

ICTQual AB

Conflicts of Interest Guide for Centres



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1. Introduction

ICTQual AB is committed to ensuring the integrity and fairness of all assessments, qualifications and activities conducted by its Centres. This guide provides Centres with a clear framework to identify, manage and report conflicts of interest, safeguarding the impartiality and credibility of the qualification process.

2. Definition of Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's personal, professional, or financial interests could interfere with their role in ensuring fair assessment practices.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

- A staff member assessing or moderating work for a family member, friend, or close colleague.
- Having financial or personal ties to a learner, Centre, or awarding body that could affect impartiality.
- Dual roles where an individual's decision-making could be influenced by competing interests.

3. Purpose of the Guide

This guide aims to:

- Help Centres identify potential conflicts of interest.
- Outline procedures for managing and mitigating conflicts.
- Ensure compliance with ICTQual AB policies and regulatory requirements.

4. Responsibilities of Centres

Centres must:

1. Identify Conflicts of Interest

- Conduct regular reviews to identify any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.
- Maintain a register of declared conflicts for all staff members involved in assessment, moderation, or administration.

2. Manage Conflicts of Interest

- Take proactive steps to prevent conflicts from compromising assessment integrity.
- Implement measures such as reassignment of duties or additional oversight where conflicts are identified.

3. Report Conflicts of Interest

- Notify ICTQual AB immediately of any conflicts that cannot be managed internally.
- Submit a report outlining the nature of the conflict, actions taken and any residual risks.

5. Procedures for Centres

1. Declaration of Interests

- All staff members must complete a conflict-of-interest declaration form upon recruitment and annually thereafter.
- Any changes to personal circumstances must be reported promptly.

2. Identifying Potential Conflicts

Centres should monitor scenarios where conflicts may arise, such as:

- Assessors or Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) marking the work of family or friends.
- Employees holding roles in multiple organisations that could impact impartiality.
- Financial interests in businesses or entities linked to the learner or qualification process.

3. Conflict Resolution

- When a conflict is identified, Centres must:
 - Reassign the task to another individual who has no conflicting interests.
 - Implement dual oversight, such as involving an independent assessor or IQA.
- Ensure transparency in decision-making and maintain documentation of actions taken.

4. Escalation

- If a conflict cannot be resolved internally, Centres must escalate the matter to ICTQual AB.
- ICTQual will provide guidance and, if necessary, take over responsibility for managing the conflict.

6. Examples of Conflicts of Interest and Actions

Scenario	Potential Conflict	Action
An assessor is asked to grade their relative's work.	Personal relationships may bias assessment.	Reassign the work to another assessor with no connection to the learner.
IQA and assessors are close personal friends.	Lack of impartiality during internal quality assurance.	Assign a third-party IQA to moderate the assessor's work.
Centre manager has financial stakes in a related entity.	Decisions could be influenced by personal gain.	Notify ICTQual and remove the individual from decision-making roles related to the entity.

7. Record Keeping

Centres must maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all conflicts of interest, including:

- Conflict-of-interest declaration forms.
- Details of identified conflicts and actions taken to manage them.
- Communication with ICTQual AB regarding unresolved conflicts.

These records must be securely stored and made available for auditing by ICTQual AB.

8. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to identify, manage, or report conflicts of interest may result in:

- Invalidated assessment decisions.
- Centre sanctions, including withdrawal of approval.
- Damage to the reputation of the Centre and ICTQual AB.

9. Monitoring and Review

ICTQual AB will periodically review Centres' conflict-of-interest processes during audits or monitoring visits. Centres are encouraged to review their conflict-of-interest policies regularly to ensure compliance with this guide.

Contact Information

For any questions, concerns, or suggestions regarding this policy, please contact us at Support@ictqualab.co.uk.

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