



# **Wreake Valley Academy**

## **Examination Conflicts of Interest policy**

<b>Date approved by Local Advisory Board</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020
<b>Date of next review</b>	Spring term 2022

Signed on behalf of the Local Advisory Board

Chair of Governors/Chair of Committee

# Conflicts of Interest Policy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to relevant individuals on handling possible conflicts of interest with regards to examinations procedures.

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 roles and responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at all levels.
- 1.2. This policy particularly applies to all staff and other individuals who interact with the work of an awarding body. This includes individuals involved with all aspects of the creation, marketing, sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with an awarding body.
- 1.3. 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.

## 2. DEFINITION OF A CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 2.1. A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances in relation to awarding organisation activity, for example:

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

A conflict of Interest at a centre occurs where any member of the centre 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 WVA or any other centre. The term '**Related People**' is used to cover close friends or relatives 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.

A Conflict of Interest also occurs if any member of the centre's staff is entered for an examination/assessment.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1.** All relevant staff and other individuals have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest. It is likely that individuals working closely with an awarding organisation function will encounter potential conflicts of interest from time to time.
- 3.2.** Such situations must be carefully managed to ensure that any conflict of interest does not detrimentally impact on the standards of, or public confidence in, regulated units and qualifications.
- 3.3.** The ultimate responsibility for the management of potential and actual conflicts of interests rests with the Principal.
- 3.4.** Senior Leaders are responsible for communicating the conflict of interest policy to all relevant individuals within the school.
- 3.5.** Any potential conflict of interest must, in the first instance, be approved by the Principal.
- 3.6.** The Principal is responsible for risk assessing all actual or potential conflict of interest.
- 3.7.** The Principal is responsible for deciding when and how matters relating to potential or actual conflicts of interest will be escalated within the Trust.
- 3.8.** Where the conflict of interest refers to the Principal, the Chair of Governors will assume the responsibilities outlined above.
- 3.9.** All relevant individuals will be required to provide Conflict of Interest declaration annually.
- 3.10.** Where there is a potential or actual conflict of interest, these are required to be documented. The Principal must either resolve the issue or, for issues that are not resolvable (for example, staff who are also external verifiers) report the issue to the BEP CEO.
- 3.11.** The BEP CEO will investigate the issue and make a decision on the appropriate course of action.
- 3.12.** Every individual within WVA has responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the conflict of Interest policy and any guidelines. The most important feature of the Policy is the requirement that an individual disclose any activity if there is any doubt whether or not it represents a conflict of interest. Where an individual is unsure, they must report it and the Principal will make a decision on whether or not a conflict exists.
- 3.13.** Any individual considering taking on additional paid work which relates to the assessment and verification of students work must seek the Principals agreement beforehand, as stipulated in their contract of employment. An individual must not take on any such activities that could be deemed to compete or conflict with WVA activities.

### **4. INFORMING AWARDING BODIES OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

- 4.1.** Individual awarding body/bodies must be informed where, for one or more of their specifications:
  - any member of staff is entered for an examination or assessment;
  - any member of staff (including invigilators), with access to the centre's secure storage facility, has 'Related People' sitting examinations, whether that is at WVA centre or elsewhere. This includes a member of staff who has access to both confidential assessment materials and is also entered for an examination at another centre;
  - any members of staff are involved in making assessment decisions for 'Related People' at the centre where there are centre marked and externally moderated components/units. (Awarding bodies are normally informed of the candidates affected at the point when centre assessed marks are submitted.)

## Conflict of Interest Declaration Form – Academic Year 2019-2020

This form is to be completed by staff at Wreake Valley Academy (WVA) to report possible conflicts of interest. All staff are responsible for reporting any conflict of interest as outlined in the conflict of Interest policy. This includes assessors, internal verifiers, invigilators and admin staff involved in application and administration processes.

A personal interest in an outcome of an assessment amounts to conflict of interest, which poses a risk to the integrity of the assessment. Staff should make a declaration on this form if they are:

1. Centre staff sitting examinations or assessments.
2. Staff involved in making assessment decisions for centre-marked components for 'related people'.
3. Staff with access to the centre's secure storage facility who have 'related people' sitting exams at the centre or elsewhere.

<b>1. Centre staff sitting examinations or assessments</b>	Name of staff member:			
	Teaching subject(s):		1) 2) 3)	
	Qualifications to be entered for:		1) 2) 3)	
	Steps taken to ensure integrity of the assessment being undertaken:			
<b>2. Staff involved in making assessment decisions for centre-marked components for 'related people'</b>	Name of staff member:			
	Teaching subject(s):		1) 2) 3)	
	Name of candidate:			
	Candidate number:			
	Relationship to member of staff:			
	Qualifications candidate is entered for (including Exam Boards):		1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 6) 7) 8) 9) 10)	
<b>3. Staff with access to the centre's secure storage facility / assessment material who have 'related people' sitting examinations at the centre, or, any other centre this academic year.</b>	Name of staff / invigilator:			
	Job title:			
	Name of candidate:			
	Relationship to candidate:			
	Qualifications candidate is entered for this academic year:		1) 2) 3) 4) 5)	
	Is candidate sitting exams / assessments at WVA ?			
	If yes:	Candidate number:		
	If no:	Entering centre name:		
	Entering centre number			

WVA Headteacher's / BEP CEO's Review and Declaration (*to be circled*):

**1)** I have reviewed the above declaration and noted the issue raised, but have decided that no action is required.

**OR**

**2)** I have reviewed the above declaration and recommend the following action to be taken to address the above declared conflict: (e.g. move the candidate into another group; change assessor/Internal Verifier/invigilator; include the candidate in samples for verification; have the assessment marking supervised or re-marked, different administration staff to deal with the application and administration process at any stage; report to awarding body where appropriate).

Actions to be taken:

**WVA Headteacher's / BEP CEO's signature:.....**

**Date:.....**