

Published: January 13, 2026, 10:06 pm

---

As I have mentioned here a number of times, [Oxford University's Centre for Business Taxation](#) faced a number of conflicts of interest which should have ruled it out of undertaking a recent review of the literature on offshore illicit flows for the UK's Department for International Development. That Centre has shown a [remarkable lack of awareness](#) of the importance of such conflicts in undertaking its work.

Now I have found that another conflict exists.

The Small Countries Financial Management Centre is based in the Isle of Man. One of its sponsors is the Said Business School, of which the Centre for Business Taxation is a part. Another is the Isle of man government. Together, and with others, they are sponsoring a free 2 week seminar this autumn. The [introduction by the Isle of Man government says](#):

*Small countries face special challenges. Studies have shown that they can be disproportionately challenged when it comes to the effective management of their financial sector, and in their ability to engage and negotiate with both larger countries and international institutions.*

*These factors prompted the establishment of The Small States Network for Economic Development, which works to promote the sustainable development of small state economies, and their more effective integration into the rapidly evolving global economy. It also has an increasingly powerful voice in ensuring that the concerns and interests of small countries are more adequately reflected in the policies and programs of the international community. Nevertheless, until now, there has been little in the way of customised support in the area of people development in the financial sector that would address the unique challenges and, therefore the needs, of small countries.*

This is not an objective organisation. This is not an objective course. Oxford is supplying the special expertise needed to ensure that these places can lobby for their own best interest.

Hardly surprisingly the work the Centre for Business Taxation did for DfID did just that,

by [wholly erroneously](#) dismissing concerns on the scale of illicit financial flows.

Is this a coincidence? Personally, I doubt it. Is there any chance that the authors of the [paper I object to](#) did not know of the work with the Isle of Man? personally I doubt it.

These are scandalous conflicts of interest. You cannot blatantly align yourself with secrecy jurisdiction interests and then claim to be objective. Worse, you cannot do so and not disclose the fact.

Perhaps a serious course on ethics would not go amiss. But I can't see it happening somehow.