



THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Office of the Vice-President for Research and Development

**Probity Undertaking and Declaration for Non-HKUST Members Participating in
Review or Assessment Exercises**

Preamble

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (the “**University**”) is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and fairness in all its operations, including assessment processes. These principles are fundamental to safeguarding the University’s autonomy and sustaining public confidence in our processes.

To reinforce this commitment, the University requires all research-related review or assessment exercises, such as Review and Selection Committees (or Panels), that include external members to adopt a formal Probity Undertaking and Declaration Form (the “**Form**”). The Form sets out clear requirements on:

- Confidentiality of Information
- Privacy of Personal Data Compliance
- Commitment to Fair and Impartial Assessment
- Compliance with Prevention of Bribery Ordinance
- Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Statement of Practice

The Form has been developed and is set out in the following pages. The Secretariat of each review or assessment exercise should:

- ensure that non-HKUST member(s) appointed to a review or an assessment exercise complete the Form prior to participation;
- obtain the Chair’s review of and decision on the Forms completed by members, including any reports related to conflict of interest;
- obtain the VPRD’s review of and decision on the Form completed by Chair (if he/she is non-HKUST member), including any reports related to conflict of interest; and
- maintain proper and complete records of these documents to ensure proper integrity management and accountability for non-HKUST member(s) serving in review or assessment roles.



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Probity Undertaking and Declaration Form

I, _____ *[Name]* _____, agree to serve as a member of the *[Panel/Committee Name]* (“**Panel**” / “**Committee**”)*, and undertake to abide by the following requirements and provide the declarations set out below:

1. Confidentiality of Information¹

I understand that I may have access to or become privy to confidential information relating to the University, research projects and teams (collectively, “**Confidential Information**”) during my serving as a member of the Panel/Committee*. This includes, without limitation: particulars of the research projects and teams, application content, evaluation criteria, assessment and scoring. Such information may be disclosed through materials circulated, discussions and deliberations at any stage of the review/selection process.

I undertake not to disclose or share to any person or reproduce any Confidential Information that is not in the public domain, without the prior written consent of the University, unless and to the extent that such is required by law, court order or any governmental or regulatory body. I also undertake not to use the Confidential Information that is not in the public domain for purposes other than my service as a Panel/Committee* member.

2. Privacy of Personal Data Compliance

I agree to handle all personal data of applicants and other persons made available to me at any stage of the review/section process in compliance with the University Data Privacy Policy Statement (<https://dataprivacy.hkust.edu.hk/university-data-privacy-policy-statement>) and the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Chapter 486 of the Laws of Hong Kong) (<https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap486>) (and/or other applicable privacy laws). I shall keep the personal data confidential and take all reasonable steps to safeguard such data from unauthorized access or disclosure.

3. Commitment to Fair and Impartial Assessment

I commit to assessing all applications solely on merit and documented criteria. I will avoid any bias, favouritism, or discrimination during the review/selection process and uphold the principles of integrity, transparency, and fairness.

¹ For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this clause precludes the University from disclosing consolidated or summary feedback through appropriate institutional arrangements, subject to prior University approval, provided that such disclosure does not reveal the identity of reviewers, individual assessments, confidential deliberations, or any other protected Confidential Information.

4. Compliance with Prevention of Bribery Ordinance

I acknowledge that the University is a “public body” governed by the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Chapter 201 of the Laws of Hong Kong) (“POBO”) (<https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap201>), and I act as its agent in my capacity as a Panel/Committee* member and shall not act in contravention of the provisions of the POBO.

In particular, I acknowledge that it is an offence under the POBO to solicit or accept any advantage (including any gifts, payment, service or favour) from any third party (including applicants or their affiliates) as an inducement to, or reward for, or otherwise on account of performing or abstaining from any act in relation to the University’s affairs. I further acknowledge that any offer of such advantage must be immediately reported to the University.

Details of report (if applicable):

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

I understand that I shall declare any actual, potential, or perceived[#] conflict of interest in relation to the review/selection process.

- Conflict of interest arises when a member’s private interest competes or conflicts with his/her duties as a Panel/Committee* member or the interest of the University.
- Private interest, for the purpose of this Form, includes:-
 - the member’s personal or professional relationships with any applicant or related stakeholder;
 - financial or other interests of the member; and
 - interests held by any person with whom the member is closely associated, such as their family members/ close relatives, or close personal friends.

I declare that:-

☐ I have NO actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest

☐ I have actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest (details to be provided below):

[#]*Actual: An existing conflict of interest. Potential: A conflict of interest that is about to happen or could happen. Perceived: A conflict of interest which might be reasonably perceived by others as compromising a person’s objectivity.*

I declare that all information provided in this Form is true, accurate, complete. I undertake to promptly notify the University in writing should there be any change in the information provided.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Review and Decision by Chair/VPRD*

I confirm that I have reviewed the above Form. Where declarations have been made in respect of any conflict of interest or any non-compliance issues, I confirm that appropriate consideration has been given, and my decision is stated as follows.

Decision (<i>in respect of declaration of any conflict of interest</i>):	☐ The information declared does not constitute a conflict of interest. The individual can continue to serve as a Panel/Committee* member. ☐ The information declared constitutes an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and the individual should refrain from serving as a Panel/Committee* member.
Remarks / other decision:	
Chair/VPRD*'s Name:	
Chair/VPRD*'s Signature:	
Date:	