



Prevention of conflict of interest guidelines

Circumstances giving rise to conflict of interest

1. A conflict of interest may arise in a situation where, when performing a task for the club, a club member or staff has competing interests or obligations that could potentially influence his or her decision-making or actions. The following are common circumstances that may give rise to a conflict of interest:
 - (a) **Financial interests.** When a club member or staff involves in decision-making of club business or dealings with a company or an individual, he or she at the same time has financial interests in the company or individual, a conflict of interest may arise. For example, a club member who is entrusted with the responsibilities in procurement of club supplies from a company who at the same time has financial interests in the company (such as a share holder) may lead to a conflict of interest; and
 - (b) **Personal relationship.** When a club member or staff involves in decision-making of club business or dealings with a company or an individual, he or she at the same time has personal relationship with the company or individual, a conflict of interest may occur. For example, a senior club staff who is dating a subordinate may have a conflict of interest when he or she performs evaluation of the subordinate's performance.

Guidelines on avoidance of conflict of interest

2. A club members or staff, when encountering a potential or real conflict of interest in conducting club business, should:
 - (a) refrain from taking part in the deliberation, decision-making, investigation or enforcement process in connection with any matter in which he or she has a private interest. He or she should not use or permit the use of his or her club position in a manner that is intended to coerce or induce another person to provide any benefit to himself or herself or his or her relatives or friends. Nor should he or she accord preferential treatment to organisations or persons with whom he or she has connections;
 - (b) avoid putting himself or herself in a position of obligation to any subordinate, any company/organisation, or any person with whom he or she has, or is likely to have, dealings in his or her club capacity; and
 - (c) report to the sub-committee /panel chairman / convenor or his or her supervisor any private interest that may be seen to compromise his or her reasoned judgement in the performance of his or her club duties.

Guidelines on declaration of conflict of interest

3. When a club member or staff is assigned to take part in the deliberation, decision-making, investigation or enforcement process over matters in which he or she has a private interest, and that avoidance of the assignment is not possible, he or she should make a declaration of all relevant interests which may or may be seen to conflict with his or her club duties in the following manner:
 - (a) **General Committee (GC) meeting:** A GC member encountering a potential or real conflict of interest in the deliberation or decision-making of an issue should make a declaration before commencement of the discussion of the issue. Based on the nature and risks involved, the Chairman should make a ruling as to whether the member can continue participating in the deliberation and/or decision-making of the issue. In the event of the Chairman making a declaration of a potential or real conflict of interest, the Deputy Chairman should take the chair and make a ruling as to whether the Chairman (in the capacity of a GC member) can continue participating in the deliberation or decision-making of the issue. Such declarations and rulings should be recorded in the minutes of meeting as proof of declarations having been made;
 - (b) **Sub-committee or panel meeting:** The declaration of a potential or real conflict of interest should be conducted in the same manner as in (a) above; and
 - (c) **In discharging official duties by a staff member:** A staff member encountering a potential or real conflict of interest should as soon as possible report to his or her supervisor of details of such interests, and the staff member would normally be released from taking part in the matter concerned. In the event of uncertainty, the supervisor should report the matter to the club manager who, based on the nature and risks involved, make a decision on whether the staff member can continue participating in the matter. In the event of the club manager encountering a potential or real conflict of interest, he or she should make a declaration to the President, who, based on the nature and risks involved, may approve the club manager continue his participation in the task, or assign the Deputy Manager to take over the task concerned.

Sanction

4. A club member or staff who fails to avoid or declare a potential or real conflict of interest may render himself or herself liable to club disciplinary proceedings.

General Committee
July 2023