

POLICY & PROCEDURES

COUN-01: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PREAMBLE

Individuals who conduct business on behalf of PEAC must be committed to the values of the organization, one of which includes the belief in transparent, consistent, and fair practices. In support of this value and good practices, PEAC strives to avoid actual, potential, and perceived conflict of interest in all of its activities.

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1. A conflict of interest exists when conditions or circumstances could preclude or interfere (consciously or unconsciously) with an individual's capacity to conduct themselves or to make decisions impartially OR could be seen to have precluded or interfered with that individual's capacity to make decisions impartially. Such conditions or circumstances may include but are not limited to situations when an individual:
 - is or has recently been (within five years) an employee of the education program being accredited
 - has recently (within five years) graduated from the education program being accredited
 - is serving or has recently served in the capacity of consultant or honorary faculty member of the education program being accredited
 - has a monetary or personal interest in the outcome of an accreditation decision for the education program being accredited
 - has or has had close professional relationships with individuals in the education program being accredited (for example, collaboration(s) in research, grants, student supervision or patent holding)
 - has or has had close personal relationships with individuals in the education program being accredited
 - has a member of their immediate family that is involved with the education program being accredited as a student, staff, or faculty member
- 1.2. Individuals who participate in any aspect of PEAC activities are expected to recognize relationships in which they may have an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest and disclose such conflicts to PEAC.
- 1.3. Education programs may identify conflicts of interest that potentially exist in the selected members of the Peer Review Team (PRT).

- 1.4. In some cases, a professional relationship with individuals in the education program being accredited may be distant enough as to not preclude or interfere with an individual's capacity to conduct themselves or make decisions impartially. Such circumstances are reviewed by the Accreditation Committee and a determination is made on a case-by-case basis as to whether the potential conflict of interest can be "managed". If so, the relationship is declared within the Conflict of Interest Declaration and the potential conflict of interest is considered "managed". The management of a potential conflict of interest may depend on the type of role (Peer Review Team members, Accreditation Committee member, etc.).

2.0 PROCEDURES

- 2.1. PRT members are required to review the Conflict of Interest policy (*COUN-01*) and complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration (*FORM-07*) prior to participation in an accreditation review.
- 2.2. Prior to or during discussion at any PEAC meeting, the Conflict of Interest policy is included on the agenda and reviewed. Any member who perceives themselves to be in an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest must immediately inform the Chair of the existence of such a conflict. The reason for the conflict must be discussed, and the level of conflict (actual, potential, perceived) and the appropriate action (be excused from the discussion, participate in the discussion but abstain from voting, or other action) must be determined.
- 2.3. Any member who perceives themselves to be in a conflict of interest situation where disclosing the reason for the conflict would bias the other members must inform the Chair of the existence of such a conflict, excuse themselves from the meeting during the discussion, and abstain from voting regarding the program's accreditation status. The reason for the conflict should not be discussed or disclosed. Members who are unsure whether they should declare such a conflict should consult the Executive Director of PEAC to discuss the situation.
- 2.4. A PEAC Accreditation Committee member or Board member who is or has been (within five years) a faculty member of a program for which accreditation status is being considered must declare a conflict of interest and be excused from the meeting during the discussion regarding determination of the program's accreditation status and abstain from voting regarding the program's accreditation status.
- 2.5. A PEAC Accreditation Committee member or Board member who has recently (within five years) graduated from a program for which accreditation status is being considered must declare a conflict of interest and be excused from the meeting during the discussion regarding determination of the program's accreditation status and abstain from voting regarding the program's accreditation status.

- 2.6. A PEAC Accreditation Committee member or Board member who was a PRT member for the review of the program for which accreditation status is being considered may participate in the discussion, to clarify the PRT report and to add context and answer questions. The member must avoid adding any new information during the meeting and must abstain from voting regarding the program’s accreditation status.
- 2.7. In the case of a potential conflict of interest that is considered “managed”, related parties are informed by PEAC following determination that it can be managed and prior to accreditation decision-making.

Policy Number: COUN-05	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
<i>Aug 2001</i>	Accreditation Committee Handbook
<i>May 2012</i>	
<i>June 2013</i>	FORM-07 Conflict of Interest Declaration
<i>April 2014</i>	
<i>July 2018</i>	ACC-01 Accreditation Decisions
<i>Jan 2019</i>	
<i>Jan 2024</i>	PRT Handbook