

## **POLICY 3 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Conflicts of interest commonly arise, but they do not need to present a problem if they are openly and effectively managed. A conflict of interest is where the personal interests of an individual or group of individuals directly conflict with the best interests of U3A Croydon, its members, or where the decisions or actions of individuals may be influenced by their personal interest rather than those of the Association.

This will include situations in which:

1. An individual's relationship with friends, family members or associates influence decisions about volunteer positions and roles, service allocation (courses and activities), awarding of contracts or disciplinary action.
2. An individual, their friends, family members or associates may make a financial gain or gain some other form of advantage from that individual's position at U3A Croydon.
3. An individual is involved with another organisation that is in a competitive relationship with U3A Croydon and therefore may have access to our plans or financial information.
4. An individual has an affiliation or allegiance to other individuals, groups or agencies that require them to act in the interests of that individual, group or agency.
5. An individual uses their position at U3A Croydon to coerce members to adopt certain beliefs, ideologies or theories.

### **PURPOSE:**

Actions and decisions taken at all levels in U3A Croydon need to be informed, objective and fair. Conflicts of interest need to be identified and action taken to ensure that personal or individual interests do not affect the services, activities or decisions of U3A Croydon. The purpose of this policy is to (1) raise awareness about the importance of avoiding and/or disclosing a conflict of interest; and (2) outline steps the Committee of Management can take to avoid or resolve conflicts of interest.

### **POLICY:**

U3A Croydon is committed to ensuring that personal or individual interests that conflict with the interests of the organisation are identified and managed so that they do not affect the services, activities or decisions of the Association. Specifically we will:

1. Raise awareness of what constitutes a conflict of interest through briefings at Committee Meetings, Tutor's Meetings, and communications with volunteers and members.
2. Publish a Conflict of Interest Guideline in the newsletter, the website and the notice board.
3. Advise those members with a conflict (or those who think they may have a conflict) to disclose the conflict /potential conflict to the Secretary.
4. Prohibit a member from voting on any matter in which they are in conflict.
5. Take action to resolve any conflict of interest according to the procedures outlined below.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. Members will be made aware of this policy via the newsletter, website, email and notice board. Tutors will be made aware of this policy via the quarterly Tutors Meeting and Tutor's Handbook.
2. If a member has a concern about a current or potential conflict of interest, they should notify the Secretary outlining their concerns. The Secretary will notify the President immediately.
3. The Secretary will maintain a confidential Register of Interests and enter any conflict of interest disclosed, or concerns raised, in the Register of Interests. Any entries on the Register of Interests will be noted on the Secretary's Report to the Committee at the next Committee Meeting.
4. If the matter is considered minor and can be resolved through discussion and awareness raising, the Secretary or their delegate will address the matter directly with the person deemed to have the conflict of interest. They will explain this policy to them, offer them options to avoid the conflict, and request they take action to avoid or resolve the conflict.
5. If the matter is considered more serious it will be discussed with the Committee of Management and a determination will be made as to action needed to be taken to resolve the conflict.
6. The individual who is deemed to have the more serious conflict of interest will be advised of this by the Committee of Management and directed as to the action they need to take to resolve the conflict of interest.
7. If concerns remain, in either minor or serious cases, the Committee of Management will decide what further action is necessary to resolve the conflict of interest. This may include terminating a person's volunteer role, or disciplinary action in accordance with U3A Croydon's Constitution.

**RESPONSIBILITY:**

- The Committee of Management will take action, according to this policy, to resolve any conflict of interest.
- The Secretary will maintain a Register of Interests and advise the Committee, according to the above procedures, of any breaches of the Conflict of Interest policy.
- The Committee of Management will review the Register of Interests regularly to identify any emerging issues or trends that could impact negatively on the Association and take appropriate action.
- The Committee of Management of U3A Croydon will establish, implement, publicise and review this policy.

**AUTHORISATION:**

This Conflict of Interest Policy was adopted by the Committee of Management of Croydon and minuted as such, on 28 May 2018. This policy will be published by the Committee of Management of U3A Croydon on its website within 4 weeks of the date of this authorisation.

Version Number	Conflict of Interest Policy V3.01
28 May 2018	Date endorsed by Committee of Management of U3A Croydon