

Code of Conduct For Members of the On-Site Evaluation Team

High standards of honesty, integrity, and impartiality by Team Members are essential to the proper performance of the Commission's business and the maintenance of confidence by accredited schools in the Commission and the accreditation process. This confidence is influenced not only by the way Team Members comport themselves with regard to accrediting actions, but also in the way they conduct themselves in the eyes of accredited schools and the public. The avoidance of misconduct and conflicts of interest on the part of Team Members through informed judgment is indispensable to the maintenance of these standards. Thus, the Commission adopts the following standards of conduct:

1. Team Members shall conduct themselves in a manner which seeks to avoid a conflict of interest or any appearance of conflict of interest. Team Members shall declare to the Executive Director on behalf of the Commission, all current interests, financial and otherwise, in any school that is visited by the respective Team Member on behalf of the ACCSCT Accrediting Commission. Such interests may include, but are not limited to: ownership of some or all of a school, its assets, or the stock of the company that owns or operates the school; the holding of mortgages, liens, or other debt instruments or interest upon a school or its assets; service as an officer or director of school; employment or consulting arrangements with a school; or the possession of such an interest by a spouse, child, or other relative. Team Members who are graduates of the school to be visited, or who are otherwise affiliated with the school, cannot participate in any site visit to that school. If a Team Member is uncertain whether a particular interest should be reported to the Commission, the Team Member shall describe the interest in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director, on behalf of the Commission, shall review the Team Member's written statement, and issue a binding ruling as to whether the matter in question constitutes a reportable interest.
2. Team Members shall declare in advance any interest of the sort described in Paragraph 1 above that they hold in regard to a particular school, and shall not be permitted to visit that school. Team Members shall also make such declaration and shall not be permitted to visit any school in actual or potential competition with a school as to which they hold an interest of the sort described in Paragraph 1 above. Further, if a school that is scheduled to be visited is one in which a close friend, relative or colleague has an interest or with which a Team Member has a relationship such that the Team Member believes that he or she could not impartially evaluate that school, the Team Member shall so declare and shall not be permitted to visit that school.
3. Members of the Team shall not solicit or accept, for themselves or any other person, gifts, gratuities, loans or other consideration from individuals that own, operate or are otherwise associated or affiliated with a school that has been visited, will be visited or is currently being visited where the circumstances indicate that the consideration may be motivated by the donor's interest in a matter that may pertain to the school visit or resulting action by the Commission.

4. Team Members shall not engage in outside employment or other outside activity not compatible with the full and proper discharge of the responsibilities of the On-Site Evaluation Team. During the visit, Team Members shall not recruit any staff or students, nor shall they take any information or materials for personal interest or gain.
5. Team Members shall not state any opinion or make any prediction concerning action by the Commission that may result from the visit to the school. Except for the activities that are part of a visit, Team Members shall not consult with any school other than those in which they hold an interest, concerning any aspect of the school's accreditation. Inquiries from a school concerning ACCSCT accreditation process and procedures shall be directed to the Commission's staff.
6. Team Members shall treat all information obtained through schools' participation in the accreditation process as confidential, and shall not disclose such information to parties other than Team Members, the Commission and the staff of the Commission except pursuant to valid governmental regulation or judicial procedure. Team Members shall not participate in litigation or other legal proceedings involving schools that are or may seek to become accredited by ACCSCT without consulting with counsel to the Commission and the Chairman. Team Members shall not discuss accreditation matters on behalf of the Appeals Panel or Commission with members of the press without first consulting with the Chairman of the Commission.
7. Team Members shall not discuss legal matters involving schools visited or to be visited with counsel for the schools or any third party. Team Members shall direct inquiries from counsel for such schools or third parties to counsel to the Commission.
8. Team Members shall exercise due diligence in becoming familiar with, and an authority on, ACCSCT accrediting standards.
9. Team Members must participate in a Team Member training program prior to their participation in site visits, shall exercise due diligence in preparing for the school visit, and shall come to the visit familiar with all assigned materials and prepared to fully participate in the process.
10. Team Members shall participate fully in the process and otherwise conduct themselves at the school in a manner consistent with their best, impartial and unfettered judgment, and in furtherance of the Commission's purpose, without regard for the potential impact of the Appeals Panel's decisions on their own professional or financial interest or those of their friends, relatives and colleagues.
11. During the visit, Team Members shall conduct and comport themselves professionally, impartially, and courteously.
12. Alleged violations of the Code of Conduct shall immediately be brought to the attention of the Commission, which shall investigate the alleged violation and accept a written or verbal statement from the Team Member involved. If the Commission determines that the Team Member has violated the Code of Conduct, it may sanction the offending Team Member through a verbal or written reprimand or prohibit that individual from being a member of any ACCSCT team in the future.