Impartiality and Independence Statement

Bureau of Fitness Standards · bureauoffitness.org

Document	BFS-POL-01 · Impartiality and Independence Statement
Edition	1.0 (interim)
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Owner	Governing Board, advised by the Impartiality Committee
Review	Every 3 years, or sooner if requirements change

> Issued by BFS management as an interim edition. It will be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Board at its first meeting after the committees are constituted.

1. Commitment

The Bureau of Fitness Standards (BFS) understands that impartiality is essential to certification. BFS makes every certification decision on objective evidence of competence gathered through its published schemes, and on nothing else. BFS does not allow commercial, financial or other pressures to compromise impartiality.

2. Independence from training

- BFS does not deliver training for any of its certification schemes and does not require candidates to attend any particular course or provider.
- Training providers, including BFS-approved CPD providers, do not set or mark BFS examinations and take no part in certification decisions.
- BFS does not state or imply that certification would be simpler, easier or cheaper if a particular training provider were used.
- People who have trained a candidate in the previous 2 years take no part in assessing that candidate or in the certification decision.
- Approval of a CPD provider is not an endorsement of that provider's certification-preparation courses.

3. How impartiality is safeguarded

- An Impartiality Committee, on which no single interest predominates, identifies and reviews risks to impartiality at least once a year and reports to the Governing Board (see terms of reference).
- All committee members, assessors, examiners and staff sign a conflict of interest declaration every year and declare new interests as they arise.

- Risks to impartiality are recorded in the risk-to-impartiality register with the action taken to remove or reduce each one.
- Fees are published and are the same for every candidate in the same scheme. No fee, discount or payment is linked to a pass.
- Certification decisions are taken only by the Certification Committee or authorised certifiers, who were not involved in the candidate's training or assessment.
- Appeals and complaints are handled by people independent of the original decision.

4. Openness

BFS publishes its governance structure, terms of reference, policies, fee schedule (once approved), the annual impartiality report and the public register of certified persons and approved providers. See the Transparency page.

5. Status

This statement is issued by BFS management as Edition 1.0 and will be ratified by the Governing Board at its first meeting. Committee seats are currently open to nominations; until committees are constituted, no certification decisions are being made.