

## End Point Assessment

### Conflict of Interest Guidance

#### Introduction

As an apprenticeship end point assessment centre The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is required to deliver an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge skills and behaviour set out in the apprenticeship Standard, for every apprentice.

This guidance enables UCLan to meet these conditions, and provides the framework for staff to identify, manage and mitigate conflict of interest that may occur as part of an apprenticeship. All staff, consultants and partners institutions/organisations have a responsibility to protect the independence of the assessment process, proactively identify their own potential conflict of interest and both comply and support others to comply, with these guidelines.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to protect our integrity as a business and the integrity of our qualifications. The guidance is also designed to protect our staff by providing guidance on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of UCLan's business as a Training Provider and End Point Assessment Centre.

This guidance:

- defines what is meant by conflict of interest
- describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of working with, or for, an end point assessment centre
- sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest

#### Scope of guidance

This guidance applies to all staff, consultants and partner organisations that interact or potentially interact with the work of UCLan's end point assessment centre. This includes individuals involved with any aspects of the creation, marketing, sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with UCLan's qualifications, tests and assessments, and supporting resources and services.

The individuals falling within the scope of this guidance are all directors, employees, contractors, home workers, agency workers and any associate staff, including assessment associates, verifiers/examiners and freelance staff. This list is not exhaustive, and we will assess every individual directly involved in the EPA process and decision.

#### Definition of conflict of interest

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.

Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances relating to awarding organisation activity, including or example:

- where the organisation has both a training delivery function and the end point assessment function within one umbrella organisation
- 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 UCLan's behalf, but may have personal interests – paid or unpaid – in another business which either uses UCLan products or services, or produces similar products
- where someone works for or carries out work on UCLan's behalf, who has friends or relatives taking UCLan assessments or examinations
- where an individual participating has a personal or business gain from the outcome of the assessment

## Principles

*As an end point assessment centre, UCLan will:*

- Ensure that when the Training delivery arm of UCLan creates and follows a procedure, it does not conflict with UCLan's regulatory responsibility as an end point assessment centre.
- Review our processes annually to ensure that all conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are managed and resolved.
- Ensure that the contractual arrangements with our assessment associates clearly set out any obligations on them to manage conflicts of interest arising from other activities that they undertake
- Ensure that anyone who has access to confidential assessment material for a qualification is not permitted to deliver or be present at training events on that qualification.
- Ensure that all members of staff declare any interest for friends or family sitting upcoming UCLan examinations

## Responsibility

The ultimate responsibility for the Conflict of interest guidance, dissemination of the guidance and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the Quality Manager.

## Management

Senior Staff within Schools are responsible for communicating the Conflict of Interest Guidance to all relevant individuals within their areas of responsibility annually.

1. All teams are required to review their procedures annually to ensure that they anticipate and manage potential or actual conflicts of interest.
2. Management meetings are required to give appropriate attention to potential or actual conflicts of interest.
3. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all new staff receive conflict of interest training.
4. Any potential or actual conflict of interest must be documented within Team Meetings/ 121's. The Manager must either resolve the issue or, for issues that cannot be resolved at this level, report the issue to the Quality Manager.

NB All records are required to be available for audit purposes.

5. Individuals within UCLan have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest Guidance, any guidelines and complete any required conflict of interest training.
6. All individuals will be required annually to read and understand the Conflict of Interest Guidance.
7. The most important feature of the guidance 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 report it!
8. The individual and Manager are equally responsible for ensuring that the issue is documented carefully.
9. An individual may wish to raise concerns relating to conflict of interest directly with the Quality Manager. This may be done in confidence and they are entitled to receive a response to their concerns. NB individuals are protected under the company's Whistle Blowing Guidance

10. Any staff member considering paid or unpaid work outside UCLan 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 manager first. The Manager should speak to the Managing Director 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 UCLan's activities.

11. Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform UCLan of any learners being entered for its examinations and other assessments, who are family members, other relatives or friends. They are asked to declare this information to Assessment and Awards.

## Monitoring and escalation

The Head of Student Academic Administration is responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest to an appropriate level within the business and, when necessary, to the Academic Registrar.

## Advice and guidance

Any required guidance or interpretation on potential conflicts of interest should be directed to Assessment and Awards.

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