

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All Dispute Resolution Staff will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Organisation on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of QASSS Ltd decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of staff.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- A member of staff who deals with a complaint against a firm which once employed them
- A member of staff who is friends (rather than just professionally amicable) or related to a firm which is the subject of a complaint
- A member of staff, or a staff member's friend or family who has a financial interest in a company which is the subject of a complaint

Upon appointment, each Dispute Resolution Officer will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file and will be updated as appropriate.

Where a conflict of interest arises the Dispute Resolution Officer will speak to the Outsourced Services Manager who will notify by email the Quality Assurance Manager.

The following procedure will apply when a conflict of interest has been identified

**(a)** where possible, the Dispute Resolution official is replaced by another Dispute Resolution official to handle the particular dispute

**(b)** if the DR official cannot be replaced by another DR official—

- (i) the DR official must refrain from conducting the alternative dispute resolution procedure, and
- (ii) the body must, where possible, propose to the parties that they submit the dispute to another DR entity which is competent to deal with it

**(c)** if the dispute cannot be transferred to another DR entity, the body—

- (i) must inform the parties to the dispute of the circumstances of the conflict of interest,
- (ii) must inform the parties to the dispute that they have the right to object to the conflicted person continuing to handle the dispute, and
- (iii) can only continue to deal with the dispute if no party to the dispute objects

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and staff should respect its spirit as well as its wording.