

TEF Panel: delegated authority and rules of procedure for the main committee and any sub-committees

Annex B: Conflicts of interest procedures

1. To ensure impartiality in the assessments, any panel member with a declared conflict of interest in relation to a particular provider will not be involved in the assessment or decision making for that provider.
2. A conflict of interest is a situation in which personal interests may compromise, or have the appearance of or potential for, compromising professional judgement and integrity.
3. For the purposes of the TEF assessments, a conflict of interest is likely to exist if a panel member has (within five years prior to the assessment, unless a different timeframe is specified):
 - been employed by a provider
 - studied at a provider either at undergraduate or postgraduate level
 - an immediate relative (parent, sibling, child or partner) who has been employed or has studied at a provider
 - been a member of a provider's governing body
 - held an honorary position at a provider
 - been directly involved in some form of partnership delivery with a provider, for example where their provider is an awarding body or a delivery partner and they have had a role in that partnership
 - acted as a consultant, giving paid or unpaid advice to a provider
 - undertaken internal or external validation or examination for a provider (including at postgraduate level)
 - a financial interest in a provider
 - been shortlisted for a post at a provider within the last two years.
4. Each panel member must, to the best of their knowledge:
 - a. declare to the OfS any such conflict of interest they hold with a UK higher education provider that is eligible to participate in the TEF, prior to the start of the assessments; and

- b. during the term of their appointment to the panel, notify the OfS of any additions or changes to such conflicts of interest.
5. Where a panel member is uncertain as to whether a particular circumstance constitutes a conflict of interest, the Management Group will decide.
6. Where the Management Group becomes aware that a panel member has not declared a conflict of interest, it will advise the panel member to declare that conflict of interest.
7. The OfS is likely to publish panel members' declared conflicts of interest.
8. Where a panel member has declared a conflict in relation to a particular provider, the panel member will not be involved in the assessment of or decision making for that provider. The following procedures will normally apply:
 - a. The Management Group will not allocate the provider to the panel member for assessment;
 - b. The panel member will not participate in any part of any meeting (or in the conduct of the panel's business by correspondence) or have a vote on any decision relating directly to the assessment of that provider;
 - c. The OfS will restrict the panel member's access to information relating directly to the assessment of that provider.
9. The validity of any proceedings of the panel or any panel sub-committee is not to be affected by any defect in a panel member's declaration of a conflict of interest or the application of these procedures.