

# Declaration of Interest Policy

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## Declaration of Interest Policy

## Document Metadata

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## 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the process by which WES Council members declare personal, financial, and professional interests that may be relevant to their governance responsibilities. The aim is to ensure transparency, support effective conflict management, and promote confidence in the Society's leadership.

Declarations are not about wrongdoing — they are about accountability. This process ensures that potential conflicts of interest are identifiable, manageable, and recorded in a way that protects both the individual and the organisation.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the WES Full Council. It covers:

- Initial declarations made upon appointment
- Annual declarations submitted as part of the governance cycle

- Updates made when circumstances change
- The use and management of the Society's Register of Interests

It does **not** apply to general members, WES Pros, or Area Reps unless they are serving in a formal governance role.

### 3. Definitions

- **Declaration of Interest:** A statement made by a Council member listing any relevant affiliations, roles, relationships, or financial interests.
- **Register of Interests:** A confidential document maintained by the Secretary recording all current declarations.
- **Material Interest:** Any interest that could reasonably be perceived as influencing a Council member's judgement in a WES decision or activity.

### 4. Policy Statement

All Council members must declare relevant interests fully and honestly. These declarations are essential to the effective operation of the WES Conflict of Interest Policy and broader governance practice.

WES maintains a Register of Interests as a governance tool — not a public document. Its purpose is to inform meeting practice, mitigate risk, and support fair participation in decision-making.

### 5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Secretary	Issue and collect declarations; maintain the Register of Interests; flag known risks to the Chair.
Council Members	Submit a declaration upon appointment and annually; update as needed.
Chairperson	Refer to the register where a conflict is suspected or a challenge is raised.

### 6. Policy Detail / Procedures

#### 6.1 Initial Declarations

- All newly appointed Council members must complete and return a Declaration of Interests form within 30 days of their appointment.
- This includes professional roles, organisational affiliations, family relationships relevant to equestrian activity, and any financial interests that may overlap with WES.

## 6.2 Annual Declarations

- A fresh declaration must be submitted by all Council members annually, usually in Q1, or aligned with the AGM.

## 6.3 Updates and Ongoing Duty

- Council members must inform the Secretary if their interests change during the year. This includes taking on new roles or relationships that may be relevant.
- Informal disclosure (e.g. in a meeting) does not replace the requirement to update the written declaration.

## 6.4 Register of Interests

- The Register is maintained securely by the Secretary and is not published.
- Access is restricted to the Secretary and Chair unless disclosure is required by a disciplinary or compliance process.
- The Register may be referenced by the Chair during Council discussions if a potential conflict is raised.

## 6.5 Consequences of Non-Compliance

- Failure to submit a declaration, or knowingly providing incomplete information, may be treated as a governance breach and referred to the Disciplinary Procedure.

# 7. Related Policies and References

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- WES Conflict of Interest Policy
- WES Disciplinary Procedure
- WES Code of Conduct (*update in development*)

# 8. Compliance and Breach Handling

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Where a Council member fails to declare interests or refuses to submit a declaration without cause, the matter will be escalated to the Chair and may be referred for disciplinary review. In such cases, participation in Council votes or sensitive decisions may be suspended pending resolution.

## 9. Review and Version Control

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Version	Date	Author	Changes Made
0.1	18/07/2025	DG	Initial policy draft
0.5	08/10/2025	DG	Changes following chairmans review
1.0	04/11/2025	DG	Published

## 10. Approval Record

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Approved By	Date	Notes
Full Council	04/11/2025	Approved for immediate use