

Employment of Close Relatives and Other Close Associates Policy

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The purpose of this policy is to set out the University's position on staff members who are in a Close Personal Relationship.

(2) Staff must avoid any Conflict of Interest in the appointment and management of, or interactions with, a person with whom they have a Close Personal Relationship, in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct for Staff. A Conflict of Interest can arise when a staff member makes or participates in employment decisions affecting another person with whom the staff member has a Close Personal Relationship.

(3) The University acknowledges that its staff may have Close Personal Relationships with each other. However, a Close Personal Relationship together with a Reporting Relationship between two employees is undesirable, and as far as possible should be avoided.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This policy applies to all staff employed by the University.

Section 3 - Policy

(5) Staff appointments must comply with the [Staff Recruitment Rule](#).

(6) A staff member should not be involved in, or influence, or be perceived (by a reasonable person) to be involved in or influence, a decision-making process relating to the employment or supervision of another staff member with whom he or she has a Close Personal Relationship.

(7) Head of Cost Centres need to be aware of any existing or potential Close Personal Relationships between a staff member and another University employee where there may be a Reporting Relationship between the two staff members. In these circumstances each employee in the Close Personal Relationship must inform his/her supervisor in writing and the Supervisor must inform the Head of Cost Centre in writing.

(8) Where it becomes apparent that an employment decision may result in a Reporting Relationship between staff members who have a Close Personal Relationship, the approval of the Director Human Resource Services or delegate must be obtained before an offer of employment is made.

(9) The Director Human Resource Services should ensure that as far as reasonably practicable, Reporting Relationships between staff members in Close Personal Relationships are avoided. The Director Human Resource Services is authorised to issue such directions and requirements as may be reasonably necessary to avoid or mitigate the impact of such situations. The action taken may, for example, involve changing the reporting line of one of the staff members.

Section 4 - Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply.

(10) Close Personal Relationship - means a relationship between an employee and a relative, a financially dependent person, a person where there is a financially connected relationship, a close friend, a de facto partner or any person with whom there is currently, or has been, an intimate or agonistic relationship. This does not include a working relationship which exists due to ordinary collegiate collaboration, where colleagues are not relatives, financially dependent, de facto or intimate partners.

(11) Conflict of Interest - a conflict of interest may arise where an employee has the responsibility to make, or participate actively in making, decisions or recommendations relating to the employment of another individual, which makes it difficult for the employee to be objective, or that for a reasonable person would create the appearance that the employee may not be objective.

(12) Employment Processes include:

- a. Appointment or continuing appointment;
- b. Conditions of appointment, promotion or reclassification;
- c. Termination of employment;
- d. Provision of opportunities and resources allocation for research, conferences or training and development;
- e. Referee reports or performance appraisals;
- f. Payment of funds; and
- g. Any other employment-related matters where a staff member is in a position to make or influence decisions concerning another staff member.

(13) Reporting Relationship - exists between two employees where one of the employees reports to the other employee or to a direct report of the other employee.

(14) Supervisor - means the role to whom a position reports to.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Conflict of Interest" - A UNE Representative will have a Conflict of Interest where they have a material interest in a decision or matter, and/or their interest appears to raise a conflict with the proper performance of their duties (e.g. avoiding personal losses as well as gaining personal advantage — whether financial or otherwise).

"Code of Conduct" - A document (variously referred to as a 'Code of Ethics', 'Code of Behaviour' and various other titles) broadly communicated within the entity setting out the entity's expected standards of behaviour.