

Schedule 1 – Actual, Perceived and Potential Conflict of Interest Examples

These examples provide more information about how situations that may be an actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest.

Actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest	Examples
Links to other organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An RMIT employee who sits on the Board or is a director of another company, may give risk to an actual conflict of interest (e.g. if the employee is asked in their capacity as an RMIT employee to make decisions about whether RMIT should award a contract to the company whose Board they sit on, they may place the interests of the other company in gaining the contract above the interests of RMIT in awarding it to the most appropriate supplier) or a perceived conflict of interest (e.g. where in the situation described they do not actually place the other company’s interests above RMIT’s interests but other tenderers believe the process could be unfair because of the connection). • An RMIT employee engaging in an activity with another organisation (domestic or international), such as research. Even if this were not an actual conflict of interest because RMIT may have no interest in the activity, there may still be a perceived conflict of interest given both the resource commitment from the employee and external perception from regulators and other stakeholders. Where this activity is undertaken in the ordinary course of the employee’s role (such as co-authoring a research paper) and with the explicit consent of their manager, a conflict of interest declaration may not be required but it is the responsibility of the employee to consider these individual situations and assess whether a declaration may be required. • An RMIT employee who is employed and maintains a position at other educational institutions may have a conflict of interest where materials from one institution are used for the employee’s role at another institution or where there are timing conflicts for the employee’s duties. This conflict may be manageable with clear guidelines about how the employee will manage the conflict and there is agreement from their people manager.
Preferencing of family, friends or associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An RMIT employee sits on an interview panel and one of the candidates the panel interviews is a family member/friend/associate of the employee. There is scope for this situation to constitute an actual conflict of interest (e.g. if the employee asks overly easy questions of their known candidate, provides the questions in advance or tries to sway the panel to appointing their known candidate regardless of merit) or at the very least a perceived conflict of interest (where other candidates feel the job will not be awarded on merit because of the potential for the employee to favour the known candidate).

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An RMIT employee hires a family member/relative to work on a casual basis during semester without undertaking a merit-based selection and interview process. This is likely to be either an actual or potential conflict of interest (e.g. because RMIT's interest is in ensuring that roles are only created and filled where strictly necessary and where an objective and fair recruitment process has been undertaken, and in minimising complaints from others about recruitment that lacks transparency or is unnecessary). An RMIT employee's partner is an external seller of a product used by students in an RMIT academic program. There is scope for this situation to constitute an actual conflict of interest (e.g. if the employee ensures the product remains in use even though it is not the best or most appropriate product for this use) or a perceived conflict of interest (e.g. if students become aware of the relationship and believe the product has been chosen over competitor products because of the relationship). The employee should excuse themselves from any decisions relating to whether the product is to be used.
Engaging in outside work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An RMIT employee works on their own project or business during the hours they should ordinarily be performing work for RMIT. This is likely to be an actual conflict of interest, because the employee's interest in furthering their own project or business is incompatible with RMIT's interest in having the employee perform the work that RMIT is paying them to do. An RMIT employee is an author of educational materials which they encourage or require students to purchase in order to fulfil requirements in the courses they teach. This is likely to be an actual conflict of interest as the employee is likely to receive a financial benefit from the sales of the self-authored educational materials. The financial benefit received from the sales will impact the employee's ability to remain impartial when allocating educational materials for the courses they teach. In this instance, the Learning and Teaching Committee within each School will consider these conflict declarations and submissions made by academic staff when seeking to prescribe self-authored learning resources and make recommendations to the relevant College Deputy PVC Learning and Teaching, which will require DVCE approval (refer to the Self-Authored Learning Resources: Conflict of Interest Disclosure Guidance Materials).
Engaging in activities that may impact your ability to perform your role adequately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An RMIT employee holds a substantive role as a VE teacher in School X. They are offered additional teaching duties in RMIT's School Y, resulting in an excessive workload. There is scope for this situation to constitute an actual conflict of interest (e.g. if the excessive workload results in a drop in the employee's performance at School X or Y, then this would be putting the employee's interest in extra financial remuneration above RMIT's interest in having the employee perform at the expected level) or a potential conflict of interest (for example, where the additional workload may result in a drop in performance).
Personal relationship with a student or another employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A relationship of a personal nature between employees where one employee is involved in the selection, appointment or promotion of another or is in a supervisory role and responsible for employment-related decisions involving another employee is a conflict of interest that will need to be managed and disclosed.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a conflict of interest where staff members with personal, commercial, familial or other significant relationships with students are involved in activities such as supervision, assessment, recording of results and grades, awards, prizes or scholarships (and other funds), student conduct and appeal processes, or other decision-making processes where a conflict exists or has the potential to exist. Staff must avoid and declare the conflict and ensure they are not involved in decision making activities involving the student. • Personal relationships between staff and students under their responsibility in areas such as teaching/learning, assessment, selection, pastoral care or research contravene the RMIT Commitment Statement on Staff-Student Relationships, the Code of Conduct and workplace behaviour policies. Such relationships are a conflict of interest which can have a detrimental effect on the learning and teaching environment, other students and colleagues.
Use of University resources or branding for personal benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An RMIT employee uses the university's resources or branding for personal purposes. This is likely to be an actual conflict of interest (e.g. because the employee has prioritised their own personal interests in using the resources and branding without payment or approval, over RMIT's interest in ensuring that its resources and branding are only used for RMIT-related purposes).
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A staff member with decision making powers in relation to a tender offered by the University accepts a gift or hospitality from a person associated with a company which is tendering the work from the University. • A staff member or a member of their immediate family has a direct or indirect financial interest, or holds a directorship, in a company or other entity which supplies, or is likely to supply, goods and/or services to the University, or which operates in competition with the University. • A staff member takes part in assessing a tender application where he/she has, or has had, a personal relationship with a person or organisation that has submitted a tender application. • Selection as a University supplier by a staff member who has a personal or economic interest in that entity, this includes engaging a family member as an independent contractor, subcontractor or consultant.