



Conflict of Interest Policy

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Introduction

1.1 The WASP Centre is required to have in place a Conflict of Interest Policy that enables us to identify, manage and mitigate any potential conflicts of interest. All staff and other individuals have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest.

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to protect our integrity as a school and the integrity of our qualifications. The policy is also designed to protect our staff by providing guidance on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of The WASP Centre's role in delivering courses.

This policy:

- • defines what is meant by conflict of interest.
- • describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of working with, or for, an awarding organisation.
- • sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at each level in the organisation.

3. Scope of policy

3.1 This policy applies to all staff and other individuals who interact or potentially interact with the work of the awarding organisation. This includes individuals involved with any aspects of the creation, marketing, sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with qualifications, tests and assessments, and supporting resources and services.

3.2 The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include all staff employed by The WASP Centre on a full time, part time or casual basis.

4. Definition of conflict of interest

4.1 A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed.

4.2 Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances for example:

When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.

When an individual has interests that conflict with his or her professional position.

Where someone works for or carries out work on The WASP Centre's behalf but may have personal interests – paid or unpaid – in another business.

Where someone works for or carries out work on The WASP Centre's behalf, who has friends or relatives taking assessments or examinations.

4.3 The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has specific requirements regarding potential conflicts of interest relating to examinations:

The awarding bodies are required by the qualification regulators to ensure that any Conflict of Interest in relation to the design, delivery and awarding of examinations/assessments is identified, recorded and managed effectively. In turn, centres are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the awarding bodies are able to comply with this regulatory condition.

What is a Conflict of Interest?

In this context, a Conflict of Interest occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an examination/assessment at your or any other centre. The term 'Related People' is used to cover close friends or relatives. A Conflict of Interest also occurs if any member of your centre's staff is entered for an examination/assessment.

Who are 'Related People'?

'Related People' are those with whom the member of staff has a close relationship. It would certainly include spouses, children and siblings, but would also include close friends, relatives and members of the household where there is regular contact, such that privileged information might be shared inappropriately. A step-relative, cousin, niece, etc., would count if the contact with that person was close and frequent.

5. Principles

The WASP Centre will:

Review its processes annually to ensure that all conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are managed and resolved.

Ensure that the contractual arrangements clearly set out any obligations on them to declare and manage conflicts of interest arising from other activities that they undertake.

Ensure that anyone who has access to confidential assessment material for a qualification understands the confidential nature of the content.

Ensure that all members of staff declare any interest for friends or family sitting examinations.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for the Conflict of Interest policy, dissemination of the policy and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the Trustees.

6.2 The Headteacher and/or Exam Officer is responsible for communicating the Conflict of Interest Policy to all relevant individuals within their areas of responsibility annually.

6.3 All departments are required to review their procedures annually to ensure that they anticipate and manage potential or actual conflicts of interest.

6.4 The Exam Officer and/or SLT are responsible for ensuring that all new staff receive conflict of interest information.

6.5 Any potential or actual conflict of interest must be documented by the subject leader. Their line manager must either resolve the issue or, for issues that cannot be resolved at this level, report the issue to the Head Teacher and Trustees.

6.6 The Exams Office will ensure that all JCQ requirements are adhered to and will maintain appropriate records accordingly. (See annexe 1).

All staff

6.6 Individuals within The WASP Centre have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest Policy, any guidelines and complete the required conflict of interest training.

6.7 All individuals will be required annually to read and understand the Conflict of Interest Policy.

6.8 The most important feature of the policy is the requirement that an individual discloses any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest. If there is any doubt whether or not it represents a conflict of interest it should be reported.

6.9 The individual and line manager are equally responsible for ensuring that the issue is documented carefully.

6.10 An individual may wish to raise concerns relating to conflict of interest directly with their line manager. This may be done in confidence and they are entitled to receive a response to their concerns.

6.11 Any staff member considering paid or unpaid work outside of The WASP Centre should inform their manager if they think there is any potential for a conflict of interest. If the staff member is unsure whether a conflict of interest might arise, they should discuss this with their line manager first. The line manager should contact the Head Teacher if they need advice on whether a situation presents a conflict and a record should be kept of the discussion. A staff member must not take on any such activities that could be deemed to compete or conflict with The WASP Centre's activities.

6.12 Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform the Head Teacher and the exams office of any candidates being entered for its examinations at the school and also at any other examination centre who are family members, other relatives or friends by completing the form in annexe 2.

6.13 The Head Teacher is responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest to an appropriate level within the school and, when necessary, to the Trustees.

6.14 The Head Teacher will begin an investigation of any issues identified within 48 hours. A preliminary report will be made available to the Trustees within 5 working days.

Annexe 1

Conflict of Interest log (Summer exam series 2023)

Date recorded	Staff name & job title(s)	Interest declared	Nature of any potential Conflict of Interest	Specific Conflict of Interest	Steps being taken to manage the risk represented by any Conflict of Interest
	<i>Example</i>	<i>Sitting exam/assessment at this centre</i>		<i>≤ Declared to awarding body</i>	<i>The following protocols are in place: (to prevent the member of staff having access to exam/assessment materials prior to the exam/assessment). The Exam Officer and Headteacher ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials is maintained at all times.</i>

This log will be kept for a minimum of one year after results have been issued for the relevant exam series

Annexe 2
Declaration of Interest form 2023/24/25

The awarding bodies are required by the qualification regulators to ensure that any Conflict of Interest in relation to the design, delivery and awarding of examinations/assessments is identified, recorded and managed effectively. In turn, centres are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the awarding bodies are able to comply with this regulatory condition.

*A **Conflict of Interest** occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an examination/assessment at your or any other centre. A Conflict of Interest also occurs if any member of your centre's staff is entered for an examination/assessment.*

Therefore, centres are required to inform the awarding bodies for any of their specifications of any specific Conflict of Interest. To ensure our centre complies, you **must** declare (by ticking) any of the statements that apply to you and complete the required information in

- I will be sitting an exam/assessment at this centre in the Summer 2022 exam series
 - Your name
 - Your job title(s)
 - Subject(s) you teach (*if applicable to your role*)
.....
 - Qualification(s) I am to be entered for
 - Awarding body
 - Qualification type
 - Specification (subject)
- I have access to confidential assessment materials (in the centre's secure storage facility and/or through an awarding body secure extranet site)
- I don't have access to confidential assessment materials (in the centre's secure storage facility and/or through an awarding body secure extranet site)

‘Related People’

‘Related People’ are those with whom you have a close relationship. It includes spouses, children and siblings, close friends, relatives and members of the household where there is regular contact, such that privileged information might be shared inappropriately. A step-relative, cousin, niece, etc., would count if the contact with that person was close and frequent.

I have access to the centre’s secure storage facility and I have a one or more ‘Related People’ sitting exams, at this centre (*where more than one related person complete a separate form*)

I am involved in making assessment decisions for centre-marked components for ‘Related People’

Name of related person (the candidate)

Relationship to me:

Candidate number

Awarding bodyQualification Type.....

Specification (subject)

Qualification(s) candidate to be entered for

Date declaration(s) made:

Signature to confirm declaration(s):

This completed form (including date and signature) must be returned to Headteacher as soon as Conflict of Interest occurs.

The declaration(s) you have provided will be used to inform the relevant awarding body/bodies where a specific Conflict of Interest is identified and to record the steps being taken by the centre to manage the risk represented by any Conflict of Interest. You will be informed where any steps directly affect you.

All records are subject to inspection by the JCQ/awarding body on request and will be kept for a minimum of one year after results have been issued for the relevant exam series

Date:

FOR HEAD OF CENTRE/EXAMS OFFICER USE ONLY

Completed declaration form received.....

Recorded on Conflict of Interest log

Action: Awarding body/bodies informed of specific Conflict of Interest (where applicable)

Member of staff informed of steps to manage the risk represented by specific Conflict of Interest.