

F1. Standards of propriety

Background

The Cabinet Office has issued instructions to all departments and agencies on the Standards of Propriety that apply Civil Service wide. Departments and agencies must reflect these standards in their guidance.

Important principles from the Civil Service Code and DFID's guidance underpin these rules and include:

- Behaving in a way that brings or could appear to bring DFID or the Civil Service generally into disrepute
- Frustrating the policies, decisions or actions of the Government
- Breaching duties of confidentiality
- Conflicting with the interests of DFID
- Compromise or might being seen to compromise the impartiality of the Civil Service.

All DFID staff are expected to comply with the Standards of Propriety set out in the [conduct at work section of People](#).

Compliance tasks

1. DFID staff must not misuse information which they acquire in the course of their duties (Prevention of Corruption Act 1916, Company Securities (Insider Dealing) Act 1985, Financial Services Act 1986, Official Secrets Act 1911 and Official Secrets Act 1989).

Task assigned to: All staff

2. DFID staff must not disclose official information without authority. This duty continues to apply after you leave the Civil Service (Official Secrets Act 1911 and Official Secrets Act 1989).

Task assigned to: All staff

3. DFID staff must not take part in their official capacities in surveys or research projects, even unattributably, if they deal with attitudes or opinions on political matters or matters of policy.

Task assigned to: All staff

4. DFID staff must not take part in any political or public activity which compromises or might seem to compromise their impartiality (Cabinet Office guidelines).

Task assigned to: All staff

5. DFID staff must not misuse their official position to further their or others private interests (Prevention of Corruption Act 1916, Company Securities (Insider Dealing) Act 1985, Financial Services Act 1986).

Task assigned to: All staff

6. DFID staff must not give the impression that they have or may have been influenced by a gift or consideration to show favour or disfavour to a person or organisation. Specifically staff should not normally accept gifts or hospitality.

DFID staff must declare and record all gifts which are accepted and are valued at over £25.

DFID staff must declare and record all hospitality which is accepted.

DFID staff directly involved in the procurement of goods or services, or in the on-going monitoring or management of these contracts, must record all offers of hospitality by the contract provider, their representatives or agents or any prospective contract provider, whether accepted or not.

Task assigned to: All staff

7. DFID staff must not abuse or ignore DFID's procedures relating to the provision of official entertainment and retreats.

Task assigned to: All staff

8. DFID staff must not publish material (including books, journals, broadcasts or other public discussion) which draws from official information or experience without obtaining prior permission from the Director of Finance and Corporate Performance Division (FCPD).

Task assigned to: All staff

9. DFID staff must not publish or broadcast personal memoirs reflecting their experience in Government whilst a serving member, nor as a former civil servant without permission from the Permanent Secretary through the Director of FCPD.

Task assigned to: All staff

10. DFID staff must not allow their personal or political views to determine any advice they give or their actions. This includes publishing personal comments in blogs or other web based applications. It is a requirement of the Civil Service Code that civil servants will always act in a way that is professional and that deserves and retains the confidence of all those with whom they have dealings.

Task assigned to: All staff

11. DFID staff must not take on roles in organisations funded or part funded by DFID unless an exemption has been agreed by the Director of FCPD.

Task assigned to: All staff

12. DFID staff must not behave in a way which could give rise to suspicion of any real or perceived conflict of interest between their official duty and private interests.

Task assigned to: All staff

Risks of non-compliance

- Damage to the reputation of the organisation and to the staff member involved
- Impact on staff morale and cost of any legal action taken against the organisation.

F2. Fraud

Background

Fraud is the use of deception to obtain an advantage, avoid an obligation or cause a loss to another party. Corruption is the abuse of public office for private gain. DFID is committed to ensuring that its resources, voted by the UK Parliament on behalf of the UK Taxpayer, will be used only for the purposes intended. DFID management is committed to minimising the resources lost through fraud and corruption.

The risk of fraud and corruption is increasing given the scale of change that we are experiencing, the amount of money for which we are responsible, the context within which much of our work is done and changes to the method of funding developing countries.

All DFID employees, consultants and contractors, in the UK and overseas, have a responsibility to protect DFID funds and other assets from fraud and corruption.

While it is accepted that there will always be some risk of fraud in DFID programmes, all reported suspicions will be considered for further investigation. Fraud and corruption against DFID funds, either by DFID staff, partner organisations (e.g. contractors) or in partner Governments will not be tolerated because it:

- Diverts vital resources from the poor
- Breaches our public service ethics and core values
- Damages our reputation for sound financial management
- Challenges our 'fitness for purpose' and our credibility in the eyes of our UK stakeholders and International partners.

Those found to have been involved in fraudulent and corrupt activity or to have been negligent in the exercise of supervisory duties will be subject to disciplinary and, where appropriate, criminal proceedings.

Action will also be taken to recover any funds that have been lost. Similarly, funding may be recovered, and future funding withheld from partner Governments where arrangements for preventing or detecting fraud and corruption fail to improve.

Conflicts of interest

Also related to fraud is Conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when an individual could be or is influenced by personal considerations in the course of doing his or her job. This introduces the risk that decisions are made for the wrong reasons - financial or other personal rewards may adversely influence objectivity, integrity or professional commitment and can lead to fraud.

Risks to DFID from conflicts of interest can arise from personal interests within DFID; between DFID staff and suppliers; between DFID staff and other organisations, including Governments and NGOs; and within contracted organisations.

Conflicts of interest adversely affect DFID's reputation, its effectiveness in reducing poverty and value for money. Perceived conflicts of interest could be as damaging to DFID's reputation as actual occurrences, even when the right decisions are being made.

Staff must safeguard themselves as well as DFID against any risk of conflicts of interest. It is particularly important that DFID actively manages any conflicts of interest because of DFID's promotion of anticorruption initiatives in other Governments.

Whistleblowing

Staff may seek 'whistleblower' protection when reporting fraud or wrongdoing in a range of circumstances. Guidance can be found in Quest document 4089331.

Compliance tasks

1. All suspicions of fraud or corruption must be reported. The Counter Fraud and Whistleblowing Unit (CFWU) has a dedicated [fraud response email address](#) for reporting suspicions. Reports may also

be made by phone on +44 (0) 1355 843376 or +44 (0) 1355 843551. You can find detailed advice on this site on how you should react to a suspected fraud or corruption, or you can contact the Counter Fraud and Whistleblowing Unit for advice.

Task assigned to: All staff

2. All investigations of fraud and/or corruption will be directed by the Head of Internal Audit.

Task assigned to: All staff

3. Heads of Department/Overseas Offices must provide details of all suspected or actual frauds to Internal Audit Department for inclusion in the Annual Fraud Return to Treasury.

Task assigned to: Head of Department, Head of Overseas Office

4. Directors, Heads of Department/Overseas Office must maintain a Conflict of Interest register for each office/operational unit and ensure that this is updated at six monthly intervals.

Task assigned to: All staff, Head of Department, Head of Overseas Office

5. All staff must notify potential Conflicts of Interest and these must be recorded in their departmental register. Nil returns must also be recorded to indicate that staff have read and understood the Conflict of Interests Policy.

Task assigned to: All staff, Head of Department,
Head of Overseas Office

Risks of non-compliance

- Supervisory staff may face disciplinary action if their negligence results in a fraud being committed
- Staff committing a fraud, or accepting inducements, face dismissal and prosecution
- Civil recovery action will be actively pursued for any losses incurred plus resulting costs of action.