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17. Site Reviewers

The role of site reviewers is to verify information in the self-study report, evaluate whether the program or institution appears to meet the *CEA Standards*, and prepare a review team report for the Commission. Reviewers are peer professionals from the field. They serve as unpaid volunteers. Reviewers are obligated to follow procedures that will enhance the nature and protect the integrity of the accreditation process. Reviewers must adhere to legal principles that protect CEA's interests.

17.1. Reviewer qualifications

CEA site reviewers are identified and selected on the basis of their professional experience and integrity. Site reviewers understand the function of English language programs and institutions within the broader context of postsecondary education. Specifically, site reviewers are

1. academically qualified, having earned graduate degrees in disciplines related to language instruction and educational administration
2. knowledgeable professionals who have gained the respect of their peers through their involvement in professional activities
3. experts who have one or more domains of expertise related to program or institution operations
4. experienced evaluators or analysts, having conducted self-studies, reviewed educational programs, or served with other accreditation programs
5. effective communicators who possess demonstrated skills in communication, team building and collaborative decision-making, and report writing
6. respectful professionals who demonstrate a capacity to act without bias, maintain confidentiality, and exercise balanced judgment

17.2. Solicitation and recruitment of reviewers

CEA publicizes a call for prospective reviewers in informational sessions held at various professional meetings and through notices on the CEA website and in TESOL, NAFSA, UCIEP, and EnglishUSA publications. In addition, anyone may nominate specific individuals who are then contacted by CEA staff and asked to apply to become site reviewers. Individuals may contact CEA directly for information about applying to serve as a site reviewer. Each potential reviewer is informed of eligibility requirements and the application process.

17.3. Reviewer selection

An ad hoc committee of two commissioners, appointed by the Commission chair, reviews the initial applications of prospective site reviewers. The Commission chair ensures that the committee has continuity and training from year to year. The members of the committee review applications and evaluate each applicant's qualifications. The committee's charge and operating procedures are outlined in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

17.4. Reviewer training and appointment

Applicants deemed qualified are invited to attend a CEA reviewer training workshop, where they are further evaluated for appropriate skills, experience, and knowledge. Those then selected for the pool of qualified and trained reviewers sign a Conflict of Interest/Confidentiality Agreement and are considered for site visit assignments. Detailed information about training and assigning reviewers are maintained in the *Commission Procedural Manual*.

17.5. Evaluation of site reviewers

Upon completion of the site visit, the site reviews the performance of reviewers, with additional focus on the team leader. Reviewers complete evaluations of each other, and the CEA site visit representative completes an evaluation of the reviewers and the site visit. Evaluations are written and submitted to CEA to be used in determining future slates of reviewers, training topics, and other reviewer management needs.

17.6. Ethical considerations

Reviewers have direct, hands-on contact with a site's materials self-study reports, program forms, and documents) and have face-to-face interaction with personnel and students at the site. Ethical issues, such as conflict of interest and confidentiality, and considerations related to communicating with their colleagues, handling confidential reports and materials, and performance during site visits apply to reviewers because of the nature of their work. To respect the confidentiality of the accreditation process and assure that this process will not be compromised, reviewers must agree that they will

1. ensure that trust is established and maintained at all times
2. respect the human dignity and legal rights of all individuals throughout the accreditation process
3. conduct a review that is thorough, accurate, objective; that applies the *CEA Standards*; and that adheres to all CEA policies and procedures
4. be sensitive and responsive to real and potential conflicts of interest and report such conflicts to CEA
5. refrain from publicly criticizing any individual participating in an accreditation review
6. avoid using involvement in the accreditation process for personal gain or aggrandizement

7. avoid revealing the name and location of a program or institution under review to anyone other than review team members or CEA
8. refrain from seeking counsel or discussing any observations or findings about a site with anyone other than members of the review team, CEA commissioners, or staff
9. secure all documents related to a particular site review, including, but not limited to, the self-study report and any materials related to the site review
10. return the self-study report and all other materials relating to a particular site visit to CEA staff or verify that all such materials have been destroyed