



Dacorum Education
Support Centre

Conflict of Interest Policy for Delivery of Level 1/2 BTEC and Vocational Courses

DESC values the mental health and wellbeing of every member of its community.

Our policies reflect the core values of respect and support for each other in every aspect of life. Our aim is that all in our community, through working together, to feel safe and secure in an environment, which enables and equips every individual to thrive and be respectful of each other's strengths and differences.

Respect, Aspiration, Resilience

October 2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for identifying, managing, and mitigating any conflict of interest that may arise in the delivery, assessment, and management of Level 1/2 BTEC and Vocational courses. This policy ensures the integrity, transparency, and fairness of the assessment process, protecting both staff and learners from any potential bias or unfair advantage.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff involved in the delivery, assessment, verification, and administration of Level 1/2 BTEC and Vocational courses, including teachers, assessors, internal verifiers, invigilators, and administrative staff. It also applies to learners and any other individuals who may have a direct or indirect involvement in the assessment process.

3. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may occur when an individual's personal interests, relationships, or activities compromise or have the potential to compromise their professional responsibilities. For the purposes of this policy, a conflict of interest may arise when:

- A staff member involved in assessment has a familial or close personal relationship with a learner
- A staff member is involved in the delivery or assessment of a course in which they or a close family member stand to gain personal benefit (e.g., financial or reputational)
- A staff member holds multiple roles (e.g., both assessor and internal verifier) in a way that could affect impartiality
- Any situation where impartiality and fairness in the assessment process could be reasonably questioned

4. Identifying and Declaring a Conflict of Interest

All staff members are required to take proactive steps to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest exists or could arise, the following steps must be taken:

- **Self-Declaration:** Staff must declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest to the Head of Centre for Exams (Naomi Walker), Exams Officer (Carole Hammond), or relevant line manager as soon as they become aware of the conflict
- **Record Keeping:** Any declared conflicts of interest will be logged in a central Conflict of Interest Register, maintained by the Exams Officer or Head of Centre for Exams, ensuring transparency

- **Disclosure by Others:** If another staff member or learner becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest, they should report it to the Head of Centre for Exams or relevant senior staff

5. Managing a Conflict of Interest

Once a conflict of interest has been identified, appropriate measures will be taken to mitigate any impact on the integrity of the assessment process. Actions may include:

- **Reallocation of Roles:** The individual with the conflict may be reassigned to a different role, such as having another staff member handle the assessment or internal verification
- **External Oversight:** Where necessary, an independent third party may be appointed to oversee the assessment or verification process to ensure objectivity
- **Enhanced Monitoring:** Increased scrutiny of the assessment or internal verification process may be put in place for any areas where a conflict of interest has been declared
- **Exclusion from Decision-Making:** The staff member with the conflict may be excluded from key decisions regarding the assessment or grading of learners with whom they have a relationship

6. Confidentiality

Any information disclosed as part of the conflict of interest declaration will be treated confidentially and only shared with relevant individuals as necessary to address the situation.

7. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to declare or appropriately manage a conflict of interest may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to:

- Removal from the assessment process
- Disciplinary procedures in line with the Centre's staff policies
- In extreme cases, the Centre may report the breach to the Course Provider, which could impact the Centre's status as an approved Course provider

8. Review and Monitoring

This Conflict of Interest Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective. Any changes to this policy will be communicated to all staff involved in the delivery and assessment of BTEC and Vocational courses.

9. Contact Information

For questions, concerns, or to declare a conflict of interest, staff should contact the Head of Centre for Exams (Naomi Walker) or the Exams Officer.

Naomi Walker

Deputy Headteacher

October 2024