Awarding Organisation Conflict of Interest SOP

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Responsible Owner:
Head of Quality, Excellence and Development

Summary of Contents
This Standard Operating Procedure sets out the actions which staff must take when a conflict of interest arises in relation to qualifications delivered on behalf of an Awarding Organisation.

Review Information (Responsible Owner):

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Approval/Noting By:
CMT: 24 June 2026

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N/A

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July 2025

Contents

1.0 CHANGE HISTORY 1
2.0 SUMMARY 2
3.0 SCOPE 2
4.0 PROCEDURE 3
5.0 RESPONSIBLE OWNER 3
6.0 COMMUNICATION PLAN 3
7.0 REVIEW 3
APPENDIX 1: DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY 4

1.0 Change History

Changes to this SOP are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, you can click here to view the change history.

2.0 Summary

A conflict of interest exists where a member of College staff has interests in any other activity which may have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to the interests of the Awarding Organisation in delivering qualifications. A conflict of interest also exists where any part of the assessment of a learner, including by way of quality assurance or internal verification, is undertaken by a person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. This includes:

- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units
- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally and externally assessed components/units
- any members of centre staff with line managerial responsibilities who have members of their family or close friends undertaking qualifications which include internally and externally assessed components/units

3.0 Scope

This SOP applies to all staff who work in any capacity with Awarding Organisations.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Staff will take all reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest and have a duty to report any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Head of Quality, Excellence and Development. The Head of Quality, Excellence and Development will seek advice from the Awarding Organisation for further clarity to establish if a conflict of interest exists or could exist.

4.2 Staff will ensure that no part of the assessment of a learner, including by way of quality assurance or internal verification, is undertaken by a person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. In particular, no person should assess, internally verify, invigilate, or administer assessment materials and results for themselves or any family member, partner, other relative, close friend or close colleague.

4.3 Staff with line management responsibilities must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest where a family member, close friend or close colleague is enrolled on a programme within their area of responsibility. The Head of Quality, Excellence and Development will ensure that appropriate quality assurance arrangements are put in place to protect the integrity of assessment processes. The line manager must not be involved in any assessment or quality assurance decisions relating to the learner.

4.4 The Head of Centre or appointed nominee will notify the relevant Awarding Organisation where a member of College staff registers for a qualification for which they are normally involved in delivery, assessment, internal verification, quality assurance, administration or certification.

4.5 Staff should declare all actual or potential conflicts of interest as soon as they become aware of them. Failure to do so may result in an internal or external enquiry and review under the relevant disciplinary policy. Where a member of staff is unsure if a conflict of interest exists, they should seek advice from the Head of Quality, Excellence and Development.

All actual or potential conflicts of interest must be recorded using the relevant College declaration process and retained securely by QED. The record should include the nature of the conflict, the action taken to manage the conflict, any advice received from the Awarding Organisation, and confirmation that the agreed controls have been implemented.

5.0 Responsible Owner

The Head of Quality, Excellence and Development is responsible for ensuring that this SOP is implemented, adhered to and reviewed.

6.0 Communication Plan

This SOP will be uploaded to the College intranet and referred to in staff induction and training.

7.0 Review

This SOP will be reviewed annually, or when the need for change has been identified.

Appendix 1: Document Change History

Version	Date	Change Detail
1.0	June 2023	Section 4.3 added to address conflicts involving staff with line management responsibilities."
1.1	July 2023	Transferred to new Accessibility Template
1.2	June 2025	Responsible Owner updated to "Head of Quality, Excellence and Development" Review updated to "annually"
1.3	June 2026	Minor updates made to clarify responsible owner references, conflict of interest declaration requirements, escalation to Awarding Organisations, and wording within the procedure, communication and review sections.