

Introduction

At ABCA Systems we understand that our employees have personal relationships which are formed at work, or indeed, a family member or friend may be recruited into a role in the company.

Undue restrictions on employees having personal relationships is not the goal of this policy, but it is important to ensure that those relationships won't cause conflicts of interests in work. This policy sets out some guidance on personal relationships in the workplace.

Scope

This Policy covers all ABCA Systems employees, regardless of position or status. It does not apply to contractors or subcontractors. This document is a guide and doesn't form part of the contract of employment.

Aims

To use this, alongside other policies, to promote a healthy, safe and inclusive workplace that's based on integrity, mutual respect and ethical behaviour.

ABCA Systems expects employees to avoid or declare any possible conflicts of interest where loyalties might be, or be perceived by others to be, divided.

Principles

Any ABCA Systems employees who are in personal relationships with each other should make sure that this doesn't have a negative impact on the business, working environment or other colleagues.

If a relationship could lead to a conflict of interest due to the roles of the employees involved, then this needs to be registered with the Company Directors.

This is particularly important if any of the following instances apply:

- The relationship involves a manager and a direct report or client
- Any of the employees has access to personal or customer information
- Any of the employees have influence on business policy or decisions.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of ABCA Systems employees where this policy applies are:

- To make sure that relationships don't have a negative impact on the business, the working environment or colleagues. Examples of this could include:
 - Conflicts of interest in making business decisions including actual or perceived favouritism.
 - Confidentiality issues.
 - Bringing the Company into disrepute (media exposure, legal claims against the company e.g. harassment, discrimination, etc).
 - Inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.
 - Compromising your professional conduct e.g. coercion or blackmail.
 - Decline in work standards.
- To seek advice if unsure about what to do
- As a minimum, employees must declare the relationship to their line manager or HR, and consider registering with the Company Directors where a conflict of interest may arise

- To ensure the relationship does not impact negatively on work
- Favouritism or reverse favouritism is not acceptable
- Do not give public demonstrations of overly-affectionate or inappropriate behaviour.

Line Managers and HR responsibilities include;

- Treat information about any declared relationships with discretion and in confidence
- In the first instance, to speak informally and in confidence to employees where a suspected conflict of interest might apply
- Assessing if there is any risk to the business as a result of this relationship
- To consider whether either person should transfer into a different team
- Always act reasonably and with fairness.

Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

ABCA Systems takes a serious view of any breaches of this Policy and such actions will be investigated as possible disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure.

While it is hoped and intended that most problems relating to employment in ABCA Systems can be resolved on an informal basis, the Grievance Procedure exists so that causes of genuine concern can be dealt with fairly.