
Conflict of Interest Policy & Advice on Expenses

1 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 1.1 As a Non Departmental Public Body and Company Limited by Guarantee the UK Commission is required to comply with the Companies Act. As you know this act is complex with many different requirements.
- 1.2 One of these requirements is that the Chair and other Commissioners must declare any relevant and material personal or business interests which may conflict with their responsibilities as Commissioners. In order to ensure that such conflicts are identified at an early stage, and that appropriate action can be taken to resolve them, a Register of Interests is maintained by the UK Commission. This register is available to the public and lists direct and indirect financial interests which members of the public could reasonably think may influence judgement. It also includes non-financial interests of Commissioners which relate closely to the UK Commission's activities, and interests of close family members and persons living in the same household as the Commissioner.
- 1.3 The Register is compiled of individual returns submitted by Commissioners. You are asked to complete the form attached at Annex 1 and return it to Carol Gault (carol.gault@ukces.org.uk). It is essential that you advise the Commission of any changes as they occur. To assist you we will refresh and reissue this policy on an annual basis.
- 1.4 To assist you when filling in the form we have listed below the types of information you may need to consider:
- Directorships
 - Ownership or part ownership of private companies, businesses or consultancies
 - Any shareholdings in organisations with whom the UK Commission has, or is looking to have contracts with, which are or will be funded from their Programme budget
 - Significant shareholdings in organisations with whom the UK Commission has or is looking to have contracts with, which are or will be funded from their Running Costs budget (i.e. more than 10% of the issued shares of that organisation, or, for small firms where any issues may be more acute, at the member's discretion where below 10% holding)
 - Direct relationships or business dealings with SSCs
 - Direct relationships or business dealings with any other organisation which is applying/has applied to the UK Commission for investment funding
 - Any other commercial interest in a decision in which you have any role

NOTE: if you have a query about suppliers/contractors please contact Carol Gault for detailed information. (carol.gault@ukces.org.uk)

2 CONDUCT WITHIN MEETINGS

- 2.1 Common law requires that members of public bodies should not participate in the discussion of, or make decisions about, matters in which they have a direct financial interest. Where matters in which a Commissioner has a direct financial or organisational interest arise at a Commission or Group meeting the Commissioner concerned must register their interest in advance of the meeting and leave the room

whilst that item is discussed. Should such a matter arise unexpectedly then the Commissioner must immediately declare their interest to the Chair and leave the room at that point. If the interest is not substantial it will be for the Chair to decide the appropriate course of action.

- 2.2 Where interest is not of a direct financial nature, Commissioners should consider whether participation in the discussion or decision could be perceived as a potential Conflict of Interest. As a Commissioner you should assess whether you, a close family member, a person living in the same household as you, or a firm, business or organisation with which you are connected are likely to be affected by the decision in question, e.g. a decision to invite tenders for a contract where a firm with which you are connected is significantly better placed than others to win it e.g. application for investment funding through EIF/GIF/Employer Ownership Pilot. If so, then you should declare an interest to Carol Gault as soon as it becomes apparent. If this situation arises during a meeting you should declare your interest to the Chair as above.

3 RECEIPT/GIVING OF HOSPITALITY

- 3.1 Gifts should, in general, be refused but gifts and benefits of a trivial or inexpensive nature (such as calendars and other gifts of low monetary value) can be distinguished from more expensive and substantial offers. A similar distinction should be made between working lunches/dinners and more expensive social functions, travel and accommodation. Our general policy is to refuse gifts/hospitality arising as a result of being a Commissioner.
- 3.2 On occasion Commissioners may need to offer hospitality. This should be discussed in advance with Carol Gault to agree what can be provided. Members may claim full reimbursement for agreed hospitality except when alternative arrangements are made to directly invoice the UKCES.

4 COMMISSIONER EXPENSES

- 4.1 Commissioners are entitled to claim reasonable and necessary expenses in relation to their work for the Commission as described below. You are reminded that the UK Commission is required to act responsibly with public money and that its expenditure is open to public scrutiny.

4.2 TRAVEL

- 4.2.1 Commissioners should use the most economic or most suitable means of travel.
- 4.2.2 Commissioners may claim travel expenses as follows:

Rail Travel

- First Class/Standard class fare whichever is appropriate to the journey in question.

Tube Travel

- Oyster Card fare for the zones travelled.
- Travelcard or tube ticket

Air Travel

- Economy class fare.
- Members may travel in business class in exceptional circumstances e.g. trips abroad to US or Canada if there is a business need for this. Commissioners should obtain agreement for business class travel in advance from Carol Gault.

Car (or Motorcycle)

- 45 pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles in a calendar year.
- Necessary parking costs, including parking at rail and air terminals.
- Congestion charges.
- The UK Commission will not normally refund the cost of a hire car. If a member anticipates that a hire car will be needed this should be discussed and agreement obtained in advance from Carol Gault.
- The UK Commission will not meet any other motoring-related costs.

Taxi

- Taxi fares can be reimbursed with receipts

4.3 ACCOMMODATION

4.3.1 The UK Commission will normally make all arrangements for necessary overnight accommodation on behalf of Commissioners. This includes the cost of bed, breakfast, lunch and evening meal with non-alcoholic drinks as required.

4.3.2 It will not meet the cost of the following:

- Personal telephone calls, internet charges and newspapers
- Alcohol and mini-bar charges
- Any other sundry items

4.4 MEALS

4.4.1 Members may claim the actual cost of meals (except where these are provided). Claims should not normally exceed Breakfast - £18; Lunch - £25; Dinner £35. The cost of alcoholic drinks will not be reimbursed.

4.5 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

4.5.1 The cost of courses and training in association with your role as a Commissioner, will be met by the UK Commission.

4.6 PAYE AND NI

4.6.1 For Commissioners who claim an honorarium the UK Commissions' London office is deemed the permanent place of business for members. Consequently expenses claims for attendance at the London office will be liable for tax. The Commission will meet the tax liability on your behalf if you wish. If so you will need to complete a HMRC declaration form (available from Carol Gault) that will enable the Commission to handle this issue directly with HMRC.

- 4.6.2 Commissioners who do not claim an honorarium are not subject to the above requirements.

4.7 MAKING CLAIMS

- 4.7.1 Upon being appointed as a Commissioner you will be required to complete a Supplier Detail Form, attached as Annex 2, which must be returned to Jodie McCormack (jodie.mccormack@ukces.org.uk) before any payments for expenses can be processed. Please note that the bank details you supply on this form is where payments will be made. If you require payments to be made both to you personally and to your respective organisations then we will require two separate supplier details forms to be completed. Please see paras 4.7.2 and 4.7.3 for further information.
- 4.7.2 Claims for personal reimbursement should be submitted monthly using the UK Commission claims form (attached as Annex 3) available from Carly Lawrence (carly.lawrence@ukces.org.uk). All claims must be supported by original receipts. Payment will be made by BACS transfer to the payment address notified by each member.
- 4.7.3 Claims for reimbursement which are to be paid direct to your organisation must be done so by issuing UKCES with an invoice for the amount (along with copies of receipts). Payment will be made by BACS transfer to the payment address notified by each member.

Claims should be sent to:

Carly Lawrence
UK Commission for Employment and Skills
Renaissance House
Adwick Park
Wath-upon-Dearne
S63 5NB

4.8 COMMENTS AND QUERIES

- 4.8.1 Any comments or queries about any of the issues above should be directed to Carol Gault (Tel. 01709 774892 or email: carol.gault@ukces.org.uk).