



SUAT Close Personal Relationships at Work Policy

Last reviewed	April 2025
Reviewed by	CFO
Approved by	CEO
Date of approval	April 2025
Policy owner	CFO
Location	Website

Introduction

Staffordshire University Academies Trust is committed to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and integrity amongst all staff. As part of this it is necessary to distinguish between personal relationships and professional ones and to have arrangements in place that safeguard all parties in circumstances where these have the potential to overlap. SUAT does not have any issue in colleagues developing a close personal relationship, however, care must be taken to avoid any conflict of interest, for example, line management.

The Local Academy Council will delegate authority to the Headteacher or CEO (or nominated representative) to take action under the procedure outlined below and will monitor the use of this procedure for effectiveness and fairness.

The Policy

An employee must declare any close personal relationship that could involve a potential conflict of interest for the employee or otherwise conflict with their professional responsibilities such as where a line management relationship also exists.

The School/Trust will act upon such a declaration to ensure that any potential conflict of interest is avoided and/or to ensure that the employees are not compromised in their work.

Employee's who do not declare a close personal relationship at work in accordance with the requirements of the policy may be subject to appropriate action in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

A LAC member must declare any pecuniary interests on an annual basis and must comply with their own conduct.

Operation of the Policy

Examples of close personal relationships that could involve a potential conflict of interest for an employee or otherwise conflict with the employee's responsibilities at work include but are not limited to:

- Family relationships
- Sexual or other intimate relationships
- Business, financial and commercial relationships

The circumstances in which personal relationships at work must be declared, include, but are not limited to:

- Any close personal relationship between an interview panel member and an applicant for employment with the Trust
- Any close personal relationship between a manager or senior manager and an employee responsible to that manager or to a senior manager on the same management line
- Any close personal relationship between a LAC Member/Director and an employee of the Trust
- Any close personal relationship between an employee and an existing or potential (i.e. through the operation of the Trust tendering processes) supplier of goods or services to the Trust.

The Trust regards as wholly unacceptable any close personal relationship between an employee's/LAB member/director and a child/young person who is under the age of 18 (19 if still at school) whom they meet as a result of their employment or voluntary role. If this type of relationship exists/develops, it represents an abuse of the employee/governor/director's position

of trust, a breach of the standards of propriety expected in the post and a compromise of professional standards.

Safeguarding/child protection procedures should be invoked immediately, before taking action under the Disciplinary policy. The CEO of the Trust must also be informed at the earliest opportunity.

In addition to the particular cases set out above, it is the responsibility of the employee/governor/director to assess any other circumstances in which there could be a requirement in accordance with this policy to declare a personal relationship at work, for example a relationship with a pupil's parent, or a member of the family attending a Trust school.

If an employee/governor/director is in any doubt about the circumstance when a close personal relationship should be disclosed, they must seek guidance from their Line Manager or the Headteacher or take advice from their Trade Union Representative. The expectation is that if an employee/governor/director is in doubt about the requirement to declare a close personal relationship at work the employee/governor/director should declare the relationship in accordance with the policy.

As employee/governor/director who needs to declare a personal relationship at work should set out the relevant circumstances, in writing, to the Headteacher (or CEO if it is a member of the central team). In respect of the Headteacher or Governor the declaration should be provided to the Chair of the LAC.

Upon receipt of a declaration the Headteacher (Chair of the LAC or other senior leader as appropriate) will meet with the employee/governor/director. In accordance with the policy the purpose of the meeting will be to agree the actions that are necessary to avoid any potential conflict of interest and or to ensure that the employee/governor/director is not compromised in their work with the Trust. The agreed actions will be recorded and placed on the employee's personnel file and a copy will be given to the employee. If it is considered unavoidable to inform other members or staff about the relationship in order to explain a change in management arrangements, this will be discussed with the individuals concerned, before it is disclosed.

If the circumstances of the personal relationship change the employee must so advise the Headteacher or CEO. The previously agreed actions will be reviewed in discussion between the employee/governor/director and Head and an updated note will be produced and attached to the original. This may involve a risk assessment to safeguard staff.

Appendix A – Close Personal Relationships in Employment Notification Pro Form

To be completed following discussion between the Manager (s) of the employees declaring the relationship and the employees involved.

Any adjustments made to working practices must be communicated to all involved in the work and should be reviewed and updated with necessary.

Employees' Details	
Date Notified	To Whom
Employee 1 name (block capitals)	Post Title
Employee 2 name (block capitals)	Post Title
Direct Line Management YES/NO	Indirect Line Management YES/NO
Number of levels between employees	
Issues Identified;	
Adjustments identified (if the employees work within a team at different levels the Line Manager should not be involved in any decisions relating to promotion, grading or pay determination and should not sign any paperwork that is linked to pay. If this would be a normal part of the duties alternative signatures must be identified.)	

Manager's/Head of School/Headteacher/CEO Signature
Signed:
Date:

Employee's Declaration and Signature
I understand and agree with the arrangements that have been put in place.
Employee 1 Signed:
Date:
Employee 2 Signed:
Date:

