

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (I)

EXTRACT: Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students

2. Supervision Arrangements

- 2.1 The Head of School is responsible for the co-ordination of arrangements for supervision of students. However, the Head of School may choose to delegate the operation of such arrangements to another member of academic staff. In either case it should be made clear to all staff and students who are undertaking this task.
- 2.2 Each student should be provided with a lead supervisor, academic supervisory support and a mentor. The same appointments would normally be expected to continue throughout a student's full period of study.
- 2.3 Academic supervisory support should reflect the individual needs of the student and the context of their study. It should be undertaken by
 - 2.3 .1 A second supervisor or a team of supervisors (known as 'co-supervision'), or by:
 - 2.3 .2 An academic adviser
- 2.4 Whatever supervisory arrangements are put in place, a lead supervisor should be designated who has overall responsibility for advising interested parties of the progress of the student's research.
- 2.5 In the case of split location postgraduate research study, it may be appropriate for a local academic adviser or mentor to be appointed. The School may, at its own discretion, pay an honorarium to the adviser or the mentor. The University of Birmingham retains full control over the supervision and must be the final arbiter in all cases.
- 2.6 When considering applications from prospective students, the Head of School or nominee should ensure that appropriate supervisory support is available. The Head of School should also ensure that the teaching, research interests and other supervisory responsibilities of staff are taken into account when supervisory arrangements are being made; that individual supervisors are not overloaded, and that students are appointed a lead and co-supervisor(s) from a relevant research area.

Conflicts of Interest

- 2.7 In clauses 2.7, "Supervisor" shall mean lead supervisor and/or academic adviser (as the case may be) and "conflict of interest" shall mean the existence of a relationship between the Supervisor and student (whether personal, family, financial or otherwise), which may prevent or adversely affect the impartial supervision of the student's research.

- 2.7.1 When considering the suitability of a member of staff to take on the role of Supervisor for a particular student, the Head of School (or nominee) shall in each case ascertain from such member of staff whether there is an actual or potential conflict of interest.
- 2.7.2 The Head of School (or nominee) shall not appoint such member of staff to the role of Supervisor if satisfied that doing so would create a conflict of interest.
- 2.7.3 Following the appointment of a Supervisor, such Supervisor should notify the Head of School forthwith if a conflict of interest arises during the course of the supervision period and the Head of School reserves the right to appoint an alternative Supervisor in such circumstances.