Conflict of Interest Policy - Exams

Reviewed and Approved by	**Saira Minhas** **Head of MIS & Exams**
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Introduction

1.1 In order to comply with JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) Regulations, WM College is required to have in place a conflict of interest policy that enables us to identify, manage and mitigate conflict 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 business 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 Colleges role as 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, invigilation 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 College on full time, part time or sessional 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, but is not exclusively limited to:

- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.
- Where someone works for or carries out work on the Colleges behalf, and is therefore defined as a member of staff, who also has friends or relatives taking assessments or examinations in the same subject area in which the member of staff works and within the same organisation
- Where someone works for or carries out work on the Colleges behalf, and is therefore defined as a member of staff, who is directly supporting friends or relatives taking assessments or examinations in a subject area in which the member of staff has been asked to invigilate, even though the staff member does not officially teach that subject at the college.

5. Principles

5.1 In order to maintain compliance with JCQ Regulations, the College will:

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

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

Exams Maanger

6.1 Has responsibility for:

- Communicating to all staff involved in the teaching and assessment and moderation of exams

Manages Conflicts of Interest by informing the awarding bodies, 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; and

Maintains clear records of all instances where:

- 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 (e.g. 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

Head of MIS and Exams

6.2 Has responsibility for monitoring the role of the Exams Manager.

All staff

6.3 Individuals within WM College have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the Conflict of Interest Policy and complete any required declaration forms.

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

6.5 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.

6.6 Prior to each examination series all staff and other individuals, must inform the Exams Officer of any candidates being entered for its examinations and other assessments, who are family members, other relatives or friends.