



Conflict of Interest

Policy

2022

Contents

1

1. Introduction	2
2. Purpose	2
3. Definition of conflict of interest	3
4 Declaration of interests	3
5 Data Protection	4
6 What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest	4
Appendix 1	4
Appendix 2	5
Appendix 3	5

1. Introduction

This policy applies to all Staff and associates of ROUC

Why we have a Policy

Employees and Management have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of the organisation, and in accordance with its governing documents, and to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest. Staff and students have similar obligations.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of ROUC. Such conflicts may create problems. They can:

- inhibit free discussion
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of ROUC
- risk the impression that ROUC has acted improperly
- The risk that achievement is influenced by conflicts of interest
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The aim of this policy is to protect both ROUC and the students involved from any appearance of impropriety.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect our integrity as a business and the integrity of our programmes. The policy is also designed to protect our staff by providing guidance on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of ROUC recommending learners for an Award, to BTEC/Edexcel.

This policy:

defines what is meant by conflict of interest

describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of working with, or for, ROUC

sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at each level in the organisation.

3 Examples of Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may come in a number of different forms:

1. direct financial gain or benefit to a person employed by ROUC

the inappropriate award of a qualification to a student who is related to a member of the teaching faculty

2. indirect financial gain, such as:

- employment by ROUC of a spouse or partner of a Director, where their finances are interdependent
- non-financial gain, such as when a user of the ROUC's is also a Director and or employee
- Employment of a family member of a Director, when they are managed by that Director

Relationships between staff of ROUC and learners, where there is a direct teacher/learner relationship

4 The Declaration of Interests

We are asking Directors and all staff to declare their interests, relationships with learners and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role within ROUC. This declaration should be in writing to the Director of Human Resources.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the Human Resources /Director

This register of interests shall also be used to record all gifts of a value over £10 received by the Directors and staff. Interests and gifts will be recorded in register of interests, which will be maintained by the Director of Human Resources. The register will be accessible on request to all staff, Directors, Awarding bodies, QAA and any BIS related organisation.

5 Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees and staff act in the best interests of the charity. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

6 What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest

If you or a Connected Person to a learner, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the awarding decision for that Connected Person. You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason.

You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

The connected learner should not receive any added benefit over and above that received by any other learner of ROUC.

Appendix 1: Checklist for Conflicts of Interest

1. If you have identified that a conflict of interest exists, is the learner concerned, receiving; or likely to receive, a material benefit as a result of that conflict of interest?
2. has the Lecturer/member of staff, declared the interest in the register of interests and not taken part in any discussions on that issue?
3. If yes, has the benefit been authorised?
4. are there procedures in place to manage the conflict of interest effectively
5. have the Directors ensured that any perceived benefit received by the learner is disclosed in the register, and ensured effective measures to prevent any benefit from the conflict of interest

Appendix 2: Notification of Conflicts of Interest

Where a staff member identifies a possible conflict of interest, they should submit a brief written memo to the Director of Human resources, setting out:

- name and role
- date
- nature of possible conflict of interest
- value of any material benefit involved
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The Director will request additional information if necessary.

Appendix 3: Definition of a Connected Person

1. A Lecturer, employee their child, stepchild, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister
2. The spouse or civil partner of any of the above, including a person living with another as that person's husband or wife or a person living with another as if they were civil partners
3. A person carrying on business in partnership with any of the persons mentioned above.