

# Check-up: When is there a conflict of interest?

If you sit on a governing body, you will have to deal with conflicts of interest in your role. Below are examples of situations in which conflicts may arise. Have you ever dealt with conflicts like this?

Conflict	Yes	No
Having a direct or indirect interest that conflicts with, or influences the performance of your duties in the organisation you govern.		
Intervening in the everyday management of your organisation to get a friend or relative employed, or to get special treatment or favoured access to particular resources.		
Voting on a matter that helps your own business, or makes it harder for your commercial opposition to compete with you in the marketplace.		
Voting on a land ownership or land use issue that increases the value of your property to the detriment of others.		
Giving a friend or relative a benefit as a result of your position in office, when this benefit would not otherwise be available to them (this is often called an indirect conflict of interest).		
Failing to declare any of these potential conflicts of interest.  For example, one of your family members might quite properly submit a tender to do some paid work for the organisation. When this happens, the elected member should let everyone on the governing body know that they have a potential conflict of interest, and then abstain from (not participate in) voting on that tender.		

If you have a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest, the right thing to do is to tell other people about it or 'disclose it'. By disclosing the conflict of interest, you avoid having a real conflict of interest by saying it to everyone at the meeting (being 'transparent'), and then not voting on the issue yourself (abstaining).