

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (VERSION 2.0)

The establishment of links between staff and outside bodies - whether Government departments, commerce, industry, or others - is not only in the public interest but also benefits the Organisation and the individuals concerned. However, it is possible that such links may give rise to conflicts of interest. UOBACERAK has therefore prepared the following guidelines and rules to help individuals assess whether or not proposed activities could cause a conflict of interest, and to outline the procedure for disclosure of any actual or potential conflict.

Guidelines as to Conflict of Interest:

It is not possible to define all the circumstances which may cause a conflict of interest, but the following are examples of situations giving rise to a perceived conflict of interest. In any situation where an individual is uncertain as to the propriety of a given arrangement, advice may be sought from the Director.

- a) Use of the research or administrative facilities to pursue personal, business, commercial, or consulting activities.
- b) Any attempt to restrict rights governing the timing and content of publications, except in circumstances properly approved by UOBACERAK to protect privacy, commercially sensitive proprietary information, and patentable inventions.
- c) Involvement in externally funded activity which might infringe the right of a student engaged in the activity to complete the degree for which he or she is registered, and/or to publish freely his or her findings (except in the circumstances referred to in sub-paragraph (b) above).
- d) A financial interest held by an individual (or by his or her immediate relative(s) or household member(s)) in an external enterprise engaged in activities closely related to that individual's line of research in the Organisation. Examples of such interests are paid consultancies, paid service on a board of directors or advisory board, or equity holdings in or royalty income from the enterprise. The existence of such an interest does not necessarily imply conflict, but is likely to give an appearance of conflict, and should be declared.
- e) A personal involvement (or by his or her immediate relative(s) or household member(s)) in any company or commercial enterprise which is in a contractual relationship with the Organisation, or which is in the process of negotiating a contract with UOBACERAK, where the employee has been concerned or connected with placing or negotiating the contract in question or with the research or other activity which the contract might cover.
- f) Application by family members or friends for employment in UOBACERAK or in a related company, where an individual is in a position to influence the appointing process.

- g) Receipt of gifts or hospitality by a student or an individual (or by his or her immediate relative(s) or household member(s)) from a company or organisation offering goods or services to UOBACERAK.
- h) A personal relationship, historic or emerging, between staff members or staff and student that may imply influence or bias (either against or in favour) towards either party.

Declarations:

Any gifts (of any or no value) to employees of UOBACERAK must be declared immediately to the Director and may only be accepted on behalf of the Organisation (not as a personal gift). It is not appropriate to give gifts of value to students; any gift should be given on behalf of the Organisation (not the staff member) and without prejudice or bias.

It is the duty of all employees to disclose any conflict of interest (personal or professional). The procedures for disclosure are explained below. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action.

A declaration as to any conflict of interest will be sought by the Organisation at employment. Application for permission to undertake other activities such as research or employment will require the individual concerned to declare any conflict of interest before permission will be granted.

Disclosure should be made in writing and should be directed to the Director. This procedure will also apply in other situations giving rise to a potential conflict of interest. A record of all declarations made shall be maintained centrally by the Director. In addition to declarations made from time to time, records shall be updated regularly and members of staff shall be required to provide updated information on request.

If a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest has been disclosed, the individual concerned shall discuss a possible resolution with the Director. Any unresolved matter shall be referred to the CEO for advice.

Review history

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