



# **Conflict of Interest (Exams) Policy**

## Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect staff and students and the integrity of Carrington School as a centre. Any assessor or other member of staff involved in any way with internal assessments or exam processes must declare any conflict(s) of interest in this regard.

This policy applies to all staff and other individuals who interact with the work of the exam boards including teaching and marking.

## Definition of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual has competing interests or loyalties. The conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed. For the purposes of this policy, situations where a conflict of interest occurs are:

- A member of staff taking a qualification at the centre which includes internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
- A candidate being taught and prepared for any qualification (including internally assessed components/units by a member of staff with a personal connection to the candidate)
- A member of exams office staff with a personal connection to a candidate being entered for exams at the centre
- A member of centre staff taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
- A member of staff taking a qualification at another centre

Situations relating to staff members taking qualifications do not apply at Carrington School as this is not allowed.

## 1. Carrington School's management of conflict of interest

Carrington School complies with the JCQ and other awarding bodies conflict of interest regulations by:

- Ensuring the relevant awarding bodies are informed of any conflict of interest
- Requiring staff to sign a *Declaration of Interest* form for any student who is a close friend or relative as the student starts GCSE/vocational courses and then before the published deadline for entries for each examination series
- Recording a list of staff who have a conflict of interest and sharing that with Heads of Department/Quality Nominee so that they are aware and can take necessary action to mitigate
- Maintaining records that confirm the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected
- Ensuring other relevant centre staff, where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials, are briefed on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials.

## 2. Responsibilities

All staff have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest policy and guidelines. Staff are required to make a declaration as soon as they become aware of a potential conflict.

## 3. Making a declaration

All staff who identify that they potentially have a conflict of interest are required to sign a Centre Staff Declaration Form. These forms and a list of all staff involved are kept in a folder in the Exams Office. Declarations are treated confidentially within the bounds of what is required to be reported to the awarding bodies.

#### 4. Action following a declaration

Depending on the nature of the declaration, (i) a report is made to the relevant awarding body and/or (ii) a log is kept of any action taken to mitigate risk. The individual concerned and Exams Officer are equally responsible for ensuring that the issue is documented carefully.

Clear records are kept which include details of measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications involved. Heads of Department/Quality Nominee are informed of any potential conflict of interest within their department. Records are held in the Exams Office to be available for inspection by JCQ inspectors and/or awarding body staff if required, or if they are requested should concerns be reported to an awarding body. They are retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later.

Ultimate responsibility for the Conflict of Interest policy, dissemination of the policy and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the Head of Centre.