

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS UNIVERSITY (IBU)

POLICY CONTROL

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| Policy Number | 3028 |
| Policy Title | Conflict of Interest Policy for External Program Review Consultants |
| Policy Owner / Responsible Offices | Office of the Executive Dean and VP Academic |
| Approval Authority | Academic Council |
| Applies To | External academic peers appointed or nominated as program review consultants |
| Approval Date | January 30, 2026 |
| Effective Date | January 30, 2026 |
| Review Date/s | Every three (3) years |
| Revision Date/s | – |
| Revision Implementation Date/s | – |

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

International Business University (IBU) undertakes regular academic program reviews as part of its commitment to academic quality, continuous improvement, and external accountability. Independent external program review consultants play a critical role in this process by providing objective, expert perspectives on program design, delivery, outcomes, and alignment with academic standards.

To maintain the credibility and integrity of program reviews, it is essential that external consultants are free from conflicts of interest that could compromise—or be perceived to compromise—their independence or objectivity.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define and manage conflicts of interest as they apply to academic peers serving as external consultants on academic program review committees at

International Business University (IBU). The policy is intended to safeguard the integrity, objectivity, and credibility of the program review process.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

International Business University conducts academic program reviews in accordance with established institutional and quality assurance principles. External program review consultants form a critical component of the program review team and are responsible for providing independent, expert evaluation of program quality, academic standards, relevance, and continuous improvement.

All individuals appointed to a program review team are expected to avoid both actual conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest between their responsibilities as reviewers and their personal, professional, or business interests.

4. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all academic peers nominated or appointed to serve as external program review consultants for undergraduate or graduate academic programs at International Business University.

5. DEFINITIONS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

An actual or potential conflict of interest arises when an individual is placed in a situation where their personal, professional, or financial interests could reasonably be perceived to influence—or appear to influence—their judgment, objectivity, or independence in fulfilling their duties as a program review consultant.

Employment or prior employment at a competitive or potentially competitive institution, in and of itself, does not constitute a conflict of interest.

6. POLICY

6.1 INELIGIBLE AFFILIATIONS

Individuals appointed as external program review consultants must not have had any past or current formal affiliation with:

- the academic program under review,
- International Business University, or
- any formal program partners associated with the program under review,

within the previous seven (7) years.

Examples of affiliations that constitute an unacceptable conflict of interest include, but are not limited to:

- supervisory or mentoring relationships,
- regular or ongoing research collaboration,
- former student-supervisor relationships,
- visiting or teaching appointments, and
- co-authorship of academic or professional publications.

6.2 DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

External program review consultants who:

- have any interest in the program under review arising from a past or current affiliation within the previous seven years, or
- make public statements regarding a review that is underway,

must decline appointment to the review team or withdraw from the team if the conflict becomes apparent after appointment.

All individuals appointed to a program review team are required to provide full written disclosure to the University of any actual or potential conflict of interest as soon as they become aware of it.

Similarly, if a member of the program review team becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest involving another appointed reviewer, they must provide a full written disclosure to the Executive Dean and Vice President, Academic (EDVP). Such disclosure must clearly describe the nature, scope, and timing of the affiliation or relationship in question.

6.3 REVIEW AND DETERMINATION

The Executive Dean and Vice President, Academic, in collaboration with the Quality Assurance Office, will review all disclosed situations involving actual or potential conflicts

of interest. Together, they will determine the suitability of the individual to serve as an external program review consultant.

6.4 AUTHORITY AND ENFORCEMENT

The Executive Dean and Vice President, Academic is responsible for:

- notifying external program review consultants if an actual or potential conflict of interest has been identified, and
- excluding or removing external program review consultants from the review team where required under this policy.

International Business University will take reasonable and appropriate measures to ensure that the final composition of each program review team is free from actual or perceived conflicts of interest, in accordance with this policy.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW CONSULTANTS

- Avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Provide full and timely written disclosure of any actual or potential conflict.
- Withdraw from the review process where required.

EXECUTIVE DEAN AND VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC (EDVP, ACADEMIC)

- Review disclosures of actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- Determine eligibility to serve on review teams.
- Notify and remove consultants where required.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICE

- Collaborate in the review and assessment of disclosed conflicts of interest.

8. REVIEW

Review Cycle: Every three (3) years

9. COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all external program review consultants. Failure to disclose an actual or potential conflict of interest may result in exclusion from the review process.

10. EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Adherence to this policy supports the integrity and credibility of IBU's academic program review processes and may be monitored as part of institutional quality assurance practices.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

None