

Staff and Student Relationship Policy

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Approved by: *VCET*
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1. Introduction

We value and rely on the professional integrity of your relationships with other colleagues and with students. To ensure business is conducted and seen to be conducted in a professional manner it is necessary to distinguish between, and take account of, personal relationships which overlap with professional ones.

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

- a close personal relationship
- a family relationship
- a sexual/romantic relationship; or
- a business/commercial/financial relationship

2. Personal relationships with students

We believe that the professional relationship with a student is vital to their educational development and affirms that the teaching relationship is based on trust, confidence and dependency.

Students are entitled to treatment that is fair, lawful and free from a reasonable perception of bias.

2.1. New personal relationships

Staff are prohibited from entering a new close personal, sexual, financial or business relationship with Regent's students. These types of relationships have the potential to lead to abuse of power, breach of trust, favourable/unfavourable treatment, and conflict of interest.

2.2 Existing personal relationships

Where a personal relationship between a staff member and a student exists, for example, prior to potential enrolment by a student to study with us, or if a job applicant secures a job at the university and a student is already studying here, this must be declared by the staff member to their manager as early as possible so that any potential conflicts and reasonable adjustments can be considered.

If the relationship is between an academic colleague and student, alternative teaching, tutoring or assessment arrangements may be made where operationally viable.

3. Personal relationships with colleagues (including agency workers)

Where a personal relationship develops between colleagues who are in line management or supervisory relationship at work, direct line management will cease which means they must not be involved in recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion or in any other management activity or process involving the other party. This is to ensure our ability to make sound, objective business decisions are not conflicted or seen to be conflicted.

Colleagues in a personal relationship should not work together in any circumstance whereby a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage may be perceived to be gained from the overlap of a personal and professional relationship.

Relationships must be declared, to the line manager, or more senior manager if the line manager is part of the personal relationship.

The manager to whom the information is disclosed will then make alternative management arrangements and confirm them in writing to the individuals concerned. If it is considered unavoidable to inform other colleagues about the relationship in order to explain a change in management arrangements, or to manage potential conflicts, this will be discussed with the individuals concerned, before it is disclosed.

If a job applicant knows a staff member at Regent's, this should be declared on their application. The staff member should not be involved in the recruitment process if there is a personal relationship, as defined above, with the applicant.

If there is a prospective business/commercial/financial relationship between Regent's and another party, who has a personal relationship with a member of staff at Regents, this must be declared to the Chief Financial Officer, who will review any potential conflicts or concerns, before any decisions on engagement are made.

2. Declarations

All declarations referred to in this policy should be in writing (for example email) and copied to HR(hr@regents.ac.uk)

3. Breaches of Policy

Breaches of this policy could be considered under the University disciplinary policy, as potential gross misconduct.