

Conflict of Interest Policy

Introduction

All individuals acting on behalf of Sport Structures must remain free from any conflicts of interest that could compromise, or be perceived to compromise, their judgment or objectivity in carrying out their roles.

A conflict in itself is not a prohibitor, but it is how we decide to manage the conflict. This may be a positive outcome for the company. Therefore, to ensure fair and equitable treatment of the perceived conflict, any actual or potential conflicts of interest arising from these activities must be disclosed and then appropriately managed.

Definition

A conflict of interest is a situation where an individual's personal, financial, or professional interests – whether direct or indirect – could interfere with or advantage their responsibilities to Sport Structures. Such conflicts may:

- Impair objectivity, or
- Create an unfair advantage for any person or organisation, or
- Place the organisation credibility at risk

Alternatively the relationship maybe an advantage to the company. Conflicts can arise from relationships, financial gain, external employment, or other commitments that could compromise, or appear to compromise, decision-making.

Stakeholders and roles

It is recognised that conflicts of interest can arise across our workforce that may influence decision making and operational integrity. Examples of those involved/affected by conflict of interest include:

- Employed staff
- Associates – including consultants, tutors, assessors and verifiers
- Volunteers
- Partners
- Family members

Identifying Conflicts of Interest

It is the duty of all members of the workforce to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest related to their roles. Examples include, but are not limited to, where someone:

- Is likely to make a financial gain or avoid a financial loss
- Has an interest in the outcome of a service provided

- Has a family member or a personal relationship with someone who may gain advantage from a service.
- Is or has worked for, or has close ties with, an organisation that is a customer or partner

Examples of interests that should be declared include, but are not limited to:

- Membership of an organisation, e.g. a National Governing Body
- Board or committee roles within an organisation, particularly in the same sector
- Financial interests or shareholding
- Employment or self-employment outside of Sport Structures, e.g. tutoring
- Volunteer roles in sport and physical activity such as coaching
- A family member or a personal friend connected with a product or service.

Process

All members of the Sport Structures workforce must:

- Complete a Declaration of Interest form (if required) before starting any work for Sport Structures.
- Await confirmation regarding any necessary actions before commencing work where a declared interest exists.
- Notify Sport Structures if their circumstances change and a new or potential conflict arises
- Update and resubmit their last Declaration of Interest form where necessary

Sport Structures will:

- Maintain a central record of the declarations, overseen by the Finance and HR Officer
- Review all declarations and assess the potential risks or benefits of any identified declarations.
- Take appropriate action to manage declarations and monitor them as required
- Inform relevant staff of the outcomes of assessments and any steps required.
- Process new or updated forms promptly to minimise disruption to any affected activities.

Operational considerations

The following points outline key operational practices that should be applied to identify, mitigate, and monitor potential conflicts:

- Avoid assigning individuals to multiple roles (for example, tutoring, assessing and verifying) within the same qualification or learner cohort to maintain objectivity.
- Where dual roles are unavoidable, conduct a risk assessment and document mitigation strategies
- Require staff and associate workforce to declare any personal or professional relationships that may influence learner outcomes or operational decisions
- Ensure independent verification of assessment decisions where conflicts may exist
- Ensure meeting chairs routinely ask for conflict declarations and record them in minutes
- Provide annual training on recognising and managing conflicts of interest, tailored to different roles
- Establish a transparent process for reporting and investigating conflicts, including whistleblowing mechanisms.
- Review conflict of interest procedures as part of internal review processes