee**

A committee of two - three members of the ACAE Board of Directors makes up the Review Committee. The Review Committee looks at the report and prepares a presentation and recommended accreditation status about the program for the ACAE Board. At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the ACAE Board, the Review Committee presents and offers its recommendation. Additionally, the Board reviews the report and program response and then, by majority vote, adopts an accreditation status for the program.

### **ACAE Board Report**

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 Director prepare the ACAE Board Report, 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 (See page 27, Review of Programs by Site Visitors and Board of Directors: Policy and Procedure Chronology)

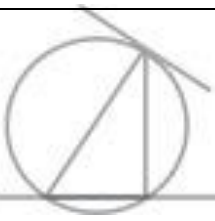
### **Annual Profile Reports**

**Annual Reporting:** On an annual basis, programs will need to disclose information about the following:

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

These reports will be the tools to assist ACAE with monitoring and evaluating the program's continued compliance with the Standards in the interim period between evaluation visits. The Annual Reports will be updates of the Profile Reports that programs provided during their initial ACAE accreditation or interim years between reaccreditations. The Profile Reports include comprehensive questions about different facets of the academic program and, initially, require considerable time and effort to finish. This is true because some of the data requested take time to gather. After the data are updated the information will be kept on file permanently and, in subsequent years, will be updated easily. The Profile Reports are user-friendly and easy to navigate.

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 in Manual on Substantive Changes for additional information).



The website for submitting data for the Annual Reporting to ACAE will be opened in May of each year and the program will have until the end of October of that year to complete its Profile Reports. After the reports have 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 Profile Reports indicate 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 Profile Reports. Following that meeting, programs will be notified of the status of their Profile Reports and will then be enabled to continue to the Self Study phase.

### **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.

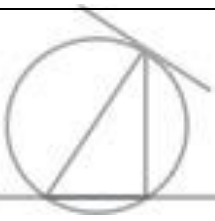
If the ACAE Board has concerns about the educational effectiveness of the total program and thinks the program would benefit from an onsite visit in 2, 3, or 5 years, it will grant accreditation for a specific term.

**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 or reaccreditation process. A self-study document is submitted online, a virtual interactive site evaluation takes place, and the process culminates in a physical site visit to the academic program. The process follows the same steps outlined in Section 4.

**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). A program with this classification retains the 'Accreditation' status, but is closely monitored. Probationary Accreditation is not an adverse action.



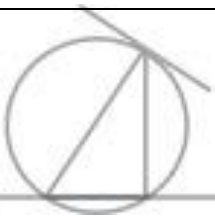


## **Withdrawal/Denial/Revocation Categories**

**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.

**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, but may reapply for accreditation again after a period of one year.



## Section 6: Application for ACAE Accreditation

### **Requirements for New AuD Programs Seeking Developing Status**

- 1) **Letter of Intent:** Submit a Letter of Intent signed by the Senior Academic Officer responsible for overseeing the Audiology Program and the Program Director if already designated.

Letter of intent must be brief, but must include the following:

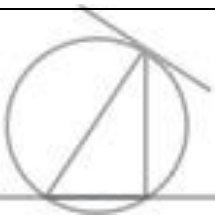
- A declaration of intent of the institution to develop and seek accreditation for the AuD program.
  - A statement that the institution agrees not to admit students into the AuD program until after the Developing Status for the Program is approved
  - The month and year the first class is projected 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 that 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.
- 2) **Copy of the Feasibility Plan:** 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.
  - 3) **Fees** – See Fee Schedule on page 17.

### **Order of Submission of Initial Required Components:**

It is typical for a program to submit their Letter of Intent and associated fee first. The Copy of Feasibility Plan and associated fee would follow. However, it is also acceptable for a program to submit their Copy of Feasibility plan and associated fee at the same time as the Letter of Intent.

### **Steps Following Completion of Initial Required Components:**

- 1) The ACAE Board of Directors appoints a Review Committee of the Board to study the feasibility study/plan/application and follows-up with questions to the program.
- 2) The ACAE Board of Directors 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 conducts a second review 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:



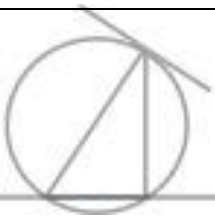
- a. To submit a second updated and revised Copy of the Feasibility Plan after a period of time (to be determined by the Program/University and ACAE)
- b. To discontinue the process by either the Program/University or the ACAE Board

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.

Once a program is awarded Developing Status they will then follow the Accreditation Components found in Section 5.

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

- 1) **Letter of Intent:** Submit a Letter of Intent signed by the appropriate chief operating officer of the institution overseeing the Audiology program and the Program Director. The Letter of Intent should be brief but must include the following:
  - A declaration of intent of the institution to seek ACAE accreditation.
  - A declaration of intent to complete the ACAE Computerized Accreditation Program (CAP) system.
- 2) **Registration:** Register to gain access to the online ACAE Computerized Accreditation Program (CAP). ACAE staff will provide information on how to register.
- 3) **Completion of Accreditation Components** (as described in Section 5).
- 4) **Fees** – See Fee Schedule on page 17.



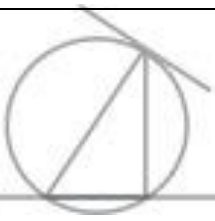
## Accreditation Fees

<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</b> <i>(for ongoing programs &amp; those programs coming from developing status)</i>	
Non-Refundable Deposit (submitted with Letter of Intent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ This fee includes the required ACAE training program prior to beginning the CAP process</li></ul>	\$3,000
Application Fee <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ This fee is due prior to the initiation of the annual Profile Report and Self-Study</li></ul>	\$2,000
Fact Finding Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Due prior to the Fact Finding Visit</li></ul>	\$5,000
<b>Total Fee:</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

<b>Annual Fee</b>	
○ Fee paid by accredited programs each year following accreditation	\$2,500

<b>Reaccreditation</b>	
Reaccreditation Fee	\$1,500
Reaccreditation Site Visit Expenses	\$3,500
<b>Total Fee:</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>



## Section 7: 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 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 online and simultaneously sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. All days refer to business days.

The ACAE Board Report, which is provided to the appropriate chief operating officer of the institution and the Program Director, contains a specific statement of reasons for all 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.

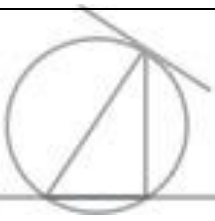
The request for an appeal must be submitted in writing and include a statement setting forth the program's objections and a concise statement of the basis on which the accreditation decision is being contested. The request must be received by the ACAE Executive Director within 15 days after the program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

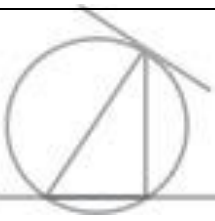
### **Process for Selecting an Appeals Hearing Panel**

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 PSVR, the program's response to the PSVR, the Final Board 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**

Evidence that may be provided to support an appeal consists of that information contained in the record the ACAE Board reviewed prior to making the adverse accreditation decision. All information and documentation contained in the appeal must include a reference to where information 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.

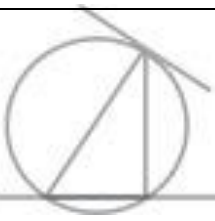
The panel then will draft a report detailing its findings and will issue a decision to affirm or remand the adverse accreditation action of the ACAE Board.

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.

### **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.

### **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.

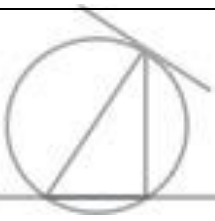
The ACAE directors and site visit team members are not authorized under any circumstances to disclose information obtained during site visitations or during the ACAE meetings to anyone other than those involved with the evaluation of a specific program. The extent to which publicity is given to evaluation 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.



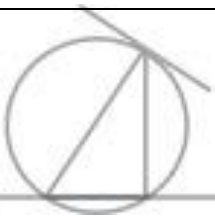


The ACAE was not created to serve and will not serve as an arbiter or mediator of disputes that may arise between the AuD degree programs and other parties. However, the ACAE is interested in hearing from groups or individuals who may have specific comments relating directly to a program's lack of compliance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

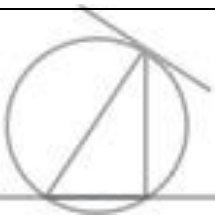
#### **Procedures for Complaints Not Related to Accreditation Decisions:**

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 matters complained of, set forth in detail the facts and reasons claimed to support the allegations and must include copies of all pertinent documents in the possession of the complainant supporting the complaint.
2. Upon receipt of a written complaint regarding ACAE actions or personnel, the ACAE Board will review the complaint 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.

## **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 as determined by criteria a through g under Section VII.N.2. 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.

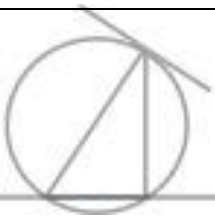
The ACAE notifies a program in writing of any adverse accreditation action to deny or revoke accreditation, an action to place a program on probation, or the issuance of a Show Cause order. The notice describes the basis for the action.

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 19, "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, the appropriate accrediting 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).

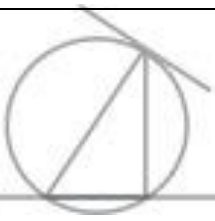
The ACAE will, in consultation with programs, inform the public of decisions on accreditation status and will inform the public of the basis for final decisions to grant or re-accredit programs. In the case of denial or withdrawal of accreditation status, to provide the specific reasons for the decision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

### **Public Disclosure**

The ACAE 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.

### **Records Maintenance**

The ACAE maintains complete, accurate, and secure records of its last two full accreditation reviews of each program, including site visit evaluation team reports, the program's responses to site reports, any periodic reports that the ACAE may require of accredited programs, any reports of special reviews between regular reviews, and a copy of the program's most recent self-study. These records are maintained in a web-based format. 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 Programs by Site Visitors and Board of Directors Policy and Procedure Chronology**

#### **Policy**

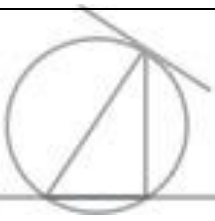
The ACAE Board will review a program for accreditation according to the ACAE Standards for a Doctor of Audiology Program (AuD), use multiple raters for consistency and follow the ACAE CAP procedures outlined below:

#### **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 different types of qualitative status are outlined below:

#### **KEY:**

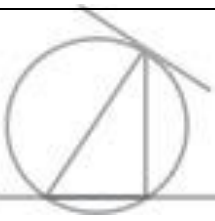
1. **Strength:** A strength is a status given to a program that has demonstrated excellence in its compliance with a standard. In essence, the program has far exceeded the ACAE expectations of compliance for a specific standard.
2. **In-Compliance:** An in-compliance is a status given to a program that has demonstrated that it satisfactorily meets the ACAE expectations of compliance for a specific standard.
  - **In-Compliance (with Non-Mandatory Suggestions):** If a program receives an in-compliance status in a standard, 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 ACAE staff and board members to program staff, senior administration, faculty, and students during an academic training at the beginning of the self-study process and during the exit conference of an on-site visit at the conclusion of the self-study process. 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 partial compliance is a status given to a program that has demonstrated partial compliance with a standard. This means that the program is approximately 80% - 90% in compliance, but needs to achieve 100% compliance. At this point, the program must submit a Plan of Action or Progress Report to ACAE within a specified period of time, i.e., three to six months, demonstrating that it has developed a plan, has complied with the standard or is making progress in that direction. The program has a maximum of two years to come into compliance. The timeline is provided in the ACAE Final Board Report.
4. **Non-Compliance:** A non-compliance with a standard is a status given to a program that has not demonstrated compliance with a standard. This means that the program is 100% out of compliance. At this point, the program must submit a Plan of Action within a specified period of time, i.e., three to six months, indicating the action it is taking to reach compliance. If the program provides a Plan of Action that is acceptable to ACAE, it must subsequently submit a Progress Report within a specific time period, demonstrating it is in partial compliance or compliance with the standard. The program has a maximum of two years to demonstrate its compliance with the standard beginning with the Plan of Action. The timeline is provided in the ACAE Final Board Report. Note: If a program cannot demonstrate a Plan of Action within the timeline given, it may be placed on Probation. If the program cannot demonstrate compliance with the standard after two years, its accreditation status may be removed or the ACAE Board of Directors may issue an order to 'Show Cause'.

#### **Procedural Chronology:**

1. Approximately 4-6 weeks prior to an on-site visit, the Site Evaluation Team engages in a confidential online Interactive (Virtual) Evaluation Site Visit about ACAE's Standards with the Program Director, faculty, and any other consultants/advisors whom the program wishes to have participated.
2. At the conclusion of the Interactive (Virtual) Evaluation Site Visit, the online CAP connection between the Program and the Site Visit Evaluation Team is locked down.
3. The Site Visit Evaluation Team prepares online notes, blogs with each other about what it has found and begins to prepare for the on-site visit and begins to draft the Site Visit Report.
4. During the on-site visit, the Site Visit Evaluation Team completes the site visit report and presents it to the program staff and administration at the conclusion of a site visit. The report includes a recommendation to the ACAE Board about the program, based on the program's compliance with the ACAE Standards.
5. The program has 30 days two weeks beginning immediately after the physical site visit to correct any factual errors in the Site Visit Report, respond to the findings and recommendations contained therein, and return it online to ACAE.
6. As part of an inter-rater process, a particular program's Site Visit Report is sent to a Review Committee of the ACAE Board.
7. The Review Committee studies the Site Visit Report, asks questions of the Site Team and is privy to the program's self-study, response to the Site Visit Report, and other pieces of relevant,



factual information. After this review, the Review Committee makes its recommendation to the ACAE Board.

8. The ACAE Board reviews the PSVR, self-study, program's response to the Site Visit Report and discusses the Review Committee's recommendation. It then votes on an accreditation status for the program.
9. A Board Report and letter are prepared, signed by the ACAE Board Chair, and sent to the appropriate chief operating officer of the institution that hosts the program and the Program Director.
10. If the program is given a status of Accreditation, with one or more of the Standards identified as Partial Compliance or Non-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.
11. If the program is given a status of Probationary Accreditation, it will be required to prepare an interim report demonstrating its compliance with the Standards. The interim report will be due no later than one year from the date the program receives the Board Report and may be due in a shorter period of time. The program will have no more than two (2) years to remedy its areas of Non-Compliance before the ACAE Board initiates an adverse accreditation action.
12. If the program is denied Accreditation, it will not be listed on the ACAE list of accredited programs. 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 19, "Appeals Procedure").
13. If the program has its Accreditation status revoked, it will have its name removed from the ACAE list of accredited programs. 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 19, "Appeals Procedure").

### **Conflict of Laws**

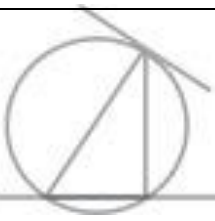
It is the policy of ACAE that any program that experiences a conflict between a requirement imposed by one of ACAE's Standards of Accreditation or a policy or procedure of ACAE and a state or local law, should immediately notify ACAE of the conflict. ACAE will work to resolve the conflict immediately.

### **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 Standards 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.

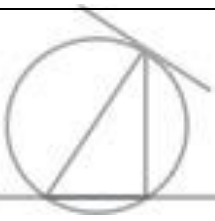
#### **Long-term Reviews:**

Every seven to ten years, the ACAE conducts longer reviews or revisions 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 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 interested constituencies, 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 ACAE's communities of interest, including but not limited to, Program Directors, faculty, administrators, students, preceptors, employers, and alumni, 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 constituencies and other interested parties of the changes it intends to make, and gives these constituencies and interested parties 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.

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

### **General Ethical Responsibilities:**

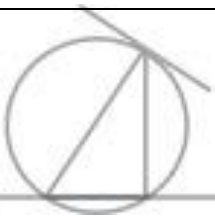
The ACAE and any person(s) connected with this accrediting agency shall:

- 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 staff 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 a – h 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 Chairperson, 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 Chairperson, 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:**

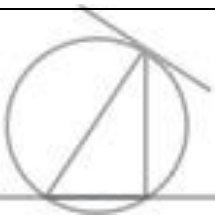
Abstaining (or abstention) is a parliamentary term that means that a voting member chooses not to cast a vote. An abstention does not imply or indicate that a conflict of interest exists. Abstentions are to be used only when a voting member of the ACAE Board cannot make an informed decision based on 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 Chairperson 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 Profile Report and Self-Study, 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;
- The scope, length, structure, delivery method, and/or curriculum of the program; or
- Significant change in human or financial resources.



The following are examples (not all-inclusive) of changes that ACAE considers substantive:

- Change in the Program Director;
- Substantial changes in the curriculum;
- Substantial increases or decreases in enrollment;
- Substantial increases or decreases in faculty;
- Substantial change in financial 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 in Section VII.K.

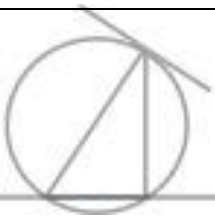
### **Public Member Expectations Policy**

#### **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, 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.*

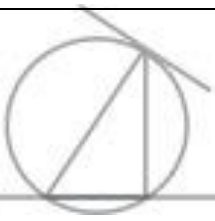
### **Length of Time Between Reaccreditation Cycles**

The ACAE Board of Directors has instituted a policy stating that programs in full compliance with no substantive concerns or deficiencies with the ACAE Standards be eligible for a ten-year period (as opposed to a seven-year period) between reaccreditation cycles. This also means that a program that has a Partial or Non-Compliance immediately after its reaccreditation, but is able to demonstrate Compliance within one year, is eligible for the extension, if approved by the ACAE Board of Directors. Programs qualifying for the new timeline will be contacted by the ACAE and the policy will be discussed with the program in further detail.

This policy would not apply to programs that completed their Developing Status and were undergoing accreditation for the first time within the US. Their first accreditation, if and when granted, would extend for a maximum of seven years.

Note: Dependent on the decision of the ACAE Board of Directors with regard to recommendations for a program, the ACAE has the prerogative of accrediting or re-accrediting a program from one to 7 years.

Also, the ACAE can schedule a fact-finding visit at any time, if it receives information that there are substantive changes made within the program that are of major concern to the ACAE (See Page 35, "Substantive Changes").



## Section 8: Appendices

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

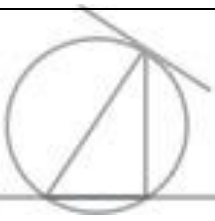
The ASPA Code of Good Practice provides guiding principles for members in conducting the accreditation process. An accrediting organization holding full membership in the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors:

#### **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.

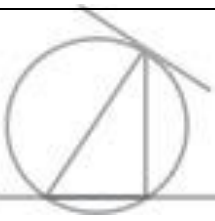


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**Respects institutional independence and freedom in academic decision making through accrediting activities that:**

- 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: American Academy of Audiology Ethical Practices Committee**

### **Charge:**

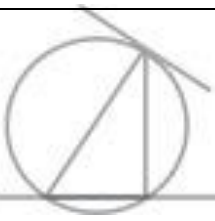
The Ethical Practices Committee (EPC) will periodically review and update the code of ethics to which members are bound and produce advisory opinions clarifying ethics principles and rules. The EPC will formulate, review, update and publicize policies and procedures for review of complaints. The American Academy of Audiology Board of Directors (BOD) must approve changes to the code of ethics, policies and procedures and advisory opinions before implementation and publication. The EPC will review public and member complaints alleging unethical behavior by members, adjudicate and determine appropriate disciplinary action. Decisions are subject to appeal to the BOD. The EPC will work to increase member awareness of the American Academy of Audiology Code of Ethics and the practical implications of the code, rules and advisory opinions

### **Vision Statement:**

The Ethical Practices Committee endeavors to assist members in upholding the integrity of the profession through member education and provision of timely information.

### **Mission Statement:**

It is the intention of the Ethical Practices Committee (EPC) to be viewed as a valuable resource for the interpretation and enforcement of the American Academy of Audiology Code of Ethics. Audiology professionals and the patients we serve will look to the EPC for sound review of issues that impact the provision of hearing and balance healthcare.



## **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.

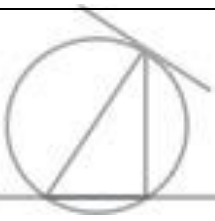
Any board or committee member who is aware that they may have a potential conflict of interest with respect to any matter coming before the board or committee shall recuse themselves and not be present or partake in any discussion of or vote in connection with the matter.

### **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.

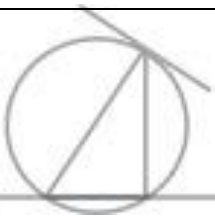
(A) Without exception

(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 #** \_\_\_\_\_

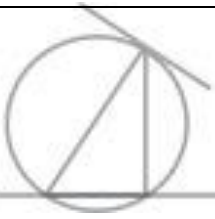
**E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**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**

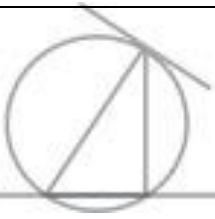
Name of Organization	Title/Member/Consultant	From (Year)	To (Year)

**Identify potential conflict of interest:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

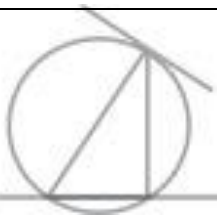


**LIST TWO PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

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: [molek@audiology.org](mailto:molek@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:**

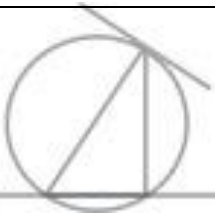
\_\_\_\_\_ Educator \_\_\_\_\_ Practitioner

### 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) \_\_\_\_\_

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[www.aceaccred.org](http://www.aceaccred.org)