FCSA



FREELANCER & CONTRACTOR SERVICES ASSOCIATION (FCSA)

MANAGEMENT OF IMPARTIALITY

1. Introduction

Suitable controls are described and implemented to ensure the activities of FCSA are transparent and undertaken impartially and the arrangements for undertaking Certification are not influenced by commercial, financial or any other pressures that could compromise impartiality. Appropriate checks and balances are inbuilt into the processes and detailed in procedures with records to confirm the ongoing maintenance of impartiality which is overseen by a mechanism to which the management is answerable on such matters.

2. Procedure

2.1. The impartiality of the activities of FCSA is acknowledged at the highest levels within the organisation, and a risk register (additional document 3) is produced and maintained by the Head of Operations. The risk register will indicate any potential risks from organisational and personal relationships, and the arrangements in place to mitigate and reduce the risk to ensure impartiality, objectivity, independence and fair treatment for all is preserved.

2.2. The mechanism for safeguarding impartiality consists of a Committee for Safeguarding Impartiality of interested parties with a balanced representation so that no single interest predominates (see section 3 for membership and section 4 for rules of procedure).

3. Terms of Reference

3.1. The Committee consists of a balanced representation of the following interested parties consisting of 2 independent Members, 1 independent member of the IAP, and FCSA's Chief Executive Officer.

A current list of the Committee members is held by the Head of Operations.

The Committee is charged with providing the following inputs:

a) The policies and principles relating to the impartiality of the Certification activities.
b) Any tendency on the part of FCSA as the Certification body to allow commercial or other considerations to prevent the consistent impartial provision of Certification activities.
c) Matters affecting impartiality and confidence in Certification, including openness.

3.2. If the top management of the Certification body does not follow the input of this mechanism, the mechanism shall have the right to take independent action (e.g., informing authorities, accreditation bodies, stakeholders). In taking appropriate action, the confidentiality relating to the client and Certification body shall be respected.

3.3. Input that is in conflict with the operating procedures of the Certification body or other mandatory requirements should not be followed. Management should document the reasoning behind the decision to not follow the input and maintain the document for review by appropriate personnel (including the accreditation body).

4. Rules of procedure

4.1. Members of the Committee are invited by the Head of Operations on behalf of the Chief Executive and are provided with this procedure which details their role and responsibilities.

4.2. Members are not limited to a defined period of Membership, but on retirement from the Committee the Head of Operations/CEO will seek a suitable replacement to maintain the balance of interest.

4.3. Every member of the Committee is required to sign a confidentiality undertaking and when appropriate identify any conflicts of interest arising when discussing a particular topic or if requested to undertaking any additional activity e.g., partake in an appeal.

4.4. The independent member is nominated as the chair person.

4.5. Meetings will be at least annually (may be conducted remotely) and the chair will confirm the meeting is quorate at commencement.

4.6. Each member of the Committee has only one vote including the chairperson since having a deciding vote in the event of split vote is considered a predominant interest.

4.7. If the meeting is not quorate it may still continue but voting cannot take place.

4.8. In the event of a vote the necessary information subject to vote will be circulated to all members and a remote meeting of all members established to rediscuss and resolve the issue and vote accordingly.

4.9. In discharging responsibilities for input to policies and principles relating to impartiality, the members of the Committee will be made aware of ISO/IEC 17065 impartiality requirements and this procedure, the overall organisational arrangements and how impartiality is assured. The Head of Operations will also advise on any changes to procedures etc that impinge on the policy and arrangements for ensuring impartiality is preserved throughout the operation.

In addition, the Committee as stakeholders are advised of the FCSA scheme(s) to acknowledge that impartiality has been addressed but also to provide any technical comments based on their experience of such scheme(s). They are also informed of any changes to the scheme.

4.10. The minutes of all the meetings will be recorded and any minutes amended accordingly by the Head of Operations when a vote is resolved. Minutes of meetings will also indicate agreed actions, timescale, and responsibility.

The Head of Operations will monitor the actions for completeness accordingly and report at the next meeting re: progress/completion.

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Issue 1	02/01/24	Document First Issue

FCSA

integrity • independence • influence



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