

Conflict of Interest Policy

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all Blackpool Skills Academy (BSA) employees and representatives.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard all students and employees by reducing the risk of false accusations of improper or unprofessional conduct. Clear definition of professional boundaries together with appropriate procedural guidance, assist in ensuring employees do not place themselves at risk.

3. Policy Statement

BSA is committed to the safety and wellbeing of both students and employees. All employees and all students are entitled to be treated with respect. The Conflict-of-Interest Policy and related guidance provides direction on behaviours expected of all employees.

Please note, to fulfil the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2019, it states that guidance relating to professional boundaries and employee codes of conduct are to be read by all employees in conjunction with the safeguarding guidance in Part 1 of its publication.

4. Activities related to managing a conflict of interest

- Staff are trained in managing boundaries and related conflicts as part of their induction.
- where there is potential for a conflict of interest, the awarding body will be notified, and their agreement requested prior to the start of the course.
- Any agreed conflict of interest will be recorded on a central log maintained by the examinations team.
- Development is provided for students on key policies during their induction and new policies or procedures are introduced in Tutorials.

5. Disclosure

It is important that staff and students recognise and disclose any situations that present a conflict of interest for example:

- staff applying to study or currently studying within BSA where they are an employee
- teaching, assessing, internally quality assuring or invigilating an exam where a relative, friend or colleague is a student.
- students completing an assessment or examination that is supervised or assessed by a member of staff who is a relative, carer or family friend.

6. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest

If a conflict of interest is identified that has not been disclosed the related examination or assessment will be invalidated and the staff or student disciplinary procedure will be activated. The qualification awarding body and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) will be notified of the conflict of interest.

7. Procedure

The Head of Centre and/or Examinations team will take reasonable steps to manage the conflict e.g.

- provide an alternative assessor, internal quality assurer, invigilator or support worker who is not related to any student.
- inform the awarding body if the teacher is the only available specialist in that subject area to seek their permission and to arrange for any additional scrutiny to monitor fair and impartial approaches.
- record the conflict of interest in the conflict-of-interest log maintained by the examinations team.
- provide details of conflicts of interest to visiting External Quality Assurers and External Examiners or others associated with the awarding body for the relevant qualification.

If a student or staff member believes that a declaration of conflict of interest has not been managed correctly, they may raise a complaint in line with the Complaint's Policy.

8. Linked Policies and procedures

- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Employee Disciplinary Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedure