



London School of Social and Management Sciences

Conflict of Interest Policy

Introduction

London School of Social and Management Sciences has adopted a policy to address conflicts of interest so as to ensure that its activities, and those of its staff and students, are and are seen to be conducted to the highest standards of ethics and integrity. A conflict of interest arises where the commitments and obligations owed by an individual member of staff or student to the School are likely to be compromised, or may appear to be compromised, by:

- That person's personal gain, or gain to immediate family (or a person with whom the person has a close personal relationship)¹, whether financial or otherwise.
- The commitments and obligations that person owes to another person or body.

Conflicts of interests can be financial and non-financial, and a potential gain can be personal or a benefit to someone with a connection to a member of staff. Commitments and obligations can also be compromised. The issue is not the integrity of the member of staff concerned, but the management of any potential to be influenced by conflicting loyalties. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can damage reputation and so conflicts need to be managed carefully.

The following information provides guidance on the identification and subsequent management of actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest that may be encountered by members London School of Social and Management Sciences staff.

1. Recruitment of new staff

Staff involved in the recruitment and selection process must immediately declare to the HR Manager any conflict or potential conflict of interest, at which point in the interests of fairness to all candidates they will not be permitted to continue to participate. For example, it would not normally be appropriate for a member of staff to be a member of a recruitment panel where an applicant is a member of their spouse's family. Members of staff can seek confidential guidance from the HR Manager.

2. Private work

Members of staff may undertake private work in their own time but this must not impair the performance of the member of staff's duties nor conflict with the interests of the School. Before accepting any work or extending any existing private work members of staff are encouraged to contact their line manager. Under no circumstances shall stationery (printed or otherwise) bearing the College's name, address, letter heading or crest be used in connection with private work.

3. Relationships between staff and students

The School values good professional relationships between staff and students. These relationships are heavily reliant upon mutual trust and confidence. The School does not wish to prevent, or even necessarily be aware of, liaisons between staff and students and it relies upon the integrity of both parties to ensure that abuses of power do not occur. Members of staff can seek confidential guidance from the HR Manager. Hospitality of a value over £50 received by any member of staff should be disclosed to the HR Manager who will then inform the Finance Department.

4. A director and/or shareholder of the School is involved in assessment or internal verification

Any director or shareholder of the School who is holding a position at School e.g., Principal, Lecturer etc., will not participate in assessment or internal verification decisions.

A conflict of interest as a position where an individual or an organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In these cases, there is a conflict of interest and this may influence decisions, so they become invalid. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances and the list below is provided as examples and is not exhaustive.

Scenario	Why is this a potential conflict of interest?	How can this conflict of interest be managed?
An assessor of a programme is the uncle of a learner studying the qualification.	There may be a perception that the assessor is biased and will not make valid judgements due to his family relationship with the learner	A different assessor makes judgements on this learner's work. The work is then part of the normal internal sampling processes.
The Principal of the college is one of the owners and takes on the role of an assessor or internal verifier.	The college receives funding when learners achieve this qualification and there are marketing benefits from high levels of learner achievement.	The Principal does not participate in assessment or internal verification decisions for the funded qualification or the Principal informs ATHE that he is undertaking a role involving assessment or IV. ATHE implements additional measures
A lecturer at the college is studying for a L7 ATHE qualification by distance learning. ATHE supports this activity as part of her personal development and career progression.	The assessor and internal verifier at the college are colleagues of the lecturer.	The lecturer needs to register with another ATHE centre or the lecturer needs to send their work to ATHE for assessing.

Monitoring the Policy

The policy and procedures will be reviewed every two years or as required as part of the document management process. This will ensure that the policy continues to be fit for purpose and reflects the types of conflicts that may arise and how those conflicts are managed