

Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Policy

Conflict of Interest

In carrying out its accreditation responsibilities, the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA) and its subcommittee SASA seek to ensure that its decisions are based solely on the application of professional judgment to the information resulting from its evaluation procedures. Therefore, the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA seek to avoid both the reality and the appearance of a conflict of interest. For the purposes of this policy, a conflict of interest is defined as:

“A circumstance in which an individual’s capacity to make an impartial or unbiased accreditation decision may be affected because of prior, current, or anticipated institutional affiliation(s), other significant relationship(s), or association(s) with the institution under review”.

Examples of the types of activities that might cause a conflict of interest include but are not limited to the following:

- A) Acceptance of gifts, entertainment, or other favors from an outside concern that does or is seeking to do business with the ARC/STSA.
- B) Having a financial interest in an outside concern from which the ARC/STSA purchases goods or services.
- C) Accepting personal compensation for Committee related speaking engagements, consultative services, or other activities.
- D) Representing the ARC/STSA or its subcommittee SASA in any transaction in which the member (or immediate family) has a substantial interest.

If any voting member of the ARC/STSA or its subcommittee SASA has a conflict of interest in any matter brought before the body for a vote, that member shall declare such conflict before any discussion of the matter. Further, any other voting members may share their concern regarding a potential conflict of interest of other voting members prior to the beginning of any discussion of the matter in question.

When considering accreditation recommendations, members of the ARC/STSA or its subcommittee SASA shall absent themselves from the room for any discussion and/or vote on programs within any institution which the member has had a business relationship or for which the member has served in an advisory capacity in the preceding two years.

Additionally, members of the ARC/STSA or its subcommittee SASA shall refrain from any discussion or vote on any program, regardless of discipline, located within that member’s state.

When conflict of interest is alleged, the Board of Directors of the ARC/STSA and the Executive Director will consider all relevant data and make a determination on the validity of the allegation. When conflict of interest is established, the member(s) in question will be subject to disciplinary action or discharge from office, consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as determined by the Board of Directors.

Each member of the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA will sign annually a statement that acknowledges he or she has read and understands these policies. Signed statements will be maintained at the ARC/STSA corporate office.

Consultation Services

Members of the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA will not serve in any consultative capacity to develop or establish surgical technology programs or surgical assisting programs while serving on the Committee. If appointed, it is expected that any member(s) engaged in consultative activities would divest themselves of those activities within the first six months of their term of appointment.

Furthermore, members of the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA agree to absent themselves from surgical technology and surgical assisting consultative services provided to any institution for a period of two years beyond the termination of their service to the ARC/STSA.

Confidentiality

Members of the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA shall not discuss organizational matters, disclose or use any information specific to an institution or program of which they have knowledge by virtue of involvement in the accreditation process, except when officially participating in this capacity. Unauthorized disclosure or use of verbal or written information is considered a serious breach of confidentiality and can result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the ARC/STSA and/or its subcommittee SASA.

The ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA require that accreditation procedures be sensitive to the need to maintain confidentiality in the accreditation process while also disclosing certain information to serve and protect the public interest.

In order to comply with this requirement, the ARC/STSA and its subcommittee SASA will hold as confidential the following documents and the information contained therein:

- a) Application for Accreditation
- b) Self-Study Report
- c) Site Visit Report
- d) All Progress and Annual Reports
- e) All correspondence between the ARC/STSA, SASA, CAAHEP, and the institution which relates to the accreditation process (including the appeals process, if any).

This requirement shall be waived for any of the above documents when the ARC/STSA or CAAHEP is required to turn over information by a bona fide judicial or governmental process.

Institutions may release any of the above information, at their discretion. Except in the case of a program that has been placed on accreditation probation, the ARC/STSA and CAAHEP will not make public any of the above documents without the permission of the institution, unless an institution misrepresents the information either through public statements or release of selected sections of documents.

Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting

Acknowledgement of the Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Policy

The undersigned hereby acknowledges and affirms:

- a) I have received a copy of the Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Policy for the ARC/STSA.

- b) I have read and understand the policy.

- c) I agree to comply with the policy.

Signature

Printed Name

Relationship to the ARC/STSA

Date