



Manor Hall
Academy Trust

Building Relationships, Celebrating Success, Promoting Progress

BAILEY STREET AP ACADEMY TRUST CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN EXAMS POLICY

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REVIEW COMMITTEE	This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis
DATE OF PUBLICATION	January 2022
REVIEW DATE	January 2023

Signed:	Date:
Title:	
Signed: On Behalf of the Management Committee	Date:
Title:	

Conflicts of Interest Policy (Exams)

Introduction

The conflicts of interest process is designed to protect the integrity of examinations and exam assessments and to ensure they remain fair and to protect candidates where there is potential, or a perception, that they could be influenced by any personal interests.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to staff and any other relevant individuals on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of their roles as teachers, invigilators, and assessment/exam-related administrators.

This policy applies to all staff or other individuals whenever they interact or potentially interact with any of the school assessment/exam related functions. This includes individuals involved with all aspects of devising, setting, marking, administering, invigilating, internally verifying or any other activity connected with the assessment of candidates and associated supporting resources and services. The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include full-time, part-time and support staff of the school and any associate staff including external examiners.

The most important feature of the policy is the instruction that individuals should always disclose an activity if there is any doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest.

Definition of a conflict of interest in the context of exams

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.

A personal interest is a Conflict of Interest that relates to a particular individual. A personal interest can be financial or non-financial in nature. So, for example: If a person conducting an investigation into alleged malpractice is related to one of the Learners accused of malpractice that would be a personal interest, or if a person's salary is related to the number of appeals they uphold (or reject), that too would be a personal interest.

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 schools behalf but may have personal interests – paid or unpaid – in another business.
- Where someone works for or carries out work on the Schools behalf, who has friends or relatives taking assessments or examinations.

Some examples of conflicts of interest within an exam situation.

The following are examples of conflicts or potential conflicts of interest from different areas of the school. These examples are intended to be helpful to staff in making decisions that relate to potential conflict of interest situations in their day-to-day work.

- If a teaching member of staff is involved in any way with the development of a secure assessment for either internal or national use, he/she cannot make use of the knowledge of that assessment in any teaching or learning activity
- Teachers, invigilators and assessment/exam-related administrators do not take responsibility to ensure the security and confidentiality of all assessment documents including examination papers
- Learning and teaching materials are based on live examination of other assessment materials (although they can make use of past examination of other assessment materials)
- A member of staff is asked to assess, invigilate or internally verify the work of a student who is a family member, other relative or close friend
- A member of staff makes assessment materials available to individuals, whether or not students of the school, when not specifically tasked with assessing them as part of a timetabled activity

To determine whether or not a personal interest exists in a particular case, the relevant question to ask is whether:

- The person carrying out the assessment, investigation or appeal has any reason or incentive to make anything other than a good faith decision; or
- An informed or reasonable person would conclude that such a reason or incentive exists.

Staff responsibilities

The most important feature of the policy is the requirement that an individual disclose 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.

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.

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

- All staff have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest Policy, any guidelines and complete any required conflict of interest training.
- All staff who have access to confidential assessment material for a qualification are required to read a copy of this policy and understand the confidential nature of the content.
- All members of staff are required to declare any interest for friends or family sitting examinations. Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform the Head teacher and the school exams officer of any candidates being entered for its examinations and other assessments, who are family members, other relatives or friends.
- Any staff member considering paid or unpaid work outside of the School 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 Bailey Street AP Academy

The Head of Centre is responsible for managing the conflict of interest process.

The exams officer must keep centre records in the following situations (but not limited to):

- 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 son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their centre which do not include internally assessed components/units
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres.

The Head of Centre must ensure that the records include details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected. The records may be inspected by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or Awarding Organisation staff

The records will be 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.

Procedures to be followed in the Event of an Actual or Perceived Conflict of Interest

All relevant staff have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest.

Such situations must be carefully managed to ensure that any conflict of interest does not detrimentally impact on standards of, or public confidence in the schools educational provision

- Any potential or actual conflict of interest must be documented by the subject leader and passed to SLT and the school exams officer.
- The SLT must either resolve the issue or, for issues that cannot be resolved at this level, report the issue to the Governors.
- Any day-to-day concerns identified by an individual should be raised with their line manager – however,;
- An individual may wish to raise concerns relating to conflict of interest directly with the Senior Leadership team. This may be done in confidence and they are entitled to receive a response to their concerns.
- Any staff member considering paid or unpaid work outside of the School should inform their line 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.
- Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform the Head teacher and the school exams officer of any candidates being entered for its examinations and other assessments, who are family members, other relatives or friends.

In line with JCQ regulations the exams officer and Centre Head must inform the awarding body in writing about conflicts of interest before the published deadline for entries of:

- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units
- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their 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 internally assessed components/units.

Responsibly

The Head of Centre is responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest to an appropriate level within the business and, when necessary, to the Governors