

Standards of Conduct and Conflict/Interest Policy

Category: Human Resources	Policy Number: 1504	Effective Date: 91-11-16	Related Policies: 1502 7507
Approved By: Administration	Maintained By: Vice President, Human Resources	Amended:	Review Due: 05-09-13

Foreword

This policy applies to all persons employed at BCIT.

The objectives of this policy are to describe the standards of conduct expected of employees and to define employer and employee responsibilities related to them. Employees who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

General Standards of Conduct

The conduct of employees must not bring the Institute into disrepute. Accordingly, employees must avoid situations which violate the standards of conduct policy or result in a public perception that a violation has occurred. If an employee becomes involved in such a situation, the employee must disclose the matter to the direct manager and remedy it immediately.

The conduct and language of employees in the workplace are expected to meet acceptable social standards. Employees in dealing with other persons in the workplace are to treat them with respect and dignity and to refrain from exploiting a work relationship for private advantage or benefit.

1. Relationships with Students

Employees in teaching position, or who have influence, input or decision-making power over a student's marks, academic interests or other matters shall not become involved in a business or inappropriate personal relationship with a student. Additionally, in all dealings with students, employees shall ensure that their own behaviour is consistent with all aspects of this policy, especially the General Standards of Conduct outlined above.

2. Working Relationships

Employees who are direct relatives or who share the same household shall not be employed in situations where:

- a reporting relationship exists where the superior has influence, input, or decision-making power over an employee's performance evaluation, salary, premiums, special permissions, potential for promotion, condition of work, and similar matters; or
- the relationship affords an opportunity for collusion between the two employees which would have a detrimental effect on the Institute.

The above policy may be waived provided that the President:

- upon review, finds it essential to do so in order to meet operation needs, and,
- is satisfied that sufficient safeguards are in place to ensure that the Institute's interests are not compromised.

Employees are to disqualify themselves as participants in personnel decisions when their objectivity would be compromised for any reason. For example, employees shall not participate in staffing actions involving direct relatives, persons married to direct relatives, or persons living in the same household.

3. Confidentiality

Employees shall not divulge information received through their position or office which is not available to the general public unless prior authorization is given for its release.

Where an employee has reason to believe that there exists a contravention of the law, a waste of BCIT funds or assets, or a danger to public health or safety, the employee shall bring the matter to the attention of the President through normal Institute channels, or directly if necessary. Where this does not resolve the matter, a complaint should be made in writing to the Board of Governors.

4. Conflicts of Interest

BCIT recognizes the right of employees to be involved in activities as citizens of the community but employees must keep their role as private citizens separate and distinct from their responsibilities as employees of BCIT and they must avoid conflict of interest situations.

Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to:

a. Compromising Situations

An employee's actions should not compromise or undermine the trust which public places in the Institute.

Employees should not place themselves in a situation where they are under obligation to any person who might benefit from or seek to gain special consideration or favour. The honesty and impartiality of employees must be above suspicion.

Employees have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that does not either compromise the ability of the Institute to accomplish its mandate or undermine confidence in the employee's ability to discharge assigned responsibilities properly.

b. Conflicts Between Job Responsibilities and the Employee's Private Affairs

No conflict shall exist between the private interests of employees and the discharge of their duties or the operations of BCIT. Employees shall endeavour to avoid the public perception that such a conflict of interest exists. Upon appointment, employees shall arrange their private affairs in a manner that will prevent any conflicts of interest from arising.

Employees, in the performance of their duties, shall not give preferential treatment to relatives or friends or to organizations in which they or their relatives or friends have an interest, financial or otherwise.

Employees shall exercise care in the management of their private affairs so as not to benefit, or be perceived to benefit, from:

- the use of information acquired solely by reason of their employment; or
- any Institute transactions over which they can influence decisions (for example, investment, borrowing, purchases, sales, contracts, grants, discretionary approvals and appointments).

Employees shall not misuse their position, office affiliation, or Institute property to peruse personal interests.

c. Acceptance of Gifts and Other Complimentary Items

An employee shall not, either directly or indirectly, demand or accept for personal benefit a gift, favour or service from any individual, organization or corporation other than:

- the normal exchange of hospitality between persons doing business together;
- tokens exchanged as part of protocol;
- the normal presentation of gifts to persons participating in public functions; or
- the normal exchange of gifts between friends.

Furthermore, employees **ARE NOT TO ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING WITHOUT ONE-UP APPROVAL:**

- gifts or any other complimentary items with values in excess of \$200
- gifts or other complimentary items with values in excess of \$200 which may compromise the objectivity of the employee or result in a perception that the employee's objectivity is compromised. In case of doubt, an employee should err on the side of getting approval.

5. Outside Remuneration

Employees may engage in remunerative employment with another employer, carry on a business, receive remuneration from public funds for activities outside their position provided that:

- it does not interfere with the performance of their duties as an employee;
- it does not bring BCIT into disrepute;
- it does not represent a conflict of interest (refer to Conflict of Interest section of this policy);
- they do not have an advantage derived from their employment at BCIT;

- it is not performed in such a way as to appear to be an official act of BCIT, or to represent Institute opinion or policy;
- it does not involve the use of BCIT premises, services, equipment or supplies to which employees have access by virtue of their Institute employment.

Related Policies:

- Policy 1502, Guidelines for Serving on External Bodies as They Relate to BCIT
- Policy 7507, Harassment and Discrimination