



GUIDELINES (INTERNAL)

Relationship Conflict of Interest Report

Contact Officer:	Secretary
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Version Number:	1

Guideline Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to provide guidance to all NDSA councilors regarding personal relationships within the NDSA, in order to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest, or misuse of power and authority. This internal report will specifically address these conflicts of personal relationships between executive members. By the end of 2019, there will be a “Personal Relationship Policy” in order to combat these concerns.

1 Background

It is recognised that the nature and kinds of personal relationship that exist in university contexts are many and varied. Whilst most social and personal relationships are entirely beneficial in that they promote good working and academic relationships, it is recognised that there will be particular circumstances where the person(s) concerned will need to be conscious of their conflict of interest or withdraw from certain decisions or from undertaking certain roles, in order to protect themselves and the NDSA from any possible criticism of unfair bias.

It is neither desirable nor possible to define in advance all the different types of relationship or sets of circumstance where there may be real or perceived conflicts of interest, but these will include:

- decisions relating to financial matters
- decisions involving confidential information
- representation at University events and boards
- reputation of the NDSA in relation to staff members

2 Code of Practice Introduction

It is not possible to provide guidance on every eventuality: it is the responsibility of each councilor to declare personal relationships that may give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest to their Executive. Where this situation arises between executive members, the conflict of interest will be registered with the whole council.

3 General Conduct

- 3.1 In contexts representing the NDSA, the councilor(s) shall conduct themselves at all times in a way that are consistent with their role and duties, in line with all NDSA and University policies (including those related to codes of conduct and policies such as the Financial Recognition of Student Association Executive).
- 3.2 When dealing with student matters (in any capacity), the councilor(s) should recognize that they are in a position of trust, and that it is their professional and ethical responsibility to represent students accordingly. Councillors should carry out those responsibilities inherent in their roles, first and foremost.
- 3.3 The NDSA places responsibility on individual members of the council to withdraw from decisions where, owing to their personal relationships, there might be either real or perceived conflicts of interest.
- 3.4 The councilor(s) will continue to keep their personal, commercial and political interests separate from official Association duties.

4 Financial Decisions

- 4.1 The councilor(s) whose personal relationships may give rise to a conflict of interest will exercise expenditure approval requests with an extra degree of scrutiny. Where applicable, the councilor(s) will withdraw from financial decisions where, owing to their personal relationships, there might be either a real or perceived conflict of interest.
- 4.2 Executive approvals under \$100.00 are conducted as in the Financial Guidelines. However, expenditure approvals made by the involved councilor(s) must be affirmed by a third-party councilor, who then must provide a third signature on the expenditure form.

5 Confidential Information

- 5.1 When dealing with student matters (in any capacity), the councilor(s) should recognize that they are in a position of trust, and that it is their professional and ethical responsibility to represent students accordingly. Councillors should carry out those responsibilities inherent

in their roles, first and foremost.

5.2 Where a decision needs to be made in regards to confidential information, that information will be disclosed to the minimum number of councilors possible for the decision to be made, provided that at least one person party to making the decision has no conflict of interest arising from a personal relationship.

6 Social Media Conduct

6.1 The councilor(s) will ensure their social media privacy settings are at the highest restriction, in order to uphold the professional and trusted reputation of the NDSA.

7 Conflict Reporting

7.1 Where any councilor believes that there is a possible or actual misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest, then they should raise this at the first instance with the Secretary of the NDSA. Where this is inappropriate, the conflict/misuse may be raised with any executive member.

8 Other Policies

8.1 This statement should be read in conjunction with the NDSA Constitution, specifically section 19: Disputes.

Bottom of Form
