

**Policy and Procedures on
PUBLIC COMMENT
Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology**

**Initial Implementation date: January 1, 2002
Effective Date of Revisions: July 1, 2005
for all programs anticipating a site visit after that date**

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) is a nationally recognized accrediting agency. As part of the CAA's recognition by the U.S. Department of Education, the agency is encouraged to develop a method for allowing public input about the accreditation process and about graduate education programs prior to final decision by the CAA. Accordingly, individuals who wish to provide input about a program seeking candidacy (preaccreditation), initial CAA accreditation, or about a CAA-accredited program seeking reaccreditation may do so in two ways: a) by submitting written comments prior to the accreditation site visit in accordance with the procedures specified below, or b) by providing comments to the site visit team during the program's scheduled site visit.

All comments provided must:

- relate to a program's compliance with the published Standards for Accreditation of Graduate Education Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (Standards), effective January 1, 1999, and
- identify the specific program seeking candidacy, initial accreditation, or reaccreditation with the CAA.

I. Procedures for Submitting Comments Prior to the Site Visit

The CAA publishes on the ASHA Web site the list of programs that have submitted application for candidacy, initial accreditation and reaccreditation during that calendar year for which CAA is seeking public comment as part of its current accreditation review of the published programs. The listing will include the dates of the scheduled site visit for each program.

Individuals who wish to submit written testimony about any of the programs scheduled for a site visit must adhere to the following procedures:

- All comments about education programs are due in the Accreditation Office no later than 15 days before the first day of the scheduled site visit. Comments received after this time will not be forwarded to the site visit team for consideration during the accreditation review.
- All written testimony must include the commentor's name, address and telephone contact information and the commentor's relationship to the program in order for the Accreditation Office staff to verify the source of the testimony, including comments submitted via fax or as an e-mail attachment. All comments must be signed.

Comments should be submitted to:

Accreditation Public Comment
Council on Academic Accreditation
in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA)
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
2200 Research Boulevard #310
Rockville, MD 20850
accreditation@asha.org
Fax: 301-296-8570

Procedures for Handling Comments Received in Advance of the Site Visit:

- The Accreditation Office staff will acknowledge receipt of the individual's comments, confirm whether they were received within the approved timelines, and verify the source of the testimony with each respondent.
- All comments will be provided, with the author's name redacted, to the chair of the site visit team at least 1 week prior to the first day of the scheduled site visit.
- The site visit team will consider the written comments as they review the program's compliance with the accreditation standards and will address them in the site visit report, if appropriate, as they relate to the appropriate Standards for Accreditation.

II. Procedures for Providing Comments During the Site Visit

Both written and oral comments will be considered during any portion of the site visit, provided they meet the criteria specified above.

Public Meeting:

Programs scheduled for review also are responsible for soliciting public comment from students and consumers by holding a public meeting during the scheduled site visit. The program must widely publish an announcement regarding this meeting no later than 15 days prior to the site visit. The announcement should indicate that a copy of the Standards for Accreditation and/or the CAA's Policy on Public Comment may be obtained by contacting the Accreditation Office at American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2200 Research Boulevard #310, Rockville, MD 20850, calling ASHA's Action Center at 800-498-2071, or accessing the documents on ASHA's Web site at <http://asha.org/about/credentialing/accreditation/>

Other Comments during the Site Visit:

If written comments are provided to a site visitor during the site visit, the commentor must include his/her name, address and telephone contact information and the commentor's relationship to the program in order to verify the source of the testimony, and must have signed the comments. As with all information obtained during the site visit, the site visit team members will consider the written comments as it relates to the accreditation standards, and will not reveal the identity of the person submitting the comments in the written site visit report or append the written comments to that report.

PLEASE NOTE: In addition to these opportunities for providing public comment regarding a program's accreditation status, the CAA has separate procedures for filing a formal complaint about a CAA-accredited program or one seeking CAA accreditation. Individuals who wish to file a formal complaint should contact the Accreditation Office to obtain a copy of the complaint procedures, or refer to the Procedures for Complaints Against Graduate Education Programs on ASHA's Web site at <http://asha.org/about/credentialing/accreditation/>