



## CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- define conflict of interest (COI)
- provide guidance for members in avoiding and/or dealing with COIs
- outline the responsibilities surrounding COIs

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the University community, including, but not limited to employees, students, volunteers, any individual who serves on a University committee, suppliers and contractors, and any other person who teaches, conducts research or works at or under the auspices of the University, adjunct professors, post-doctoral fellows and professor emeriti and those holding a visiting appointment.

In the event that any provision of this policy is found to be inconsistent with the provisions of a collective agreement or Board Bylaws, the collective agreement and/or the Board Bylaws will prevail.

### POLICY STATEMENT

Members are expected to maintain a culture of high ethical standards and commitment in compliance with relevant policies, procedures and applicable collective agreements.

Members are expected to avoid real, or potential COIs between their duties and responsibilities to the University and personal interests. Duties and responsibilities to the University include, but are not limited to:

- employment responsibilities as outlined in job descriptions and/or collective agreements, and
- adherence to University policies and procedures, including those related to conduct.

Unless expressly permitted under the applicable University policies, procedures and collective agreements, no member shall knowingly participate in any decision that directly and preferentially benefits the member or any individual with whom the member has an immediate family, or personal or commercial relationship. Without limiting the generality of this statement, the following examples of such decisions are provided:

**Employment of Relatives:** employment at the University will not be allowed where the applicant is subject, either directly or indirectly, to the supervisory control of a relative or a person with whom a close personal relationship exists.

**External Commitments:** members may not accept external commitments, including employment, or engage in activities that, by virtue of their time commitment, interfere with or prevent them from performing their University duties and/or responsibilities.

**Involvement in Hiring or Evaluation:** Members must not participate in or influence the appointment, promotion or evaluation of a relative or a person with whom a close personal relationship exists.

**Use of University Resources:** members must not use University resources or facilities for personal benefit, or to benefit a relative and/or a person with whom a close personal relationship exists.

**Receiving Gifts:** Members shall not accept, either directly or indirectly, any gifts or favours from existing or potential supplier of goods and services unless they are reasonable and of small and non-influencing intrinsic value.

All real and potential COIs must be disclosed by the member prior to the activity giving rise to the conflict commencing or continuing.

In exceptional circumstances, COIs may not necessarily preclude the member's involvement in the situation. If a situation arises where a real, or potential conflict can be managed so as to enhance rather than undermine the member's contribution to the University, an exception to this policy must be approved by the President or, through the process set-out in a collective agreement.

Members who become aware of a COI matter should report such to their supervisor, or the Director. Where there is a process for reporting COI in a collective agreement, the collective agreement must be followed.

In the event that a member is dissatisfied with the position taken by the University with respect to the COI, unionized members can appeal under the grievance and arbitration procedure of applicable collective agreements and other members can appeal to the appropriate Vice-President, whose decision after consultation with all parties involved, will be final.

## DEFINITIONS

*Real conflict:* At least three prerequisites have to be established before a member can be said to be in a real conflict of interest:

- the existence of a private interest;
- that this private interest is known to the member; and
- that this private interest has a connection with the member's university duties and/or responsibilities that is sufficient to influence the exercise of those duties or responsibilities.

*Potential conflict:* A potential COI is one that may reasonably develop into an actual conflict. The potential for conflict exists as soon as the university member can reasonably foresee that he or she has a private interest that may reasonably be sufficient to influence a public duty or responsibility.

COMPLIANCE AND  
REPORTING

This Policy is under the jurisdiction of Human Resources.

The Associate Vice-President, Human Resources is responsible for maintaining compliance with the Policy.

SAC members must ensure this policy is made known to members within their respective departments/divisions; and that relevant aspects of this policy are implemented.

The Associate Vice-President, Human Resources will report, on an annual basis, all confirmed COIs to the appropriate Committee of the Board of Trustees.

The President must review and, where appropriate, approve proposed exceptions to this policy.

Policy owner:	Associate Vice-President, Human Resources
Authorized by:	Board of Trustees Human Resources Committee
Accepted by:	Senior Administrative Council
Effective date:	June 2016
Next review:	June 2025
Revision history:	August 2002, July 2004, November 24, 2005
Related documents:	