



Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Dunfermline Branch Conflict of Interest Policy

Introduction

The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Dunfermline Branch is a local association of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. To run the Branch and its activities, we have a Branch Committee who meet regularly. This policy sets out how committee members should handle any conflict of interest which may arise.

We appreciate the time and effort given voluntarily to RSCDS Dunfermline Branch by all our committee members. This policy is designed to protect both RSCDS Dunfermline Branch from being affected by conflicts of interest, and to protect our committee members by providing the opportunity to declare their other interests before they may be put into a difficult situation.

What is a 'Conflict of Interest'?

We expect our committee members to put the interests of the Branch before their own interests, or those of any other person / organisation. Where this is not possible, there may be a conflict of interest. In RSCDS Dunfermline Branch, examples of when a conflict of interest may occur include:

- When a committee member is asked to perform a role for which they will receive remuneration beyond normal out of pocket expenses (such as teaching or playing at an event)
- When an individual also acts as a committee member or representative for the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (parent organisation) or another Branch, particularly in financial situations where the RSCDS may distribute grant funding to branches, or where the other Branch may apply for the same funding grant.

There are two distinct types of conflicts of interest:

- A personal conflict involves RSCDS Dunfermline Branch business which conflicts with the committee member's own personal or business interests
- An appointment conflict involves RSCDS Dunfermline Branch business where acting in the best interests of the Branch will have a potentially negative impact on the Branch members or other committee members who nominated or elected the individual committee member

Declaring a Conflict of Interest

We expect our committee members to declare a potential conflict of interest as soon as they become aware that the conflict may exist, for example when the committee meeting agenda is announced or when the committee meeting is held. The affected committee member should notify the Branch Chairperson and Branch Secretary in writing (whether by paper or electronic method), including the details of the potential conflict and, if possible, how they propose to resolve the potential conflict. The Branch Chairman and Branch Secretary will discuss the conflict and any proposed resolution, and confirm to the affected committee member how the conflict will be resolved and if they are required to withdraw from any decision making process.

If you do not declare a conflict of interest when you become aware of it, then this could be considered a breach of duty. This is particularly serious for charity trustees, who have a legal duty to act in the best interests of the charity - a persistent breach of duty could result

in a charity trustee being asked to leave the committee. If you know of another committee member who has a conflict of interest and they do not declare this, then it is your responsibility to make the Branch Chairman and Branch Secretary aware of this, so that they can raise it with the individual.

Withdrawing from the Decision Making Process

Withdrawing from any decision-making process may involve not participating in the discussion or decision-making process, or may require the committee member to leave the discussion, either in person or through electronically ending their participation in an online session. If notified in advance, the Branch Chairman will announce the withdrawal and reasons for doing so at the committee meeting and the Branch Secretary will record this within the minutes. A committee member may also choose to withdraw voluntarily from any decision-making process while the discussion is ongoing, stating their reasons at the time of withdrawal. The Branch Committee will continue the discussion and confirm a final decision prior to the committee member re-joining the discussion.

Managing Potential Conflicts of Interest

RSCDS Dunfermline Branch will maintain a Register of Interests, which records any potential conflicts of interests and the date of notification. (See Appendix A.) This will include:

- Any committee member or charity trustee positions held in the RSCDS or other RSCDS Branches
- Any event where a committee member has been paid remuneration (beyond out of pocket expenses) for their work on behalf of the RSCDS Dunfermline Branch
- Any other relevant potential conflicts of interest notified to the Branch Chairman or Branch Secretary

This register will be checked and updated at least annually, after the Branch Annual General Meeting has been held. Information related to previous committee members will be held for six years after they have left the committee and will then be deleted.

In addition, no more than two individuals may join the RSCDS Dunfermline Branch committee at any one time, who are also members of the same RSCDS committee or same RSCDS Branch Committee. This safeguard prevents any one external organisation from unduly influencing the decisions taken by the RSCDS Dunfermline Branch Committee.

Appendix 1: Register of Interests

| Name of Committee Member | Type of Potential Conflict (Appointment or Personal) | Potential Conflicting Organisation (if applicable) | Date Potential Conflict Began | Reason for Potential Conflict | Date Notified to Branch Chairman / Secretary | Action Taken to Mitigate Potential Conflict |
|--------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <i>Example</i> | <i>Personal</i> | <i>RSCDS X Branch</i> | <i>2-Nov-17</i> | <i>Elected to X Branch Committee</i> | <i>4-Nov-17</i> | <i>None Required</i> |
| <i>Example 2</i> | <i>Personal</i> | <i>N/A</i> | <i>4-Apr-18</i> | <i>Teaching at Branch classes and receiving fees</i> | <i>4-Apr-18</i> | <i>Did not participate in discussion re: amount of fees to be paid</i> |
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