

Impartiality and Conflicts of Interest

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1. Interests requiring disclosure

Disclosures include direct or indirect shareholdings, employment, agency, consultancy, remuneration, research funding, close family relationships and other matters that may affect the appearance of impartiality. A generic declaration of no conflict does not replace disclosure of specific relationships.

2. Managing conflicts and recusal

Relationships are checked before allocation, verification, decisions and reconsideration. A person with an unresolved conflict must not participate improperly. Changes in personnel or circumstances require renewed disclosure, with transfers, recusals or restrictions recorded.

3. Prohibition of improper benefits

Personnel must not accept applicant gifts, remuneration, rebates or benefits linked to results, or exchange decisions for sponsorship, purchases or publicity. Suspected charging or interference must be documented and handled through the complaints procedure.

4. Independent oversight

Impartiality matters are examined by personnel meeting the independence requirements. A person may not handle a dispute concerning their own interests. Unverified allegations are not made public as established facts. Confirmed issues lead to corrections of decisions or records according to their impact.

5. Disclosure before participation

Participants must disclose shareholdings, employment, agency, consultancy, financial or other relationships that may affect impartiality. An unresolved conflict excludes participation in the case's verification, decision or reconsideration.

6. No benefits linked to outcomes

Personnel must not receive applicant remuneration, gifts or economic benefits linked to an award. Funding, purchases, sponsorship and commercial pressure cannot replace any condition or change the outcome.

7. Independent selection of testing bodies

Gold Standard Quality Awards has no partner laboratories and does not designate or recommend laboratories or receive commissions. Bodies must meet the qualifications for the specific parameter and market. Reputation or relationships do not justify different treatment.

8. Reasons for verification and decisions

Material findings are linked to reports, data, standards and administrative records, with responsibilities separated. Reconsideration and complaints are handled by independent personnel. Public-relations discussions do not resolve technical questions.

9. Public verification and enquiries

Public records can be checked without signing in. Questions about evidence, status or impartiality may be submitted with specific facts, sources and relevant records. A receipt is provided and the matter is handled under the applicable procedure.

10. Records, administration and correction

For matters covered by this document, records must retain the application or case number, specific product and market, version used, documents and page references, responsible personnel, material dates, reasons and formal notices. Personal information and trade secrets are handled according to access permissions. Questions about a record may be raised through correction, complaint or reconsideration channels available to an entitled applicant. Submission alone does not alter an existing decision or licence. The outcome is determined by the formal notice and current record.

11. Effective date, application and version control

Version 2.0 of this document is published and takes effect on 19 October 2026. It applies to relevant matters formally submitted after that date. Existing applications retain their original snapshot and rules. Material changes are notified separately and handled under transitional arrangements; new conditions are not retrospectively inserted into historical decisions. Website and downloadable texts must agree. Superseded versions identify their replacement, and name or wording corrections are recorded separately from substantive amendments.