



**SOCIAL, HUMANITIES
BASIC SCIENCES
ACCREDITATION and
RATING ASSOCIATION**

ETHICAL RULES DIRECTIVE

1. Article: Basis, Purpose, and Scope

- 1.1. This directive has been prepared in accordance with the STAR Social, Human, and Basic Sciences Accreditation and Rating Association's Operational Regulations.
- 1.2. The purpose of this directive is to define the ethical rules that must be followed by internal stakeholders in all STAR activities.
- 1.3. This directive defines internal stakeholders as: STAR Board Members, STARAK Members, Committee Members, Evaluation Team Members, Observers, STAR Employees.

2. Article: Internal Stakeholders

- 2.1. Internal stakeholders must adhere to general ethical principles as well as the ethical rules specified in this directive.
- 2.2. Internal stakeholders must work in accordance with the principles of professionalism, honesty, and integrity.
- 2.3. Internal stakeholders must perform their duties in a neutral, fair, and equal manner.
- 2.4. In compliance with the Operational Regulations, all internal stakeholders must sign the "Internal Stakeholder Declaration" at the end of this directive.

3. Article: Conflict of Interest

- 3.1. Internal stakeholders must avoid any situations that could compromise the impartiality and credibility of evaluation and accreditation activities or lead to conflicts of interest. They are expected to act in a professional and ethical manner, disclose any potential conflicts of interest, and avoid situations that could create bias or controversy.
- 3.2. The objectives of this policy are to:
 1. Ensure the credibility of evaluation and accreditation activities and maintain the trustworthiness of internal stakeholders.
 2. Guarantee a fair and impartial decision-making process.
 3. Prevent any actions that could compromise impartiality or create a perception of bias.
- 3.3. Internal stakeholders cannot participate in the decision-making process for an undergraduate program if they have had a close or active relationship with that program. This includes, but is not limited to:
 1. Current or past employment as a faculty member, staff member, or consultant for the program.

2. Ongoing or past discussions about employment or collaboration with the program.
3. Current or past enrollment as a student in the program.
4. Receiving an honorary degree from the program.
5. Spouses and first-, second-, or third-degree relatives (including those of the spouse) who are current students or employees of the program.
6. Unpaid official affiliation with the higher education institution running the program (e.g., membership on a board of trustees or advisory board).

3.4. Internal stakeholders must sign the "Internal Stakeholder Declaration" stating that they will not engage in any conflict of interest and that they understand and accept these principles.

3.5. Internal stakeholders must not participate in meetings where conflicted issues are discussed or decisions are made. Their names will be recorded if they declare themselves ineligible due to a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises in the following cases:

1. Close or active relationship with the higher education institution conducting the program.
2. Financial or personal connection to the program.
3. Any reason that could impair the stakeholder's impartiality in decision-making.

4. Article: STAR Ethical Rules

4.1. Internal stakeholders agree to: Follow general ethical rules in evaluation and accreditation activities, act in the public interest, safety, and welfare when presenting STAR accreditation to undergraduate programs or making public statements, disclose any conflicting or overlapping interests to the STAR Board of Directors.

4.1.1. Internal stakeholders acknowledge that public safety, health, and well-being depend on their professional competence.

4.1.2. If an accredited undergraduate program does not meet the evaluation criteria, internal stakeholders must report this to the STAR Board of Directors in writing and collaborate as necessary.

4.1.3. For any presentation, seminar, or meeting conducted on behalf of STAR, prior approval must be obtained from the authorized STAR committee. All related materials must include the STAR logo and branding.

- 4.2. Internal stakeholders must accept assignments only within their area of expertise and experience.
- 4.3. Internal stakeholders must act as trusted representatives of STAR, avoiding all conflicts of interest, and informing relevant parties of any potential conflicts.
 - 4.3.1. Stakeholders must avoid conflicts of interest in all activities conducted on behalf of STAR.
 - 4.3.2. Stakeholders must disclose any conflicts that could affect the quality of service.
 - 4.3.3. Stakeholders must not provide consulting services for an undergraduate program undergoing evaluation and accreditation.
 - 4.3.4. If a stakeholder provides consulting services for a program, they must inform the STAR Board and not participate in any phase of that program's evaluation.
 - 4.3.5. Internal stakeholders must not undertake any role, engage in discussions, or participate in any debates that could create a conflict of interest between themselves and STAR or themselves and the undergraduate programs being evaluated.
 - 4.3.6. Stakeholders must not accept any gifts or favors from the program or its employees.
 - 4.3.7. Stakeholders must not accept or request any payment or compensation that could influence accreditation results.
 - 4.3.8. Internal stakeholders who deliver presentations, provide training, or offer consultancy on behalf of STAR upon the invitation of an undergraduate program are required to comply with the above-mentioned rules.
- 4.4. Internal stakeholders must maintain confidentiality regarding all documents and information related to undergraduate program evaluation processes and accreditation decisions, except in cases where disclosure is required by law or public safety concerns.
 - 4.4.1. Internal stakeholders must keep all documents and information provided to them during their duties confidential and must not use them for any purpose outside their designated responsibilities.
 - 4.4.2. Internal stakeholders must not disclose confidential documents, information, or findings, except when required by legal obligations.
 - 4.4.3. If internal stakeholders are required to disclose confidential documents, information, or findings, they must obtain approval from both the STAR Board of Directors and the relevant undergraduate program. In such cases, the entire document or information must be disclosed, ensuring full transparency.
 - 4.4.4. Internal stakeholders must not copy, reproduce, or share self-assessment reports or any other documents obtained from the undergraduate program with third parties or other undergraduate programs. All such documents must be destroyed at the end of the evaluation process.
- 4.5. Internal stakeholders agree that all statements they make within and outside

STAR will be impartial and accurate.

- 4.5.1. Internal stakeholders must act impartially and accurately in their reports, statements, and expressions. Any reports, statements, or publications made on behalf of STAR must contain only relevant and appropriate information. Stakeholders must avoid behaviors that could introduce personal biases or negatively impact the evaluation process.
- 4.5.2. Internal stakeholders must not include any statements, criticisms, or justifications regarding undergraduate program evaluations that have been influenced or encouraged by external parties. If they must use such information, they are required to: Clearly cite the source of the information and disclose whether they have any personal benefit from using such information.
- 4.5.3. Internal stakeholders must not use statements that misinterpret or conceal facts.
- 4.5.4. Internal stakeholders must acknowledge their proven personal mistakes and must not distort or alter facts to justify their own errors or decisions.

4.6. Internal stakeholders must act honorably, responsibly, ethically, and legally to enhance STAR's credibility and reputation.

- 4.6.1. Internal stakeholders must **avoid deceptive** or misleading behavior in public communications.
- 4.6.2. Internal stakeholders must not distort or misrepresent their own or their colleagues' academic or professional work or allow misunderstandings regarding such work.
- 4.6.3. Internal stakeholders must not intentionally or unintentionally harm the professional reputation, expectations, practices, or work of others, either directly or indirectly. If they believe someone is engaging in unethical or illegal behavior, they must report their concrete observations and findings to the relevant authorities.

4.7. Internal stakeholders agree to treat everyone equally and fairly, regardless of race, language, religion or belief, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, marital status, or political views. Those involved in undergraduate program evaluation processes must ensure equal and fair treatment for all parties.

4.8. Internal stakeholders agree to support their colleagues and collaborators in their professional development and in adhering to STAR Ethical Rules.

- 1. STAR ensures that internal stakeholders and all parties involved in undergraduate program evaluations are informed about STAR Ethical Rules.
- 2. STAR provides training to internal stakeholders to ensure they understand and apply STAR Ethical Rules.
- 3. Individuals continuing to work within STAR must engage in ongoing professional and ethical development and participate in related activities.

4.9. Internal stakeholders found to be in violation of STAR Ethical Rules may have their roles terminated by the STAR Board of Directors. If a STAR Board Member is found to be in violation, their removal will be decided by the General Assembly.

5. Article: Amendments to the Directive

- 5.1. This directive comes into effect on the date it is approved by the STAR Board of Directors.

6. Article: Enforcement

- 6.1. This directive comes into effect on the date it is approved by the STAR Board of Directors.

ANNEX-1: Internal Stakeholders Declaration

I hereby acknowledge, declare, and undertake that:

1. I have read, understood, and accepted the Information Notice provided for STAR Board and Committee Members and STAR Employees, as well as the Information Notice for Evaluators, Student Evaluators, and Observers.
2. I am aware of my rights under Article 11 of Law No. 6698 on the Protection of Personal Data.
3. I have read and understood STAR's Operational Regulations and all Directives, and I will fully comply with the provisions stated therein in a timely manner.
4. I will conduct undergraduate program evaluations and accreditation activities in accordance with STAR's Regulations and Directives, ensuring public safety, health, and interest, and I will immediately disclose any conflicting factors.
5. I will only perform duties within my area of expertise and authorization.
6. As a trusted representative acting on behalf of STAR, I will avoid all conflicts of interest and, in cases where a conflict of interest arises, I will inform STAR and the relevant Higher Education Institution.
7. I will ensure that all statements I make outside of STAR remain impartial and accurate.
8. I will act in accordance with STAR's institutional identity and corporate culture, behaving responsibly, ethically, and legally to enhance STAR's reputation.
9. In both my professional and personal life, I will treat all individuals equally, regardless of race, language, religion or belief, ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, marital status, or political views.
10. I will cooperate transparently with STAR by providing all necessary information and documents for any investigation related to an alleged violation of STAR's assigned duties.
11. If I assume a similar role in another national accreditation body within two years after the termination of my duties at STAR, I will not disclose STAR's trade secrets.
12. I will obtain STAR's approval before making any public or third-party statements regarding my duties or STAR's activities.
13. I will respect and adapt to the culture of the Higher Education Institution I am assigned to.
14. Even after my term ends, I will protect the confidentiality of the Higher Education Institution's information and not share it with third parties.
15. Even after my role at STAR ends, I will continue to protect and refrain from disclosing confidential information related to STAR.
16. During my tenure, I will maintain confidentiality regarding any information disclosed to me by STAR or the Higher Education Institution, including but not limited to:
 - a. Information related to the evaluation and accreditation process.
 - b. Any non-public information that has not been explicitly approved for sharing.
 - c. All personal data of individuals.
 - d. Any personal data related to the Higher Education Institution and its

stakeholders, as per Law No. 6698 on the Protection of Personal Data.

e. Institutional information, innovations, and any written, verbal, visual, or personal data learned during the evaluation and accreditation process.

17. I will maintain confidentiality of any information I learn before, during, or after my duties that could be detrimental to STAR or the Higher Education Institution.

Name - Surname:

Position:

Date:

Signature:

