



Conflict of Interest Policy

Oversight Body: Chair

Date Passed: April 2, 2026

Date of Review: January 2029

Related Documents: Executive Board Policy, Bylaws Article 2, Bylaws Article 10

Definitions

Conflict	A real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest or conflict of commitment.
Conflict of Commitment	A conflict of commitment exists when an employee's external or personal activities interfere, or may reasonably be perceived to interfere, with their primary responsibilities and obligations to the Acadia Students' Union (ASU).
Conflict of Interest	A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's decisions or actions could be influenced by personal or financial interests, or those of a closely associated person.

Conflicts may be:

Real conflict of interest	A situation where an employee's decisions or actions have been influenced by personal or financial interests.
Potential conflict of interest	A situation where a real conflict could reasonably occur in the future.
Perceived conflict of interest	A situation where an impartial observer might reasonably believe a real or potential conflict exists.
SRC Member	A person representing the ASU on the Student Representative Council (SRC).
Closely Associated Person	A closely associated person includes: Immediate family members, including but not limited to:

- Spouse or Common-law partner
- Child (including adopted or foster children)
- Parent, stepparent, or legal guardian
- Siblings
- Spouse or partner's parents or siblings
- Nieces or nephews (including adopted or foster children)
- A roommate or any person sharing living space with the employee
- Someone who is financially dependent on them (including through rental arrangements)
- Any person financially dependent on the employee or their spouse/partner
- A person with whom the employee has, or previously had, a close personal or sexual relationship

Purpose

The Acadia Students' Union (ASU) is committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of its members by identifying, investigating, and resolving real, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment.

This policy defines conflicts, provides examples, and outlines expectations for employees and representatives when such situations arise.

Scope

The following terms apply to all elected, hired, and appointed officials, part-time staff, honorarium recipients, and volunteers of the ASU, hereafter referred to as employees.

Statement

1. Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

1.1. Personal Relationships

1.1.1. Employees shall not:

Participate in decisions involving contracts, transactions, or agreements that may benefit themselves or a closely associated person.

1.1.2 Participate in decisions to hire or contract a closely associated person.

1.1.3 Hold external employment that creates, or could reasonably be perceived to create, a conflict of interest based on the nature of their role within the Union.

1.2 Financial Interests

Employees shall not:

1.2.1 Participate in ASU negotiations with any entity in which they or a closely associated person hold a financial interest.

1.2.2 Participate in negotiations with an entity that employs them or a closely associated person or holds a contract with them.

1.3 Gifts and Gratuities

Employees shall not:

1.3.1 Solicit or request personal gifts or gratuities from ASU vendors, contractors, donors, students, or parents.

1.3.2 Accept any gifts or gratuities that could reasonably be perceived as a bribe or attempt to influence ASU decision-making.

1.3.3 Examples of prohibited gifts include:

Cash

Loans

Travel

Accommodation

Meals

Entertainment

Equipment

Shares or securities

Any other special benefit or consideration

2. Exceptions

2.1 Exceptions to this policy may only be approved by:

2.1.1 A full approval of the Executive Board during summer months; or

2.1.2 A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the SRC during the academic semester.

3. Disclosing Conflicts of Interest or Commitment

3.1 Employees who believe they may be in conflict—or who believe another employee may be in conflict—must promptly disclose their concern in writing to:

3.1.1 The Chair (September–April); or

3.1.2 The President (May–August).

3.2 Factors considered will include:

- 3.2.1 Whether an alternative arrangement can eliminate the conflict
- 3.2.2 Potential risks to ASU members if the conflict continues
- 3.2.3 Consequences to the ASU's reputation and operations if the activity is allowed or prohibited
- 3.2.4 The rights and interests of the employee concerned
- 3.2.5 All applicable ASU policies

4. Results of Deliberation

4.1 Following the review, a determination may be made that:

- 4.1.1 No conflict exists (real, perceived, or potential);
- 4.1.2 A conflict exists but is permissible with appropriate conditions or remedies; or
- 4.1.3 A conflict exists and is not permissible, requiring remedies or disciplinary action.

4.2 All decisions will be provided in writing.

4.3 Decision-makers may:

- 4.3.1 Impose terms or conditions
- 4.3.2 Set review intervals
- 4.3.3 Reverse or modify decisions at any time

4.4 The employee may accept or appeal the decision.

5. Appeals

5.1 Employees may appeal decisions regarding conflicts of interest or commitment by:

- 5.1.1 Submitting a written appeal to the individual to whom their disclosure would normally be submitted; and
- 5.1.2 Doing so within ten (10) business days of receiving the decision.

5.2 The matter will be reviewed by the Review Board, which may:

- 5.2.1 Affirm the original decision
- 5.2.2 Overturn the decision
- 5.2.3 Issue a new decision

5.3 The Review Board's decision is final.

6. Confidentiality

6.1 The ASU treats all disclosures with discretion.

6.2 However, legal or policy requirements may necessitate sharing information with individuals internal or external to the ASU.

6.3 The ASU will make reasonable efforts to notify the employee in writing before disclosing information to any external party.