

Policy on Personal Relationships at Work

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to all Ealing Music Service (EMS) staff regarding personal relationships within the EMS to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest or misuse of authority.

The EMS values the diversity of its people and is committed to promoting equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination. Therefore, staff will apply and operate this policy fairly and in doing so ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, trade union membership/activity or marital status.

Introduction

The EMS recognises the importance of preserving the integrity of professional relationships between members of staff as well as with schools' staff, members of staff of partner organisations, consultants, contractors and/or suppliers. Whilst most social and personal relationships need not present a difficulty, and can be entirely beneficial in that they promote good working relationships, it is recognised that in certain circumstances, the staff member(s) concerned will need to withdraw from certain decisions or from undertaking certain roles, to protect themselves and the EMS from any possible criticism of unfair bias.

As school students are minors and/or members of EMS staff are in *loco parentis*, staff must not enter in to personal relationships with students under any circumstance. Any breach of this stipulation will be treated very seriously by Ealing Council. This includes investigation of the above in accordance with the Disciplinary procedures.

Definition of Related Persons

In the context of this policy, a personal relationship is defined as:

- a family relationship;
- a business/commercial/financial relationship;
- a romantic/sexual relationship.

The above definitions are examples of personal relationships which may give rise to conflicts of interest in the workplace, however, personal relationships are not restricted to these examples and anyone who considers that they are in a potential conflict of interest should declare it as outlined in the policy below.

Good Practice

Staff must always conduct themselves in ways that are consistent with their role and duties, and within all Ealing Council Human Resources (HR) policies (including those relating to equal opportunity, harassment and any codes of conduct for particular occupational groups). The



recruitment, selection, treatment, development, pay reviews and promotion of staff should be based solely on evidence and not be in any way affected by personal relationships at work.

Where personal relationships occur between members of staff, it is the responsibility of both individuals to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Identifying and declaring a personal relationship at work

Staff should declare to their line manager or Head of Service any existing or new personal relationship they have with other members of staff, schools staff, members of staff of partner organisations, consultants, contractors or suppliers which may give rise to an actual or potential conflict of interest, trust or breach of confidentiality. The line manager or Head of Service will treat these matters in confidence and in consultation with the member(s) of staff, find ways in which potential conflicts of interest can be avoided.

All declarations will be treated in confidence, recorded in writing and placed on the employees Personal File within iTrent. Should there be any changes in the future, the member of staff should request that the document should be removed from the file and destroyed.

Staff who declare a personal relationship at work, should be treated fairly and with due regard to equality of treatment issues.

Staff who are uncertain about whether there is likely to be any risk of a potential conflict of interest emerging from a personal relationship at work, should discuss the matter with their line manager (or with the Head of Service where the issue may involve the immediate line manager), in the first instance. Staff should approach their line manager in confidence should a relationship develop that may potentially contravene the principles of this policy.

Where either a personal relationship as defined above, or failure to comply with this policy (following investigation), results in an unfair advantage or disadvantage to either of the parties to the relationship, the matter will be considered seriously by the Ealing Council. This includes investigation of the above in accordance with the Disciplinary procedures.