



# Unitarian College

Growing our faith from the inside

## Policy on Conflicts of Interest

### 1. Why we have a policy

The Board of Unitarian College act as Charity Trustees and have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of Unitarian College in accordance with the College's constitution document. This includes avoiding situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

Conflicts of interest may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Unitarian College. Such conflicts may create problems. They can:

- Inhibit free discussion
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interest of the College
- Risk the impression that the College has acted improperly

The aim of this policy is to protect both the College and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

### 2. The Declaration of Interests

Accordingly, Board members are asked to declare their interests and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role at Unitarian College. A declaration of interests form is attached for this purpose listing the types of interest you should declare.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually, and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the College Director for confidential guidance.

The register of interests shall also be used to record all gifts of a value of over £25 received by Board members.

Interests and gifts will be recorded on the College's register of interests, which will be maintained by the College Director. The information provided will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and according to the College's data policy and privacy statement.

### **3. What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest**

If you are a beneficiary of Unitarian College's services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you receive (ie personal to you and not be shared with other beneficiaries). You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason.

You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal for all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

If you fail to declare an interest that is known to the College Director or the Chair of the Board then they will declare that interest.

### **4. Decisions taken where the Board member has an interest**

In the event of Unitarian College Board having to decide upon a question in which a member has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate. Interested Board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

Approved by the Board of Unitarian College on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Appendix 1: Register of Interests Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
as a Board member of Unitarian College have set out below my interests in accordance with the College's conflicts of interest policy.

Category	<i>Please give details of the interest and whether it applies to yourself or, where appropriate, a member of your immediate family or some other close personal connection</i>
Do you have current relevant employment in which you continue to have a financial interest	<i>Eg position on the College staff team or employment with an organisation receiving funding from Unitarian College</i>
Do you hold any other appointments (voluntary or otherwise) eg Trusteeships, member of the Board or governing committee	<i>Eg congregational or district committees, any other organisation receiving funding from Unitarian College</i>
Have any gifts or hospitality been offered to you by external bodies in connection with your Unitarian College role in the last 12 months? Was it declined or accepted?	
Do you personally access any of Unitarian College's services	<i>This would not include undertaking a course of study with the College</i>
Do you have any contractual relationship with the College	<i>Eg for professional services</i>
Are you aware of any other potential conflicts of interest that are not covered by the above	

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete and correct. I undertake to update the information provided as necessary and to review the accuracy of the information on an annual basis. I give my consent for it to be used for the purposes described in the Conflict of Interests policy and for no other purpose.

Signed:

Date: