

Factsheet:

Conflicts of Interest

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1. Overview:

This factsheet accompanies the Conflict of Interest policy and aims to overview several examples of potential and actual conflicts of interest and how they should be declared and dealt with.

2. Conflicts of Interest:

- 2.1. As a small organisation with individuals often holding multiple roles, involvements locally and nationally and outside of SSAGO in Scouting, Guiding and university contexts it is expected conflicts of interests will arise within the organisation.
- 2.2. Where there is any potential a conflict may occur or may be perceived to be occurring it is important members declare and discuss these during the meeting and this is recorded.
- 2.3. Recording conflicts of interest helps maintain the transparency of SSAGO and ensures we are following our legal obligations.
- 2.4. A potential conflict of interest is something which may be perceived as a conflict of interest to an external person without access to the full information, however it is possible for the individual to act according to their
- 2.5. When a conflict of interest is declared the remaining committee may decide on how this should be managed, this could be through any combination of the following:
 - 2.5.1. Exclusion from participating in the discussion, removal of speaking rights.
 - 2.5.2. Exclusion from voting on any related motions.
 - 2.5.3. Exclusion from being present for the discussion.
 - 2.5.4. Reduction of involvement in conflicting activities.
 - 2.5.5. Voluntary resignation from a conflicting role.
 - 2.5.6. Close oversight of the process by other committee members.
 - 2.5.7. Removal of the chair for the duration of the discussion.
- 2.6. SSAGO Clubs, Events and other Committees which do not have bank accounts provided by National SSAGO do not have to follow this policy, however they may choose to.
- 2.7. Clubs, Events and other Committees may also be bound by Conflict of Interest policies of their Students Union, University, Scouting or Guiding.
- 2.8. Conflicts may span multiple meetings or topics, as such the conflict only needs to be recorded the first time it is declared unless there are future changes.

2.9. Conflicts should be recorded again where there is a change to the conflict, for example responsibilities change, or a change in the management of the conflict, for instance if the topics raised in future meetings means the declared conflict becomes more relevant.

3. Examples:

3.1. Club Member and Exec

A member of the national exec is a member of a club that has submitted a development fund bid, at the start of the meeting the exec member declares that they are part of the club and may receive benefits if the bid is accepted through indirect use of the equipment as a club member.

The remainder of the exec decide that this is a conflict of interest and that the appropriate management is that the conflicted member of exec isn't present during the discussion and voting on the results of the development fund bid.

This is recorded in the register of interests.

This is still a conflict whether or not the club uses a bank account provided by national SSAGO or the member of exec being involved in the development fund bid.

If the member of exec was now a member of the club committee and involved with the writing of the bid. There are two potential options:

- If the club does not have a bank account provided by national SSAGO then the policy does not reply, they should declare their involvement in writing the bid in the exec meeting.
- If the club has a bank account provided by national SSAGO, they should declare their interest at the club committee meeting as part of the National Exec. The remaining club committee discusses and decides that as long as the member of national exec removes themselves from the discussion regarding approving the bid they are able to be fully involved in writing it. They record this on the register of interests and send it to the national secretary for inclusion on the register of interests, to be recorded separately to the conflict in the exec meeting.

3.2. Event Committee and Scouting/Guiding Role

An event committee (with a bank account provided by national SSAGO) decides it needs to borrow or hire several items to put on the event. It is agreed by the committee they should hire a large mess tent for use for catering. It is suggested that equipment could be borrowed or hired from X Scout and Guide Group, which a member of the committee is a part of.

The member of this group declares their role in the group, however as part of the group they are a good person to liaise with the group about this hire. The remaining committee decides to ask the conflicted individual to remove themselves from the meeting while they discuss what they want to borrow/hire from the group and what is a reasonable cost for this. Once this is agreed, they decide to allow the conflicted individual to act as a liaison between the event committee and the group, however only to hire the items agreed at the price agreed. Another member of the events committee oversees this and it is ensured all the discussions take place over email and the rest of the committee remain CC'd into the discussion.

Details of this conflict and how it was managed are sent to the national secretary for inclusion in the register of interests.

This is still a conflict even if the group offers the equipment without payment from the committee. The remaining committee should consider if accepting this donation is appropriate for the event without the presence of the conflicted individual.

Similar conflicts could also arise where the event committee is receiving a donation from any other company or society a committee member is a part of.

3.3. SSAGO Full Committee and Club Committee

A SSAGO Club Representative, who sits on the SSAGO Full Committee (or Reps), also sits on their club's committee, either as the SSAGO Rep or another committee role. This club has a bank account owned by national SSAGO so is covered by the conflict of interest policy. The club committee meeting is discussing some upcoming changes to SSAGO Policy.

This situation would not represent a conflict of interest and does not need to be declared. Where a club has it's Club Rep holding a committee position it is expected this individual will be identified as the SSAGO Rep in the minutes as one of their roles.

The Club Rep's role on the full committee is to represent and act in the best interests of their club and it's members to national SSAGO. It is expected that members of a club committee should also be representing and acting in the best interests of their club and it's members and as such holding these two roles creates no conflicts.

3.4. National Exec and Event Committee

A member of the national exec is currently part of the same club as the majority of the committee for a national event (with a bank account provided by national SSAGO). To members of SSAGO it may not be clear if or what the involvement between the exec

member and the event is. The exec member declares this to the next national exec meeting as soon as the conflict is perceived. The other exec members ask for more details about any links and after clarifying the involvement decide that there is no actual conflict of interest. The member continues to take full part in the discussion and voting on issues relating to the national event.

This declaration and the information leading to the decision that this is not a conflict of interest should be recorded in the register of interests.

A few months later the same exec member enters a relationship with a member of the event committee. As a change to the circumstances of their last declaration they declare a further conflict of interest at the next meeting, the member of the event committee also declares a conflict at their event committee meeting.

Both committees discuss these conflicts individually and make their relevant decisions. They both decide that since each individual can act in the interests of the role they hold there is no need to impose any restrictions on either member participating or voting on decisions, however this should remain under review. They also ensure that there is oversight from the rest of both committees in the communication between the event committee and the exec.

The event committee sends the conflict and their management to the national secretary who records it in the register of interests. They also record the declaration from the exec member in the register of interests, separately from both the event declaration and the previous declaration on this topic.

3.5. Serious Conflict of Interest

Two members of the exec are involved with planning a national event (with a National SSAGO bank account). The remaining three members of exec decide that this involvement is a conflict and they should be restricted from voting on motions relating to the event.

The event wishes to submit a development fund bid to fund equipment for theirs and future events. Such a development fund bid would usually be approved by the National Exec, however with two members removed due to conflicts the National Exec does not meet the required quorum of four members. This then makes this a serious conflict of interest as this has made the committee unable to reach quorum. The fact a serious conflict has arisen should be recorded in the register of interests.

The remainder of the exec takes the decision to approve this policy to a vote of the full committee. Both members of the exec declare the conflict again to the meeting, where it is decided they won't be part of the discussion or voting on this part of the full committee

meeting. As one of the conflicted individuals is the national chair, they pass the chair of the full committee to the national secretary (who is unconflicted) for the duration of this topic.

If instead only one member of the exec was involved then the national exec would be able to make the quorum of 4, hence this would not be a serious conflict of interest unless there is a serious amount of money or risk involved in the decision. Any remaining member of the exec may determine that this is a serious conflict and take the decision to the full committee.

3.6. Scouting/Guiding Roles and SSAGO Roles

It is expected that members of exec and team pink should record any scout and guide roles they hold in the register of interests. Unless any roles declared have involvement at a national level it is unlikely they will cause any conflicts where an Exec discusses relationships with Scouting or Guiding, however the exec should be aware of how their roles may be perceived, especially in relation to certain discussions. Issues which may occur are discussions regarding Network or Inspire, where exec members hold a coordinator or commissioner role or where the Exec discuss working with counties, districts, divisions or regions an Exec member has links too.

As all members of Exec, Team Pink and Event Committees will hold a Scouting Role through the SSAGO Scout Active Support Unit it is not expected these roles will cause a conflict, but they should be recorded in the register of interests.

If members of the Full Committee hold roles in Scouting or Guiding it is only expected these should be declared where they hold a district, division or higher level role of particular relevance to the discussion. Appropriate management may include the club nominating a replacement rep for the duration of the topic or appropriate oversight to ensure the conflicted rep is voting in line with their club's wishes and best intentions. Any declarations made should be included in the register of interests and the relevant role held recorded, where oversight of a club vote is chosen, the records of this vote should also be recorded.