



# 澳門科技大學 MACAU UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PANEL REVIEWS AND REVIEWERS

The Code of Conduct ensure that the work of the Panel Review abides by several principles. Each member of the Panel Review must evaluate the work of the Faculty/Program objectively, be impartial and have no connection with the Faculty or its Staff that could undermine objectivity. If in doubt, the member of the Review Panel should err on the side of caution and seek the advice of the Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee. The Panel Review must report honestly and fairly, ensuring that judgements accurately and reliably reflect what the Faculty/Program achieves and does. Judgements must be robust and fully supported by evidence so that can be defended, if required. The evidence and judgments must be accurate and carefully weighed and tested against the public criteria. They must also be reliable, which means that other trained Panel Reviewers, using the same evidence, would be highly likely to come to the same judgement.

### **Panel reviewers must**

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and have no previous connection with the University/Faculty/program which could undermine their objectivity;
- report honestly and fairly, ensuring that judgements are accurate, secure, first hand, valid, transparent, impartial, comprehensive, reliable, evidence-based, corporate, and public;
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity;
- do all they can to minimise the stress on those involved in the review, and act with their best interests and well-being as priorities. Staff may naturally be apprehensive about review, so Panel Members must do whatever they can to put them at their ease
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those being reviewed, and communicate judgements clearly and frankly; and respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about individuals and their work;
- leave staff feeling as though they have been treated well and fairly;
- act with the best interests and well-being of staff as priorities;
- communicate with staff purposefully and productively, and present their judgements of the Faculty/Program clearly and frankly.
- endeavour, in their dealings with staff, to build confidence and mutual respect.

- seek to understand what those being reviewed are doing and why, and share with them their views about what they find.
- ensure that feedback on findings is given in a helpful way;
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about specific members of staff and the judgements made about them;
- avoid placing themselves in a position where they cannot use information they are given in the way they think best. At times, they may need to make it clear that they reserve the right to do as they see fit with certain information or evidence.

### **Conflicts of interest**

It is important to ensure that:

- no Panel Review Member is involved in taking a decision or participates in a discussion on any matter where they have a conflict of interest;
- those providing information can be confident that it will be properly and objectively handled;
- no Panel Review member has used their position to their personal advantage;
- each Panel Review member, before they become involved in taking a decision, or participate in a discussion on any matter, is certain that there are no conflicts of interest that, in the opinion of a fair-minded and informed observer, would suggest a real possibility of bias;
- where Panel members come into possession of confidential information in the course of their role, they must not use or disclose that information in order to benefit themselves or to benefit any other person;
- each Panel Review member is responsible for their own compliance with this Code of Conduct;
- if a Panel Review member becomes aware of interests which may conflict with their duties, the member must disclose to this to the Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee as soon as he or she becomes aware that they may cause a conflict, for example on receipt of an agenda for a meeting or a Review;
- In considering whether to disclose an interest, those affected by this policy should ask whether, in the opinion of a fair-minded and informed observer, the interest would suggest a real possibility of bias. The following questions may be useful:
  - (a) Do you have, or have you recently had (i.e. within the past two years), any material business, other pecuniary relationships or organizational interests with a relevant party?
  - (b) Do you have, or have you recently had, any other relationships with a relevant party, the existence of which might suggest a real possibility of bias on your part?

- (c) Have you taken a formal or public position that might be seen as compromising your ability to deal objectively with a matter that is relevant to the Panel review or a complaint arising from it?

In the event that a Panel review member receives a written paper or agenda on a matter on which they have a conflict of interest, they must immediately return the paper or agenda to the Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee with an indication of the extent to which the paper has been read.

If a Panel review member becomes aware of a conflict of interest during the course of any discussion, their interest should be disclosed immediately and a decision relating to the matter taken at that time and recorded if appropriate. Prior to distributing any agenda or written paper on any specific matter of relevance to the review in question, the Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee, so far as possible, identify any member who may have a conflict of interest, and the Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee should alert that member to the nature of the conflict and avoid giving any details of the matter to that member unless approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

### **Gifts and hospitality**

The university's Gifts and Hospitality Policy for staff also applies in full to members of the Panel Review. The guiding principles governing the acceptance of gifts and hospitality are that:

- (a) The conduct of members of the Panel Review should not foster suspicion of any conflict between their official duty and personal interest or advantage;
- (b) Members of the Panel review, or members of their families, should not accept a gift, reward or hospitality, which would or might appear to place them under any obligation to the giver; compromise their impartiality; or otherwise be improper.