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**Conflict of Interest Disclosure Procedure at the Saudi Electronic University**

# **Introduction**

**The Saudi Electronic University (SEU) has always maintained the privacy of its employees, staff and faculty members, and does not interfere with their personal affairs. However, the university also seeks responsibility in achieving and applying transparency, independence and integrity when providing its educational, research and community services. As a result, staff and faculty members are required to act with integrity and honesty in the best interest of the university when performing their work duties, especially those that are related to activities and relationships with external entities. The university assumes and expects that such duties and activities shall not interfere with obligations assigned to its employees. Therefore, staff and faculty members should not exploit the trust given by the university to gain personal influence at the expense of the university.**

# **Document Scope**

**SEU defined its Conflict of Interest Policy to maintain community trust and to protect its integrity and academic reputation. This policy applies to employees of the university, staff and faculty members, and to all existing relationships.**

# **Goals**

* **Developing the required frameworks and regulations to clarify the relationships between staff and faculty members with external entities and their associations with them regarding financial and non-financial dealings.**
* **Enhancing the value of integrity among staff and faculty members and avoiding any actual, potential or expected conflict of interest.**

# **Definitions**

**I. Conflict of Interest**

**A conflict of interest occurs when an external entity or activity has the possibility of: (1) a staff or faculty member giving unfair advantage - in any shape or form - to friends and family members; (2) influencing a scientific or professional judgment made about a staff or faculty member; (3) influencing and making a biased decision with regards to academic research activities; or (4) influencing a decision made by a faculty member with regards to teaching, student affairs, university resources, training, or any other university matters.**

**II. Conflict of Commitment**

**A conflict of commitment happens when an external entity or activity has the possibility of: (1) interfering with SEU’s mission, service or research; or (2) interfering with a staff or faculty member's ability to fulfill his/her university responsibilities and obligations.**

# **Examples of Conflicts of Interest**

* **When a university staff or faculty member uses their position, information or business opportunities, gained by working at the university, to obtain personal benefits or to achieve benefits for a third party.**
* **When a university staff or faculty member decides or engages in a deal or financial process with a company that he/she personally benefits from.**
* **When a university staff or faculty member engages in external work that may hinder the effectiveness and objectivity of his/ her work at the university.**
* **When a university staff or faculty member takes advantage of his/her relationship with students to achieve personal benefits.**
* **Using university property or resources to provide services to external entities without gaining the university’s approval.**
* **Accepting gifts from external entities in exchange for granting special privileges and benefits.**
* **Participating in educational, consulting, or research activities with relatives at the university.**

# **Rights and Responsibilities of Staff and Faculty Members Regarding the Conflict of Interest Policy**

**I. Staff and Faculty Members’ Rights**

**Staff and faculty members have the right to: (1) personally or professionally engage in duties or perform activities with external entities provided that they do not compromise their obligations to the university or conflict with SEU’s best interest or related government rules and regulations, and (2) have access to SEU’s Conflict of Interest Policy.**

**II. Staff and Faculty Members’ Responsibilities**

**Staff and faculty members at SEU are responsible for: (1) disclosing information regarding all actual and expected conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment to SEU’s designated officials; (2) resolving any conflict by adhering to a plan in consultation with SEU’s designated officials; (3) avoiding the use of their occupational position to give unfair advantage - in any shape or form - to friends and family members; and (4) using university resources as authorized by SEU’s designated officials.**

# **Method of Disclosure**

**SEU is confident that its staff and faculty members are aware of the harms that could be caused by conflicts of interest and therefore expects them to distance themselves from engaging in work that may harm the reputation of the university. Moreover, the university provides a clear mechanism for staff and faculty members to disclose any existing or potential conflict of interest. This includes filling in the "Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form", signing it by the direct manager (Vice-Rector, Dean, Department Director) and submitting it to the specialized committee.**

# **Violations**

**If determined by SEU’s designated officials that a staff or faculty member violated this policy, he/she may be subject to penalties, according to applied government rules and regulations, including the termination of service at SEU. Violations include, but are not limited to, the following:**

**I. Failing to disclose a situation of actual or expected conflict of interest or conflict of commitment.**

**II. Failing to resolve a conflict of interest by adhering to a plan in consultation with SEU’s designated officials.**

# **Disputes and Appeals**

**A staff or faculty member has the right to dispute any action related to being involved in an actual or expected conflict of interest or conflict of commitment. The office of the university's rector shall deal with such disputes and appeals in consultation with the committee responsible for handling such cases.**