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**Conflict of Interest Policy**

**Scope and purpose of the policy**

This conflict of interest policy relates to any aspect of RWPN’s work where a Conflict of Interest (CoI) may arise (or where one may be perceived to arise).

The policy acknowledges that the vision rehabilitation sector is small and that the range of specialist knowledge, skills and expertise is limited. It also acknowledges that there is frequent dialogue between RWPN (as the sector professional body) and any organisations who employ or train the workforce.

This dialogue, in itself, is a good thing and has led directly to the growing strength of the sector. However, RWPN recognises its responsibility to be, and be seen to be, independent of other parties involved in any relationships where impartiality is required. The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to identify areas where conflict of interest may arise and identify measures that RWPN will take to address these.

**What is a Conflict of Interest?**

A conflict of interest is identified where a personal interest (including those of their partner or close family) or professional interest could have the potential to influence or affect their ability to act in the best interests of RWPN. Interests may be financial or non-financial or commercial and may be specific or non-specific to the matter in question.

**Identifying Conflicts of Interest**

A CoI can arise in any situation or setting. However, the most likely CoIs may arise in, but are not limited to, the following situations:

* Where members of the Registration and Professional Standards Committee may have prior personal or professional knowledge of the individuals or the setting involved in a formal Concern or Complaint
* Where a member of the management committee is required to participate in decision-making that may have a beneficial impact on, or be influenced by, their employer
* Where an independent assessor of a registrant’s Continuing Professional Development portfolio may have close personal or professional links to that registrant
* Where an employer is paying the registration fees for a registrant and a complaint is brought against the registrant
* Where a member of RWPN may be undertaking external quality review work in relation to the Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education’s Apprenticeship Standard which involves scrutiny of the work of the independent assessors (who may be RWPN registrants)

**Declarations of Interest**

All members of RWPN committees and sub-groups will be required to complete a declaration of interest form at the point of election or re-election, and state any CoI in relation to agenda items at the start of any meeting. In the event of complaints and concerns process where the registrant or situation is known to a committee member, the CoI will be notified to the Chair of the Registration and Professional Standards Committee, and appropriate action taken.

Any external assessor of any CPD portfolio will be required to identify any potential CoI in relation to the registrant whose portfolio they are assessing. Where such arises, the portfolio will be reassigned. If this is not possible, it will be double marked.

A declaration of interest form is provided at the foot of this policy document.

**Review of Policy**

This policy shall be subject to review on a 12-monthly basis. The purpose of any review is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the policy and to amend the policy in the light of any recommendations.

Date of Policy: April 2020

Reviewed: October 2021

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**Conflict of Interest Declaration Form**

The Rehabilitation Workers Professional Network values the involvement of its members, its committee, and business, voluntary and statutory sector partners to support and enable the organisation’s work. Conflicts of interest are not uncommon when individuals undertake different roles with different responsibilities. Individuals covered by the Conflict of Interest policy are required to complete a declaration form.

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**Name of project or role**:

e.g. *member of RWPN committee*

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| --- | --- |
| Type of interest | Description of interest |
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|  |  |

Signature

Name Date

Job title (if relevant) Employer