

**As approved by the Executive Committee**  
**In its meeting held on June 14, 2013**

**University of Balamand**  
**Principles and Policies related to the Policy of Non-Conflict of Interests at the University**

**1- Goals**

These principles

- 1.1 are complementary to the established University principles related to the Basics of Professionalism inside the University and in all its sections.
- 1.2 insist on abiding by and adhering to all the acknowledged internationally bylaws in force, and the regulations guarantying transparency, integrity and University's decision independency.
- 1.3 develop responsibility spirit inside the University, and the University's responsibility towards the society in general and the university world in particular.

**2- Framework**

These principles and policies are applied on all who work at the University of Balamand (UOB) on a full time basis, in both Academic and non-Academic fields, on all the members of the Councils and Committees, (executive or advisory) which constitute the University's administrative structure and are mentioned in the University regulations, and on the Board of Trustees (BOT) members as well.

**3- Background and Justification**

Work at UOB is based on the University's vision of serving the community and of having a leading role in this field. At the same time, UOB is a part of an international university world, thus its efficient participation is of a big importance. Therefore, UOB insists on adopting principles and policies based on its own vision, and focuses on its role in the wide university world.

This vision gives inspiration to the human values on one hand, and to the internationally adopted criteria concerning transparency of conduct in the institution and the guarantee of the University decision independency, away from any physical or moral pressure resulting from interests of individuals or bodies working in or cooperating with the University.

**4- Definition**

A conflict of interest is a conflict between personal interests and institutional responsibilities for a person in a position of responsibility in the same institution.

All who work at UOB or participate in the decision-making process shall avoid any conflict of interests. They shall be aware of the influence that their families, societies and other affiliations can have on the objectivity of their decision-making process. However, respecting the principle of avoiding the conflict of interests must not hinder all who work at UOB from using all their capacities and potentials to support the University interests and to improve its partnership with the society.

The conflict of interests consists generally of the following:

- a- Conflict of financial interests,
- b- Using private information for personal profits,
- c- Disclosing private information without official consent,
- d- Using the institution's time and equipment for personal goals or for activities not directly related to the institution.

## **5- Detailed Policies**

In this context, the conflict of interests includes, without limitation, the following:

- 1- Possessing, fully or partially, a company, an institution or a holding board related to the University through commercial or financial business contracts.
- 2- Participating in the decision-making of outsourcing any university-related business to a company or institution owned (fully or partially) by someone having up to a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) degree relationship with the concerned person.
- 3- Using the professional position to benefit from the employment status in the University: such as paid trainings for students, consulting services, or field studies, etc.
- 4- Accepting to represent any company or commercial institution, which can create a confusion about the University objectivity.
- 5- Accepting a paid mandate to do an activity that is normally within the University competence and concerns, or within the regular job tasks.
- 6- All who work at UOB, as a full timer or part timer, shall declare to the President's Office any potential conflict of interests arising from performing his university duty and/or professional work. In case of failure to declare, the person is responsible of his/her attitude's consequences.
- 7- All who are concerned with the clause (2) entitled "Framework" shall officially stop, under a written notification kept in the President's Office archive, any action involving a conflict of interests and not meeting the above mentioned principles and policies.

## **Procedures related to Non-Conflict of Interests**

These procedures related to Non-Conflict of Interests were set forth in order to clarify all the actions to be taken by all who work at UOB (academic or non-academic), all the councils and committees' members (executive or advisory), and the BOT members (concerned persons), and to define their obligations and responsibilities in this context, which keeps the University decision independency away from any physical or moral pressure and guarantees the University's transparency and integrity, based on its regulations, especially on the "Principles and Policies related to Non-Conflict of Interests at the University" (designed here by "Policy of Non-Conflict of Interests").

A conflict of interest is a situation where the objectivity and the independency of the officials' decisions are influenced, during their job or work performance, by a personal interest, material or moral, that is important to them or to any relative or close friend, or when their job or work performance is influenced by direct or indirect personal considerations, or by knowing the information related to the decision to be made.

The BOT creates an external auditing committee (Auditing Committee) ("Committee") to ensure proper implementation of the policy and the procedures.

### **1) Transparency in appointments and promotions:**

In order to ensure transparency in appointments, the qualified committee shall appoint or suggest to define accurately the tasks and obligations for the vacant positions and jobs, and relate appointments and promotions to competency, integrity and transparency. Moreover, this committee shall set real criteria for employees' evaluation, such as attending annual trainings, and relate them to the salary raise.

### **2) Biddings and Purchases:**

The concerned persons shall refrain from entering or participating, directly or indirectly, in any bidding or purchase that may be related to the University, or adverse, directly or indirectly, to the University interests, or that may realize a personal benefit for them or for any of their relatives, without neither following the related procedures nor getting the required written consent as mentioned below.

### **3) Cases of Conflict of Interest:**

These procedures set examples for behavioral criteria in numerous situations, but they do not cover all other potential cases. The concerned persons shall act properly in compliance with the policy of non-conflict of interests, and avoid any behavior incompatible with this policy. Below are some examples for cases of incompatibilities:

- (a) Entering or participating in any activity that is, directly or indirectly, adverse to the University interests without neither following the related procedures nor getting the required written consent. Agreements or projects established with any company, institution or other entity, if any of the concerned persons or of their relatives is, directly or indirectly, an owner, a partner, a director or a board member in that company, institution or entity;**
- (b) Agreements or projects established with any company, institution or other entity, if any of the concerned persons or of their relatives had received a financial or moral benefit directly from the company, the institution or the entity, or may receive this benefit upon implementation or failure of this legal action;**
- (c) When any of the concerned persons gets engaged to any business due to his/her position in the University, or to any business that may result in abusing this position;**
- (d) If any of the above mentioned cases happens to any of the concerned persons' relatives up to a fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) degree relationship;**
- (e) Using the University's assets or resources for personal interests or profiting from them for any private benefits or other goals in contexts away from the University's activity and work.**
- (f) Disclosing confidential information, without getting a prior written consent from the competent authorities, for personal profits or for any other party that is not allowed to know this information;**
- (g) Accepting presents, benefits, services or any other valuable item by any of the concerned persons or of their relatives in order to influence on the decision's objectivity of the concerned persons or on their capacities in performing their obligations and responsibilities, to waste the University's interests or harm them, or to realize personal benefits or benefits for the donor party;**
- (h) If any of the concerned persons has a direct or indirect interest in the projects and the contracts implemented for the University's account, without a prior permit from the committee;**
- (i) Being part of any business that may compete the University, without a prior written consent from the committee;**
- (j) If any of the interested concerned persons participates in voting on the decision concerning any matter related to conflict of interests.**
- (k) Abusing any of the concerned persons for his/her position in the University for personal interests, benefits or profits;**

**(I) Any other case that may be considered by the University as a conflict of interests.**

**All concerned persons shall inform the competent authorities about any position they have outside the University, or any interest that may relate them or their family members to any party dealing with the University or willing to deal with the University.**

**The conflict of interests does not include neither teaching contracts signed between the University and the Faculty members, on the condition to abide by appointments criteria mentioned in these procedures and in the University regulations, nor the cases of specific tasks (studies, translation, etc. ...) as defined by the University, from time to time, as long as the price will be 30% less than the market's prices.**

**4) Conflict of Interests Disclosure:**

**All persons concerned with this policy shall disclose and report, to the committee, their personal interests or any actual or potential conflict of interests. In case they want to participate in any activity, transaction, bidding or any similar action involving a conflict of interests, they shall get an approval from the competent authorities and disclose transparently all the information required by the University.**

**All concerned persons shall submit the mentioned disclosure immediately upon an event involving a conflict of interests or causing a change in a previous conflict of interests, if approved by the University or not.**

**Disclosure is made through a form of declaration prepared by the committee in this regard. In order to verify the data mentioned in the disclosure form, the committee has the right to ask for any further information or documents that shall be provided the soonest possible by the concerned person.**

**When disclosing any potential conflict of interests, all concerned persons shall refrain from interfering in, participating to or influence, directly or indirectly, on any business that may involve a conflict of interest, as mentioned above, until the University declares its decision in this regard.**

**5) Dealing with Conflicts of Interests:**



**The committee's decisions may include, without limitation:**

- Forcing the person concerned in a conflict of interests to correct his/her situation according to the procedures set forth by the committee (in all cases, the concerned person shall sign all declarations, engagements and required legal documents to ensure his/her compliance to the obligations towards the University and to keep on integrity, independency and transparency),**

- Removing the concerned person from the situation involving a conflict of interests until its termination,
- Limiting the concerned person's participation or interference in a business involving a conflict of interests,
- Prohibiting, terminating or not starting with the business involving a conflict of interests.

However, the committee can approve any business involving a conflict of interests according to the concerned person's will in this regard, in case no procedure was applicable or no other alternative was available for the business involving a conflict of interests, in case neither the procedures nor the alternatives that may be adopted by the University were, on all levels, better or less expensive than the business involving a conflict of interests, or in case the BOT verified, based on either previous cases or other evidences, the concerned person's integrity and independency.

The BOT is the board qualified to explain these procedures' provisions, as long as they are not incompatible with the regulations and the laws in force, and the University regulations.

6) Violation of Procedures:

Any act of violation done by any of the concerned persons towards these procedures will result in disciplinary actions mentioned in the University regulations and in the laws in force.