



Conflicts of Interest Policy

Atlas Star IT Centre

Atlas Star IT Centre expects anyone employed, engaged by or working on behalf of the organisation to conduct themselves with or exhibit:

- Integrity
- Selflessness
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Objectivity
- Impartiality, and
- Leadership.

1. Policy Statement

Atlas Star IT Centre is committed to maintaining high standards of integrity and transparency in all its operations. The purpose of this policy is to guide staff and any other relevant individuals on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of their roles as teachers, tutors, support staff invigilators, and assessment/exam-related administrators. This policy applies to all staff or other individuals whenever they interact or potentially interact with any of the assessment/exam-related functions. This policy outlines the institution's approach to identifying, declaring, and managing conflicts of interest to ensure fairness and the protection of all stakeholders.

This policy:

- Defines what is meant by conflict of interest.
- Describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of working for the institution in an assessment/exam-related function.
- Sets out which conflicts can be managed and how they should be managed, and those which are considered unmanageable and therefore cannot be allowed.
- Illustrates potential conflict of interest situations, some of which are not obvious.

The most important feature of the policy is the instruction that staff and relevant individuals should always disclose an activity if there is any doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest. The policy describes how and when such disclosures should be made, that is, as soon as potential or actual conflict is discovered. This should be done by completion of a report at the time (i.e. before the activity is carried out). The policy describes the procedures that should be followed and how to handle potential conflicts of interest.

This policy applies to staff and other individuals who interact or potentially interact with the assessment-related work/examinations of the institution. This includes individuals involved with all aspects of devising, setting, marking, administering, invigilating, internally verifying or any other activity connected with the assessment of candidates and associated supporting resources and services.

The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include full-time, part-time, prorated and support staff of the school and any associate staff including external examiners. The content of



the policy cannot cover every potential conflict and must be interpreted in the light of the particular circumstances of each conflict.

What is a Conflict of Interest?

A simple definition of conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual or organisation has competing interests or loyalties.

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal, financial, or other interests could interfere with their professional responsibilities or the best interests of the organization.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Personal relationships influencing decision-making or hiring processes.
- Financial interests in vendors or contractors engaged by the institution.
- Accepting gifts or benefits that could impair impartiality.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and representatives of Atlas Star IT Centre.

3. Identifying Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when:

- An individual has a financial or personal interest that may compromise their objectivity.
- A personal or family relationship creates a bias in decision-making. For instance, an individual scheduled to assess, invigilate or internally verify the work of friends, relatives etc.
- An individual uses their position for personal gain.
- Engagements outside the organization negatively impact job performance or decision-making.
- An individual whose personal interest's conflict with his/her professional position.

4. Declaring a Possible Conflict of Interest

All employees and representatives must declare any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest in a timely manner. This includes:

1. **Self-Declaration:** Submit a written disclosure to the immediate supervisor or line manager.
2. **Reporting Others:** If an employee suspects another individual of having a conflict of interest, they must report it to their supervisor or line manager.



5. Managing Declared Conflicts

Upon disclosure, the following steps will be taken:

1. **Assessment:** The declared conflict will be reviewed by a designated committee or supervisor to determine its nature and severity.
2. **Mitigation Plan:** A plan will be implemented to mitigate the impact of the conflict, which may include:
 - Recusal from decision-making processes.
 - Reassigning duties to avoid potential bias.
 - Terminating relationships or interests causing the conflict.
3. **Documentation:** All declared conflicts and their resolutions will be documented in the employee's personnel file.

6. Consequences of Failing to Declare a Conflict

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest, whether intentional or unintentional, may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:

- Written warnings.
- Suspension without pay.
- Termination of employment.
- Legal action if the conflict leads to breaches of the law or organizational policies.

7. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

8. Contact for Questions

For questions or guidance on this policy, please contact [info@atlasstar.com.np].

Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to adhere to the Atlas Star IT Centre's Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____