

SUBJECT: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest arises when an individual is or may be advancing one's own interests in a manner that is detrimental to the interests, integrity or fundamental mission of the University. As a public institution the University must not allow conflicts or perceived conflicts to exist.

1. Definitions

- 1.1 For the purpose of this policy, a direct relative is defined as a spouse (including common law spouse), parent, grandparent, brother, sister, son or daughter or person in a similar relationship.
- 1.2 A direct relationship is defined as a relationship between direct relatives.

2. Procedure**2.1 Favouritism in Employment**

When a faculty or staff member is in a position to influence personnel decisions (such as the recruitment, offer of employment, evaluation of performance, promotion, granting of tenure, or termination of employment) with respect to another with whom the faculty or staff member has a direct relationship that might reasonably be construed as a conflict or potential conflict of interest, then the faculty or staff member has the duty to disclose the potential conflict to their Dean/Director or to the Director of Human Resources. At their discretion, an employee may choose to disclose other conflicts of interest that may arise due to a relationship with a fellow employee.

2.2 Selection

Where a potential conflict arises in the context of selection, the direct relative employed by the University must advise his or her Dean/Director and/ or the Director of Human Resources. Prior to offering employment, the relevant Vice President, the Director of Human Resources will be made aware of the possible conflict of interest. The Vice-President and Director of Human Resources will determine if there is conflict impediment to hiring the candidate and, if so, if the hire can reasonably be accommodated.

Except where the potential conflict arises with a member of an Interview Committee, the committee will not be advised of the direct relationship.

2.3 Direct Supervision

A potential conflict of interest may arise where a supervisor/subordinate relationship is created between employees in a direct relationship. (A supervisor/subordinate relationship is considered to exist where two or more levels of supervision do not intervene between the direct relatives).

If a potential conflict exists, the following process shall be followed:

- 2.3.1 The faculty or staff member must report the potential conflict to their Dean/Director who in turn will consult with the Director of Human Resources and the Vice-President.

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- 2.3.2 The Dean/Director, Director of Human Resources and the Vice-President will review the circumstances to determine if it is possible to accommodate the potential conflict through monitoring or whether one of the employee(s) must be reassigned or transferred.
- 2.3.3 Where the Dean/Director, Human Resources and Equity Coordinator deem that a disclosed potential conflict of interest may be accommodated through monitoring, the following shall apply:
- a) Procedures will be developed to ensure the systematic monitoring of the potential conflict of interest throughout the period of employment;
 - b) The process by which monitoring occurs shall be consistent, fair, unbiased and documented in order to protect both the individual and the University and will normally include events such as recruitment, offer of employment, performance evaluation, tenure, promotion, discipline and termination;
 - c) No special considerations or privileges may be granted to a direct relative in such matters as vacation, scheduling or events similar in nature;
 - d) Where a supervisor is a step in the grievance or discipline procedure affecting a direct relative, the supervisor shall be excluded from the direct involvement in the matter and the University shall designate an alternate for that purpose;
 - e) The supervisor shall not participate in the performance evaluation and review procedure affecting a direct relative, in which case, Human Resources shall at the time of appointment, designate an alternate for that purpose.
- 2.3.4 If it is determined that it is not possible to accommodate the potential conflict, both employees will be consulted to assess the feasibility of a transfer or reassignment of one of the employees.

A record of each case will be documented and kept on file in Human Resources for the duration of employment and in accordance with legislated requirements governing employment records. Members of faculty and staff will be asked to review their current relations with other employees at the University and to disclose any potential conflicts of interest which might presently exist to Human Resources.