



Conflict of Interest Checklist for PSTs: Placements in settings with pre-existing relationships

Conflicts of interest can arise easily, so being proactive is key. Here is a checklist to help you navigate potential issues during your placement:

Review school policies:

Start by familiarising yourself with the school's code of conduct or staff policies. These will outline specific situations considered to be conflicts of interest. Common examples include romantic relationships with students or their families, or financial dealings with a student's business venture/s.

Disclose relationships upfront:

If you have any pre-existing relationships with students, their families, or school staff, disclose this to your supervising teacher and/or placement coordinator immediately. Explain the nature of the relationship and how you'll avoid letting it influence your professional decisions.

Maintain professional boundaries:

This is key! Avoid social media connections with students and/or their families unless the school has a specific policy allowing it (with clear boundaries). Do not accept gifts beyond small tokens and maintain a professional demeanour in all interactions.

Be transparent about outside activities:

If you have a business or participate in activities which could involve students (e.g. coaching a local sports team), disclose this. Document how you'll ensure these activities don't create a conflict with your teaching duties or favour specific students.

Seek clarification when unsure:

If you encounter a situation which might be a conflict of interest, don't hesitate to ask your supervising teacher or placement coordinator for guidance. It's better to be safe than sorry – open communication shows professionalism and protects everyone involved.

By following these steps, you can approach your placement with confidence, knowing you're taking proactive measures to avoid conflicts of interest.