



# **Ethical Guidelines and Agreement**

## **Association for Experiential Education Accreditation Program**

### **1. Confidentiality**

Any information provided by the organization for the purpose of accreditation will be considered confidential and will only be used by the Accreditation Council, AEE staff, and AEE reviewers in the accreditation process. Any documents provided for the purpose of completing the accreditation site visit must be safeguarded and maintained in confidence. The deliberations, status, and results of the site visit review are reported *only* to the appropriate members of the program, the AEE Accreditation Program Staff, and the Accreditation Council.

### **2. Conflict of Interest**

Volunteers or staff associated with the Accreditation Program must avoid any situation where there is a real conflict of interest. Any persons with a real conflict of interest, or who may not be able to act impartially, shall recuse themselves from the accreditation process. Furthermore, volunteers or staff should avoid any situation that might compromise their professional judgment or be perceived as a conflict of interest. Examples of conflicts include: a reviewer who is also an owner, staff member, or a member of a Board of Directors of an applicant or accredited organization; a reviewer who is a recent employee of an applicant or accredited organization; Questions or concerns regarding real or potential conflicts of interest should be referred to the Director of Accreditation, or to the Accreditation Council.

### **3. Affiliation**

Reviewers act as agents for AEE for the purpose of the program review. In serving as such agents, reviewers honor the mission statement, codes of conduct, and other policies and procedures set forth by the AEE's Board of Directors and the Accreditation Council. Reviewers make it clear to the organization being reviewed that they will not be conferring or denying accreditation, and that this is the role of the Accreditation Council.

### **4. Competence**

Reviewers conduct activities within the level of their competence. Competence for reviewing is based on previous education, training, supervision, experience, and practice. Reviewers do not become involved in situations where personal issues or conflicts will impair judgment.

### **5. Training**

Reviewers pro-actively work on staying abreast of current information in the field and participate in on-going efforts to maintain their knowledge, practice, and skills as a professional and as a reviewer.

### **6. Professional Conduct**

Reviewers conduct activities with honesty, fairness, and respect, both in interactions with other reviewers and organization personnel. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- a) making no false, misleading, or deceptive statements when describing personal qualifications or reporting findings of the review;
- b) being aware of how their own belief systems, values, needs and limitations affect the review process;
- c) being clear with program staff as to their roles and obligations as a reviewer;
- d) accepting responsibility for their behavior and decisions;
- e) possessing an adequate basis for professional judgments;
- f) respecting the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of program staff;
- g) striving to be sensitive to cultural and individual differences -- including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and socio-economic status; and

h) not engaging in sexual or other harassment or exploitation of program staff and participants.

### **7. Right to Autonomous Decisions and Feedback**

Reviewers respect the right of program staff to make autonomous decisions and assist them in understanding the consequences of their choices as they pertain to the accreditation process. Reviewers also provide appropriate opportunities to discuss the results, interpretations, and conclusions of the review with appropriate staff.

### **8. Permission to Review/Observe**

Reviewers obtain consent from appropriate organization staff prior to beginning the review process. This includes having the program obtain consent (written where appropriate) from participants for reviewers to observe programming.

### **9. Social Responsibility**

Reviewers are aware of their responsibility to the program being reviewed, the AEE, and the profession. Some of these areas include, but are not limited to:

- a) appropriately encouraging the development of standards and policies that serve their participants' interests as well as those of the public; and
- b) respecting the rights of others.

### **10. Dual Relationships**

Reviewers avoid dual relationships with organization staff and participants that could impair professional judgment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a) business relationships (e.g., marketing ones services while conducting the review to clients or the program),
- b) close personal relationships, and
- c) recruiting staff.

### **11. Professional Courtesy**

Reviewers are guests of the program being reviewed. In this light, reviews are conducted as unobtrusively as possible, not interfering with programming. Reviewers are also careful not to become involved with "internal politics" existing outside the purview of the accreditation review.

### **11. Timeliness**

Reviewers are expected to provide verbal and written feedback to the organization and AEE in an appropriate and timely manner.

### **12. Financial Compensation**

Accreditation Program reviewers will not receive any financial reimbursement for review services, however, all expenses (i.e., travel, food, lodging) will be covered by the organization being visited.

**Please sign and date and submit this form along with your completed application and resume or curriculum vitae in electronic format only to: [accreditation@ae.org](mailto:accreditation@ae.org)**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_