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CONFLICT OF INTEREST EXAMPLES

The following provide some examples of situations where a conflict of interest may, or may not, arise or exist:

Personal relationships between employees and students:

1. Q: The President pays \$100 to a student for pet caretaking?
A: This situation has the potential to create a conflict; however, it is likely de minimus.
2. Q: A faculty member or other employee is the landlord of a student?
A: This relationship should be disclosed to the employee's supervisor to determine whether the conflict can be appropriately managed.
3. Q: An employee has, or has previously had, a consensual relationship with a student where the employee has the potential to influence outcomes for that student.
A: The employee should immediately terminate the assessment role and make alternative arrangements for the assessment of the student's work and disclose the relationship with its supervisor.
4. An employee attempts to influence an application for admission for a student or prospective student with whom the employee has a close personal relationship.
A: The employee should withdraw from the application process for the specific student and disclose the relationship with his/her supervisor.

Personal relationships between employees:

5. Q: The spouse or partner of a manager applies for a position in the same work unit where the manager is in a position to influence the selection outcome.
A: The employee should abstain from the selection process and disclose the relationship with his/her supervisor.
6. Q: A supervisor has a close personal relationship with an employee whom they directly supervise.
A: The employee should immediately terminate the supervisory role and make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the employee's work and disclose the relationship with his/her supervisor.

Internal Audit

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7. Q: An employee takes part in any phase of the recruitment, promotion, reclassification, evaluation or grievance process with a current or prospective employee with whom they have, or have had, a close personal or financial relationship.

A: The employee should immediately terminate any supervisory or assessment role and make alternative arrangements for the supervision/assessment of the employee's work.

Personal benefits and financial or commercial conflicts of interest:

8. Q: A professor's family owns a local business. As part of his class curriculum, the professor assigns students to conduct surveys in the community to better understand local shopping habits.

A: This assignment and relationship should be disclosed to the professor's department chair to determine whether or not the conflict can be appropriately managed.

9. Q: An employee is the chair of a university committee that is evaluating a new rental rate structure for community groups that use University facilities. The employee is also a board member of a local sports club that frequently rents field and gym space from the University throughout the year.

A: This relationship should be disclosed to the employee's supervisor to determine whether or not the conflict can be appropriately managed.

10. Q: A department manager is choosing a vendor to provide goods and services needed for a University event. One of the companies giving a quote for the contract is owned and operated by the manager's sister.

A: The family relationship should be disclosed to the manager's direct supervisor and the Department of Contracts, Procurement and Payments Services to determine how the conflict can be appropriately managed.

11. Q: A research professor is working on a new agriculture technology that will improve crop yields. Many companies are interested in obtaining the rights to the technology so that they can bring it to the market place. The professor will receive royalties from the technology. One company has offered the professor an all-expense paid trip to tour its facility in France and a large bonus in its efforts to secure the rights to the technology.

A: The professor should disclose the company's offer to the Ethics Advisor to ensure the University's best interests are being considered and its ethics policy is being upheld.

12. Q: An employee is a director of a company engaged by the University to undertake a consultancy.

A: According to University policy, this relationship should have been disclosed prior to a contract being completed. If the contract is already in place, this relationship should be disclosed to the employee's supervisor to determine whether the conflict can be appropriately managed.

13. Q: An employee directs University resources to an entity where they or family members are directors or shareholders of that entity.

A: The action of directing University resources to an entity where the employee or family members are involved in leading the entity may, in itself, be a violation of the university's ethic policy. Prior to making the recommendation, the employee should discuss the matter with his/her supervisor. If the recommendation has already been made, the employee should immediately abstain from doing business with the entity and disclose the matter to its supervisor.

14. Q: A supervisor is involved with one of their employees in private business arrangements.

A: This relationship should be disclosed to the supervisor's manager to determine whether the conflict can be appropriately managed.

15. Q: An employee undertakes private tutoring of University students in circumstances where this could reasonably be expected to be part of their normal teaching duties.

A: In this situation, the employee should immediately terminate the private tutoring sessions and disclose the relationship with its supervisor.

16. Q: An employee or their family members have an interest in organizations that may provide property or services to the University, or to an entity the University controls.

A: This relationship should be disclosed to the employee's supervisor, and the Department of Contracts, Procurement and Payments Services, to determine whether the conflict can be appropriately managed.

17. Q: An employee owning property, or being aware of a person with whom they have a close relationship owning property, that the University might purchase.

A: This situation has the potential to create a conflict; therefore, the employee should immediately disclose the matter to his/her supervisor and the Department of Contracts, Procurement and Payments Services.

18. Q: An employee responsible for purchasing consumables receiving a gift from a sales representative of a supplier company.

A: This situation has the potential to create a conflict; therefore, the employee should immediately disclose the matter to his/her supervisor and/or discuss with the Ethics Advisor.

19. Q: An employee auditing the performance of a research project where they are or have been an investigator or participant on the project.

A: The employee should immediately abstain from the audit and disclose the matter to his/her supervisor.

20. Q: A budget administrator approves payments to themselves or to someone with whom they have a personal relationship.

A: The employee should immediately discontinue his/her duties and disclose the matter with his/her supervisor.

Conflicts with outside duties:

21. Q: A University employee has been appointed on a statewide governmental committee for an aspect of policy that affects the University.

A: The University employee should immediately abstain from the process and disclose the matter to the University.

22. Q: An employee holds a position in an organization sponsoring and conducting research at the University.

A: This relationship should be disclosed to the employee's supervisor to determine whether or not the conflict can be appropriately managed.

23. Q: An employee chairs a department and/or university committee responsible for allocating internal funding for research granted to the chair's college/department.

A: The employee should immediately abstain from the process and disclose the matter to their supervisor, the dean of the college.