

Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Those responsible for administering a charity (the 'charity trustees') must act in the best interests of the charity.
- 1.2 Conflicts of interest can arise where an individual's business/institutional, personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the charity. Conflicts of interest can create problems as they can:
 - Inhibit free discussion
 - Result in decisions or actions that are not in the best interest of the charity
 - Risk the impression that the charity has acted improperly
- 1.3 The early identification of conflicts of interest is therefore key to ensuring that both individual charity trustees and the charity trustees collectively do what is expected of them.
- 1.4 The HEDQF is in no different a position in these respects from any other charity. Its charity trustees (i.e. all the individual members) are under a legal obligation to act in the charity's best interests.

2. Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all members and Trustees of the HEDQF and any other committees or working parties set up by the Charity. For ease the term Charity will be used throughout.
- 2.2 The Charity member's personal interests or loyalties could prevent, or could be seen to prevent, them from making a decision only in the best interests of the Charity. Such conflicts of interest may arise:
 - where there is a potential financial benefit to a member, whether directly or indirectly through a connected person (such as a close family member or business partner); or
 - where the Trustee's/member's employer may derive financial benefit from an activity of the Charity
 - where a member's duty to the Charity may compete with a duty of loyalty he or she owes to another organization or person (e.g. by virtue of being a trustee or committee member of a body which has an interest in the matter).
- 2.3 Any potential conflicts of interest should be declared to the Chair of the meeting as soon as the agenda is circulated and reiterated at the meeting when the relevant agenda item is reached.
- 2.4 Where a conflict of interest arises in connection with a personal or company benefit, the member concerned must withdraw from the meeting and not take part in any discussions relating to it.
- 2.5 Where a conflict of loyalty arises, the Charity will consider what level of participation, if any, is acceptable on the part of the conflicted member, having regard to the duty to act in the best interests of the Charity. However, the normal expectation will be that the conflicted member should withdraw from the meeting during discussion of the item of business in question.
- 2.6 The existence of a conflict of interest must be recorded in the minutes, together with the decision as to how it should be dealt with.