

Policy Statement on Conflict of Interest

In carrying out its accreditation responsibilities, the Commission on Independent Schools of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges seeks to ensure that its decisions are based solely on the application of professional judgment to the information resulting from its processes. Therefore, it seeks to avoid both the reality and the appearance of conflict of interest. For purposes of this policy statement, 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 a prior, current, or anticipated institutional affiliation(s), other significant relationship(s), or association(s) with the institution under review.

The following examples are meant to be illustrative:

Affiliation:

- employee, board member, appointee, consultant, or graduate

Other Significant Relationships:

- affiliation with another institution in the same educational system;
- having a close relative affiliated with the institution under review;
- sought or seeking a position at the institution under review;
- knowledge or personal interest concerning the institution under review which might prejudice decision making.

Members of the Commission on Independent Schools are committed to full disclosure and restraint in any institutional consideration involving a conflict of interest. Members of the Commission absent themselves from deliberations or votes on decisions regarding institutions with which they are affiliated. They do not participate in discussions or vote on decisions on institutions where it would reasonably appear that they have a conflict of interest. Commission members who are uncertain regarding the possible appearance or reality of conflict of interest shall seek the advice of the Director of the Commission. At the request of the Chair, the Commission can determine the question by vote. In general, however, if there is any doubt on the part of a Commission member, it should be resolved by the member refraining from any discussion or action to the institution under review.