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## Civil and Commercial Professional Mediation Foundation Training Course

### Conflict of Interest Policy

**Course:** IMI CMTP – Civil & Commercial Mediation

#### Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Veritas Mediation Academy (VMA) professional learning community involved in the delivery of the IMI Civil and Commercial Mediation Professional Foundation Course (CMTP), including:

- directors and senior management
- staff, trainers, coaches, and assessors
- subcontractors and guest experts
- all learners enrolled on the CMTP

The policy applies to all activities relating to course delivery, assessment, coaching, observation, admissions, certification, and post-course support.

#### Purpose of the Policy

Veritas Mediation Academy is committed to upholding the highest standards of impartiality, transparency, professional integrity, and fairness in civil and commercial mediation training.

This policy sets out how VMA identifies, discloses, and manages actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest to ensure that:

- assessment decisions are independent and unbiased
- learner progression and certification are fair and defensible
- professional boundaries are maintained
- IMI requirements and ethical standards applicable to mediation practice are met

#### Policy Guidelines

##### Definition of a Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises where an individual's personal, professional, or financial interests could influence, or be perceived to influence, their judgement, decision-making, or conduct in relation to VMA training activities.

Conflicts may be:

- **Actual** – a conflict currently exists
- **Potential** – a conflict may arise in the future
- **Perceived** – a reasonable external observer could perceive a conflict, even if none exists in fact

The obligation to declare applies to all three categories.

## **Types of Conflict of Interest**

### **Financial Conflicts**

A financial conflict exists where an individual has, or is perceived to have, the opportunity for personal financial gain that could influence their role within VMA. This may include:

- paid consultancy or advisory work
- ownership interests or shareholdings
- intellectual property rights, royalties, or commercial ventures
- paid mediation or ADR work connected to learners or assessment contexts

The size or value of the interest does not determine whether it should be declared.

### **Non-Financial Conflicts**

Non-financial conflicts may arise from:

- close personal or professional relationships
- supervisory or reporting relationships
- prior coaching, mentoring, or mediation relationships with learners
- involvement in admissions, assessment, or certification decisions affecting known individuals

## Standards and Expectations

All individuals covered by this policy must:

- act with integrity and impartiality
- declare conflicts promptly and in good faith
- comply with agreed management arrangements
- avoid participating in decisions where a conflict has not been appropriately managed

Learners are expected to disclose conflicts that may affect role-plays, assessment, peer practice, or professional boundaries during training.

## Disclosure Procedures

All actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest must be disclosed in writing and recorded in the log.

- Staff, trainers, coaches, and assessors must disclose conflicts to the Head of Quality and Learning.
- Where the Head of Quality and Learning has a conflict, disclosure must be made to the owners of the company.
- Learners must disclose conflicts to their tutor or a member of the Senior Management Team, who may consult the Head of Quality and Learning as appropriate.
- Admissions-related conflicts must be disclosed to the Admissions Tutor.

## Managing Conflicts of Interest

On receipt of a disclosure, VMA will follow a structured process to ensure transparency and fairness:

1. **Acknowledgement** – written confirmation of receipt within three working days.
2. **Assessment** – evaluation of whether the conflict is actual, potential, or perceived, and its relevance to course delivery or assessment.
3. **Consultation** – where necessary, further information will be sought or relevant senior staff consulted.

4. **Management Plan** – proportionate measures will be agreed and documented.

Management measures may include:

- recusal from specific teaching, coaching, or assessment activities
- reassignment of learners or assessors
- separation of coaching and assessment roles
- appointment of an independent assessor or moderator
- disclosure to affected parties where appropriate
- withdrawal from particular decisions or activities

### **Assessment-Specific Safeguards**

To protect assessment integrity on the IMI CMTP:

- assessors must not assess learners they have coached or supervised where this could compromise impartiality
- internal moderation and standardisation processes are used to ensure consistency
- assessment decisions are evidence-based and aligned to IMI competency standards
- conflicts affecting assessment are recorded and retained for audit purposes

### **Records and Monitoring**

All conflict disclosures and management plans are securely recorded in the log and retained in accordance with VMA governance and data protection requirements.

Compliance with this policy is monitored by senior management and reviewed as part of VMA's internal quality assurance processes.

### **Appeals**

Where a learner believes that a conflict of interest has not been appropriately managed, they may raise the matter under VMA's Appeals or Complaints Procedures.

### **Policy Review and Monitoring**

This policy is reviewed annually, or earlier if required by changes in IMI requirements, mediation standards, or VMA delivery arrangements.