



Governance Conduct & Conflicts of Interest Policy Pack

Introduction

This pack sets out the governance expectations for anyone holding a formal role with the British Pain Society (BPS). It supports fairness, transparency, and integrity in how we work and make decisions.

This applies to:

- Trustees (elected Council members and officers)
- Co-opted Council members
- Committee chairs and members
- SIG Chairs and SIG leadership (e.g. Secretary, Treasurer)
- Reviewers and assessors (e.g. grant or award panels)
- Anyone acting on behalf of BPS

It aligns with:

- BPS Articles of Association and Regulations
- Role descriptions and terms of reference
- Charity Commission guidance CC3: [The Essential Trustee](#)
- Charity Governance Code: www.charitygovernancecode.org
- Nolan Principles of Public Life: [The 7 Principles](#)

Governance Compliance: Who completes what

| Role | Code of Conduct | Declaration of Interests | Disqualification Declaration |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Trustees (elected Council members and officers) | ✓ (Annually) | ✓ (Annually) | ✓ (On appointment + annually) |
| Co-opted Council members | ✓ (Annually) | ✓ (Annually) | — |
| Committee chairs and members | ✓ (Annually) | ✓ (Annually) | — |
| SIG chairs and SIG leadership | ✓ (Annually) | ✓ (Annually) | — |
| Reviewers (grant, award, etc.) | — | ✓ (Per cycle or annually) | — |
| Anyone acting on behalf of BPS (as required) | ✓ (If involved in decision-making) | ✓ (As required) | — |

Note: Co-opted Council members are treated the same as full committee or Council members for the purposes of governance compliance.



Understanding the Code of Conduct

The BPS is committed to the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and transparency. The Code of Conduct outlines the behaviours and responsibilities expected from everyone who holds a formal role within the Society, including Trustees (elected Council members and officers), Committee Members, Special Interest Group (SIG) Chairs, Co-opted Council members, and others representing BPS.

Why does it matter?

A code of conduct protects the credibility and professionalism of the BPS. It ensures we work in the Society's best interest, treat others with respect, and uphold ethical standards. This helps foster trust among members, stakeholders, and the wider public.

This document exists to:

- Clarify expectations for conduct in all BPS-related activities.
- Promote accountability and help safeguard the reputation and good governance of the Society.
- Support a culture of respect, inclusion, and collaboration across our multidisciplinary community.

By agreeing to this Code, you confirm your understanding of the responsibilities and conduct expected of you. This includes upholding the Society's values, treating others with courtesy, and acting in the best interests of the Society at all times.

The Code is reviewed annually and may be updated as needed. If you are uncertain about any aspect of the Code, or how it applies in a particular situation, please contact the Executive Director for clarification.

Breaches are reviewed by Executive Officers or Council. Suspension/loss of professional registration or dismissal for gross misconduct leads to automatic disqualification (with right of appeal).

Understanding the Declaration of interests

A conflict of interest arises when personal, professional, or financial interests — or those of a close connection — could, or appear to, influence an individual's judgment or actions in their BPS role.

Why does it matter?

This declaration helps ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability in the Society's work. By identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest proactively, it protects the quality of governance and decision-making and maintains trust in the BPS's leadership and reputation.

What counts as a conflict?

When personal, financial, or professional connections — or those of close family — might affect your judgement or appear to do so. Examples:

- Being an applicant, co-applicant, or collaborator or supervisor for a grant or award under review
- Holding a role (e.g. director, consultant, advisor) in an organisation related to BPS's work
- Having shareholdings or financial interest in relevant companies or entities
- Membership in other professional or political bodies with overlapping interests
- Having received sponsorship, gifts, or honoraria from stakeholders or suppliers
- Family or close personal relationships with any party who may benefit from a BPS decision

What You Must Do

- Complete an annual Declaration of Interests
- Update the form when your circumstances change
- Disclose interests before discussions or decisions where a potential conflict exists
- Trustees must also complete a Disqualification Declaration

Managing conflicts

Declared conflicts will be recorded in the Register of Interests.

- Where a conflict exists, the individual must:
 - Leave the room or call during the discussion of the relevant item



- Refrain from scoring or voting on the matter
- Avoid influencing the decision through prior discussion or indirect involvement

Chairs of committees, SIGs, and working groups are responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed in meetings.

Policy Governance:

- This policy is reviewed annually and approved by the Executive Officers.
- All committees, SIGs, and working groups must apply this policy in their own operations.
- Non-compliance or failure to declare may result in removal from office or committee membership.

Reviewer Bias & Objectivity Guidance

Recognising and addressing unconscious bias helps ensure that awards, funding, representation, and appointments are based solely on merit and evidence. This safeguards trust in our systems and supports equitable outcomes across all BPS activities.

On the Declaration of interests form, reviewers must:

- Indicate if they've completed bias training (e.g. AMRC, NIHR) with the declaration
- Acknowledge common biases (affinity, confirmation, prestige bias, etc.).
- Affirm impartiality before assessment
- Training and guidance will be signposted (e.g. AMRC, NIHR) and offered if requested



Understanding the Disqualification Declaration

The Disqualification Declaration ensures that all Trustees (elected Council members and officers) are legally eligible to hold their positions.

Why does it matter?

It protects the Society's integrity by preventing individuals who are legally disqualified from acting as trustees or company directors from participating in governance or decision-making roles.

Legal Disqualifications Include:

- Unspent criminal convictions (fraud, dishonesty, bribery, terrorism, etc.)
- Being on the sex offenders register
- Bankruptcy or debt relief orders
- Being removed from a trustee/director role due to misconduct
- Disqualification from being a company director

Review and Consequences

Declarations are reviewed by the Executive Director and, where required highlighted to Council. If a disqualification is identified or suspected:

- The individual will be asked to step down from their role immediately
- Appropriate legal and regulatory notifications will be made as required
- The Society will take necessary steps to ensure compliance with charity and company law

Importance

The Disqualification Declaration is a vital safeguard that helps maintain the BPS's compliance with legal requirements, protects its reputation, and ensures effective, lawful governance.

Note:

The following sections of this governance pack contains the forms that must be completed and returned as part of your role requirements.

Code of Conduct

Scope and Applicability

This Code applies to all individuals representing the British Pain Society (BPS) in formal roles, including but not limited to:

- Trustees (elected Council members and officers)
- Co-opted Council members
- Committee members
- Special Interest Group (SIG) Chairs and SIG leadership
- Reviewers and other appointed positions

Membership of the BPS Council and Board of Trustees is a privilege which carries with it additional legal responsibilities under UK company law and charity law. However, the purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide all those who represent the BPS, in Elected or non-Elected roles, with clear guidelines as to the standards of behaviour expected of them, their responsibilities and best practice in fulfilling their obligations to the Charity.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The Charity's Articles of Association and Regulations
- The Trustee Role Description (for Trustees (elected Council members and officers))

Foundations and Standards

- Trustees (elected Council members and officers) should familiarise themselves with relevant external guidance, such as the Charity Commission's *Essential Trustee* note (CC3):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>
- This Code has been drafted with reference to the Charity Governance Code for larger charities:
www.charitygovernancecode.org
- It adheres to the **7 Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)**:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

Responsibilities and Expected Behaviours

All individuals covered by this Code undertake to:

- Make themselves available, as much as possible, for service of the role to which they may be elected or appointed
- Take decisions in the public interest without favour or bias



- Avoid obligations or influences that could affect impartiality
- Declare interests, memberships, and prior knowledge relevant to BPS business, in line with the Declaration of Interest Policy
- Promote standards consistent with relevant professional guidance, such as:
 - General Medical Council (GMC) – *Good Medical Practice*
 - General Pharmaceutical Council
 - Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
 - Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Serve without seeking personal gain or preferment.
- Be transparent about decisions and actions, respecting confidentiality
- Clearly distinguish personal views from those expressed on behalf of BPS
- Provide leadership and example in upholding these principles
- Observe the confidentiality of information identified as confidential which they receive as a privilege in their role in the BPS
- Serve without seeking personal gain or preferment
- Avoid discrimination or bias based on race, disability, culture, beliefs, gender, sexuality, age, or other protected characteristics

Practical Commitments

In addition to the above responsibilities, all individuals must:

- Participate actively in all required induction, training, and appraisal activities
- Operate within agreed BPS policies, including expenses policy
- Provide timely apologies for absence from meetings or events
- Complete a **Declaration of Interests**, notifying BPS of any changes promptly

Sanctions and Disciplinary Process

- Failure to adhere to this Code will be taken seriously
- Concerns will be reviewed by Executive Officers, with recommendations to Council. Concerns about Executive Officers will be reviewed by appointed Council members
- Any conduct resulting in suspension or loss of professional registration or relevant accreditation with a regulatory body (e.g., GMC, NMC, GDC, HCPC) or dismissal for gross misconduct will result in automatic loss of BPS accreditation.
 - Other breaches of this Code may lead to sanctions, including removal of accreditation or membership, imposed by Council
- A right of appeal applies



Acknowledgement

Please sign below to show that you have read and accept the terms of this Code of Conduct:

(Name)

(Date)



Declaration of Interests

This form must be completed by all individuals holding formal roles with the BPS. Please declare any actual or perceived interests (including those of close family or associates) that could reasonably be seen to affect your objectivity when working with or on behalf of the BPS.

| | |
|--|--|
| Name: | |
| Position at BPS: | |
| Job Title: | |
| Work address: | |
| Name of organization/professional body (if applicable): | |

Please complete each section. If you have nothing to declare, enter “**NONE**”.

Personal Financial interests for past three years

Includes any payments or financial benefits received directly by you, such as:

- *Paid consultancies or advisory roles*
- *Speaking fees or honoraria*
- *Directorships or salaried roles*
- *Shareholdings in relevant organisations*
- *Royalties or patents*
- *Research or education grants awarded personally or to close family*
- *Any other paid work with healthcare, pharmaceutical, or related organisations*

| Name of Company/Organisation | Nature of Interest | Date interest ceased* | Specific to topic? (Y/N) |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
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**if applicable*

Non-personal Financial interests for past year (12 months)

Includes financial support not paid to you personally, such as:

- *Grants, fellowships, or sponsored studies awarded to your department or team*
- *Equipment, education funding, or other resources provided by external organisations*
- *Financial support received by an organisation, unit, or department where you hold a managerial or supervisory role*

| <i>Name of Company/Organisation</i> | <i>Nature of Interest</i> | <i>Date interest ceased*</i> | <i>Specific to topic? (Y/N)</i> |
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**if applicable*

Personal non-financial interests

Includes unpaid roles or affiliations that may influence your work with BPS, such as:

- *Holding office or membership in professional societies, charities, regulatory bodies, or patient organisations*
- *Political party affiliation or involvement in pressure/advocacy groups relevant to BPS activities*
- *Participation in guideline development, editorial boards, or advisory committees*
- *Relevant publications, public statements, or media work*
- *Personal or close family health experiences that relate to the work of BPS*

| <i>Name of Company/Organisation</i> | <i>Nature of Interest</i> | <i>Date interest ceased*</i> | <i>Specific to topic? (Y/N)</i> |
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**if applicable*

Non-personal non-financial interests

Includes non-financial interests held by your institution or staff for whom you are responsible, such as:

- *Honorary or reputational roles held by your institution that may benefit from your position with BPS*
- *Institutional memberships or partnerships relevant to BPS work*
- *Public statements, research, or advocacy led by your department or team*
- *Positions held by staff under your supervision that could create perceived conflicts of interest*

| <i>Name of Company/Organisation</i> | <i>Nature of Interest</i> | <i>Date interest ceased*</i> | <i>Specific to topic? (Y/N)</i> |
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**if applicable*

Other interests (actual or perceived)

Include any other interests not listed above that could reasonably be seen to influence your work with the British Pain Society or affect your objectivity. This includes perceived conflicts or affiliations that may raise questions of bias, even if no actual conflict exists.

| <i>Name of Company/Organisation</i> | <i>Nature of Interest</i> | <i>Date interest ceased*</i> | <i>Specific to topic? (Y/N)</i> |
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**if applicable*



Please declare any interests of immediate family members (spouse/partner, siblings, children, parents) that you are aware of, if not already included above. This includes business interests, company directorships, trusteeships, or any other roles that could be relevant to your work with the British Pain Society.

| |
|---------------------|
| Name: |
| Relationship to me: |
| Organisation name: |
| Nature of interest: |

Bias Mitigation and Objectivity

- Have you completed unconscious bias or conflict-of-interest training in the past 3 years? (Yes/No)
- Do you commit to assessing and making decisions with fairness, impartiality, and objectivity? (Yes/No)
- If applicable, please indicate date and provider of most recent training:

Declaration

Declarations are reviewed annually by the Executive Director and retained in the BPS Register of Interests. Any relevant conflicts will be managed in accordance with BPS policy.

I confirm that I have disclosed all relevant financial and non-financial interests, including those of my immediate family, as requested above. I understand it is my responsibility to inform the Executive Director promptly of any changes to these interests during my term of service with the British Pain Society.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Disqualification Declaration (Trustees (elected Council members and officers) only)

Declaration

I declare that:

- I am not disqualified from acting as a trustee; and
- I will inform the trustees promptly if, after the date of this declaration, one or more of the disqualification reasons applies to me.

Full Name:

Signature:

Date:

Charity Name and Number: The British Pain Society - 1103260

Annex A – Disqualification Reasons

You are automatically disqualified from acting as a trustee if:

1. You have an **unspent** conviction for any of the following
 - a) an offence involving **deception or dishonesty**
 - b) a **terrorism** offence
 - a. to which Part 4 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2008 applies
 - b. under sections 13 or 19 of the Terrorism Act 2000
 - c) a **money laundering** offence within the meaning of section 415 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
 - d) a **bribery** offence under sections 1, 2, 6 or 7 of the Bribery Act 2010
 - e) an offence of **contravening a Commission Order or Direction** under section 77 of the Charities Act 2011
 - f) an offence of **misconduct in public office, perjury or perverting the course of justice** yes/no
 - g) In relation to the above offences, an offence of: attempt, conspiracy, or incitement to commit the offence; aiding, or abetting, counselling or procuring the commission of the offence; or, under Part 2 of the Serious Crime Act 2007(encouraging or assisting)in relation to the offence

2. You are **on the sex offenders register** (ie. subject to notification requirements of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003)
3. You have an unspent sanction for **contempt of court** for making, or causing to be made, a false statement or for making, or causing to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth
4. You have been found guilty of **disobedience to an order or direction of the Commission** under section 336(1) of the Charities Act 2011.
5. You are a **designated person** for the purposes of Part 1 of the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010, or the Al Qaida (Asset Freezing) Regulations 2011.
6. You have **previously been removed as an officer, agent or employee of a charity** by the Charity Commission, the Scottish charity regulator, or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement
7. You have **previously been removed as a trustee** of a charity by the Charity Commission, the Scottish charity regulator, or the High Court due to misconduct or mismanagement
8. You have been **removed from management or control of anybody** under section s34(5)(e) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (**Scotland**) Act 2005 (or earlier legislation)
9. You are **disqualified from being a company director**, or have given a disqualification undertaking, and leave has not been granted (as described in section 180 of the Charities Act) for you to act as director of the charity
10. You are **currently declared bankrupt** (or subject to bankruptcy restrictions or an interim order)
11. You **have an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA)** to pay off debts with creditors
12. You are **subject to** a moratorium period under a **debt relief order**, or a debt relief restrictions order, or an interim order
13. You are subject to an order made under s.429(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986. (**Failure to pay under a County Court Administration Order.**)