




Name of Policy	Declaration of Interest – Exams Policy
School Lead	Steve Barnes
Governor Lead	Full Governing Body
Date of last Review	October 2023
Date of Approval	October 2023
Date of next Review	January 2025
Links to other policies	Examinations Policy
Head Teacher sign off signature and date	  October 2023

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1). The Conflict of Interest process is designed to protect the integrity of the exams system and helps to ensure that staff members at schools and colleges are protected if there is an allegation of malpractice due to a perceived, or real, conflict.

Full details of the regulations can be found in the [JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres Booklet](#) in section 5.3 (i), which you should read in addition to this guidance.

## 2). Responsibility

The Head of Centre is responsible for managing the conflict of interest process and must determine how they do so. The JCQ regulations explain what must be reported to the awarding bodies and what information must be kept on record at the school/college.

The Head of Centre must ensure that any records include details of what measures will be taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the affected qualifications.

### 3). Reporting

Awarding bodies must be informed about conflict of interest before the published deadline for entries for **each examination series**. They need to know about any members of school/college staff who are:

- taking qualifications which include internally assessed components/units at their own school/college
- teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (eg children) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units.

Entering members of staff for qualifications at their own school/college should be a last resort, when the individual has been unable to find an alternative. In this case the Head of Centre must ensure that:

- the usual protocols are in place to prevent the staff member from accessing exam materials prior to the exam, and that other staff understand the importance of maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials
- the member of staff does not receive any preferential treatment.

To inform the awarding bodies about one of the conflicts of interest described above, simply complete the conflict of interest webform on the links below. No further action is necessary unless a member of the Exams Integrity team contacts you for further information.

Before completing the form, please also read the guidance linked to [for Edexcel](#) and/or [AQA](#) (conflict of interest form links enclosed) and/or [OCR](#) (opens as a PDF, declaration [here](#)).

#### 4). Keeping records

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that their school/college maintains clear records of all instances where:

- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (eg children) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the school/college itself or other centre
- school/college staff are taking qualifications at their centre which do not include internally assessed components/units
- school/college staff are taking qualifications at other centres.

These records must:

- include details of the measures which have been put in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the affected qualifications
- be available for inspection by a visiting JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding body staff
- be available if requested in the event of concerns being reported to an awarding body
- be kept until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed (whichever is later).

If you have any queries about this process, please email the Exams Integrity team at [COIcentredeclarations@aqa.org.uk](mailto:COIcentredeclarations@aqa.org.uk) (AQA), [conflictofinterest@pearson.com](mailto:conflictofinterest@pearson.com) (EDEXCEL) or [Declaration.Disclosure@ocr.org.uk](mailto:Declaration.Disclosure@ocr.org.uk) (OCR).

5). Examples:

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\*N.B: also relevant for centre management of conflicts which do not have an internally assessed component

<b>Conflict: Staff member taking a subject with an internally assessed component/ unit at their own centre</b>	<b>Report to awarding body using online form?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<p>As set out in the JCQ regulations, this is a 'last resort' scenario- ideally centres should make arrangements for the member of staff to take the qualification elsewhere. The centre will be required to demonstrate that attempts have been made to enter the staff member elsewhere when completing the online conflict of interests form.</p> <p>Note that if the centre is part of a multi-academy trust, the staff member could be entered at a different trust centre, as long as any required monitoring/ supervision is undertaken by the entering centre.</p> <p>If it has not been possible to enter the member of staff elsewhere, then strategies to manage this conflict include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements should be made to ensure that the member of staff is not treated any differently to any other student;</li> <li>• Access to the Centre Services should be restricted if the internally assessed component has any pre-release material relating to it, to ensure the staff member cannot access any confidential materials in advance;</li> <li>• If the member of staff is a member of the examinations team, then any access to secure storage should be restricted for the period during which they are taking examinations;</li> <li>• The Head of Department/ member of the Senior Leadership Team must consider monitoring the completion and marking of the internally assessed component, as an additional check to ensure that the member of staff has been assessed fairly- this can be as part of an ongoing process of checks or as part of internal standardisation prior to submission of the marks/outcome to AQA.</li> </ul>		
<p>Remember that this conflict does not need reporting to the awarding body if the subject does not have an internally-assessed component/unit- however, the Head of Centre will need to put in place conflict management arrangements and have records available for inspection. The above strategies would also be suitable for this purpose.</p>		



<b>Conflict: Member of staff who is teaching/ preparing members of their own 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 an internally assessed component/ unit</b>	<b>Report to awarding body using online form?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<p>It is important that this conflict is managed effectively to ensure that the member of staff and the centre can be protected from allegations of malpractice. Ideally, the relative should be allocated to a different teacher in the department, as this will effectively negate the conflict.</p> <p>However, if this is not possible, strategies to manage this conflict include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to Centre Services should be restricted if the internally assessed component has any pre-release material relating to it, to ensure the staff member cannot access any confidential materials in advance of the release date- access can be supervised by another member of staff.</li> <li>• If the member of staff is also a member of the examinations team, then any access to secure storage should be restricted for the period during which they are taking examinations;</li> <li>• The Head of Department/ member of the Senior Leadership Team must consider monitoring the completion and marking of the internally assessed component, as an additional check to ensure that the member of staff's relative has been assessed fairly - this can be as part of an ongoing process of checks or as part of internal standardisation prior to submission of the marks/outcome to the awarding body.</li> </ul>		
<p>Remember that this conflict does not need reporting to the awarding body if the subject does not have an internally-assessed component/ unit- however, the Head of Centre will need to put in place conflict management arrangements and have records available for inspection. The above strategies would also be suitable for this purpose.</p>		

<b>Conflict: Exams office staff member has a member of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for an examination or assessment either at the centre itself or at another centre (i.e. subject without internally-assessed component)</b>	<b>Report to awarding body using online form?</b>	<b>No</b>
<p>In such cases, in accordance with the published JCQ regulations, it is important that the centre maintains a record detailing the measures in place to mitigate the risks. It is strongly recommended that the record should be signed by the member of staff and the Head of Centre. If one of the requirements is for the conflict to be monitored, then the person instructed to do the monitoring should also sign the record. Remember that the record may be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector as part of a routine visit, and may be requested in the event of concerns being reported to an awarding body. The records <b>must</b> be retained until the deadlines for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed (whichever is later). Maintaining such records and implementing the agreed mitigation measures will protect both the school and the member of staff should any allegations be made against them.</p> <p>In the event of a conflict of this nature, the school will make the following corrections to procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The exams officer will provide a copy of the family members timetable to SLT before the first exam.</li> <li>• The exams officer/member of the exams office staff should not enter the exam store room without direct supervision;</li> <li>• A supervising member of staff should be present when papers arrive and are logged, and provide a countersignature to account for all papers;</li> <li>• The exams officer/administrator should not handle/ have any access to papers that their relative/close family friend is taking without direct supervision. This includes before, during and after the exam and any completed candidate scripts. Another member of the exams team should also assist with/ complete the packaging of the completed papers to return to the awarding body;</li> <li>• The exams officer/administrator should have their Edexcel/AQA/OCR account access monitored and removed on the morning of the affected examinations to ensure that the paper cannot be accessed electronically, and should surrender any mobile phones to SLT before any exam packets are opened, or during the window for papers available for download, until all completed papers are packaged and returned to the awarding body;</li> <li>• The exams officer/ administrator should not have access to the candidate’s results on EDI day or on results day, so that they do not see the results before the candidate;</li> <li>• The member of staff should not have any access to the live papers before, during or after the exam(s) in question;</li> <li>• The member of staff should avoid contact with the candidate before the exams.</li> </ul>		