



**HANDOUT FOR PARALLEL SESSION 1: 13:15 – 14:05**

**OPTION A: How can we better manage conflicts of interest?**

**Dr Richard Smith**

**Principles of managing conflict of interest well**

1. Recognise that conflicts of interest take many forms; they are not just to do with for-profit companies
2. Recognise that conflict of interest is a state not a behaviour
3. Recognise that poorly managed conflicts of interest can lead to bad decisions, corrupt information, and destroy reputations
4. Have very clear rules; consult about them with all in the university but don't descend to the lowest common denominator
5. Be confident that the rules fit with the best international standards
6. Make sure that everybody in the university is aware of the rules
7. Include case based training on conflict of interest in training of all staff
8. Recognise that rules cannot cover every set of circumstances, so provide an "ethics officer" who can advise on cases
9. Back up the "ethics officer" with an "ethics committee" that can discuss issues and revise the rules
10. Have a body, perhaps the "ethics committee" that can investigate and judge possible breaches of the rules on conflict of interest and advise on punishment if necessary
11. Be sure that the management of the university acts on the advice of the "ethics committee"
12. Have the senior body in the university approve the rules and reapprove them each year
13. Be transparent in reporting breaches of rules on conflicts of interest
14. Don't allow the process to degenerate to bureaucracy