

Conflict of Interest

Introduction

A Conflict of Interest may include a conflict between the official responsibilities of an employee, either full or part-time, an associate or external consultant, within one arm of the company, and an employee in another arm of the company. The conflict may also concern other external interests the individual may have and as such could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions and prove to be contrary to the best interests of the organisation.

As an employer and training provider, Welcome Skills Limited recognises that its employees have diverse interests and contacts within the local, national and international community being beneficial to the organisation as well as to individuals. However, it also recognises that it is possible that such connections may give rise to potential Conflicts of Interest and that in general, individuals will recognise Conflicts of Interest and will want to ensure there is no perception of anyone receiving an inappropriate advantage and they are beyond reproach. It also recognises that, in most cases, potential Conflicts of Interest can be easily avoided or resolved. This will be through discussion with the line manager initially or the Director of Welcome Skills. The purpose of this Policy is to help identify Conflicts of Interest, establish a system for disclosure of any existing or potential

Scope

This policy applies to all Welcome Skill employees. The policy describes the possible personal, social, financial considerations, and work considerations which may result in an actual or perceived Conflict of Interest and how they may be managed. These conflicts may occur because of a set of unforeseen circumstances which may affect staff members. These could be

- **Work**

Conflicts of Interest may occur within the organisation if one job role conflicts with another and the job role prevents certain activities being carried out. For example, an assessor cannot be a trainer and an assessor at the same time cannot be a trainer for the new Standards. The Internal Verifier cannot assess the same students they are internally verifying. Anyone with responsibility for an apprentice's advice and guidance, training, or management must not be involved in the end point assessment. The judgement for the end point assessment must be a totally independent judgement where there is no Conflict of Interest in any format. Assessors and invigilators must not be involved in, nor responsible for any on-programme delivery or assessment or have line-management responsibility of the same apprentices to ensure no conflict. End point assessors, invigilators must be free from any conflicts of interest that could adversely affect their judgement or objectivity in administering and undertaking robust and consistent end point assessment. They must be completely independent from the apprentices, trainers and employers.

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Conflict of Interest	April 2019	3	K.Hussin	April 2020

- **Personal**

A personal Conflict of Interest is a situation where an individual's private interests such as outside engagement or personal financial assets interfere or may be perceived to interfere with their performance of their duties and as a result affect Welcome Skills.

An individual may have a personal link with the apprentice or their employer. At both organisational and individual level those undertaking the end point assessment, may have other interests that may compromise their assessment decisions.

- **Social**

A social Conflict of Interest may occur when someone in outside relationships can be seen to try and seek preferential treatment within the organisation. This may be in the case of recruitment, contracts, sales or marketing.

- **Financial**

Conflicts of Interest may occur when outside financial interests compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the professional judgement of an individual. This not only relates to the employee but also to any friend or relative. This is any member of an employee's close family, his/her partner, close personal friends and any other person with whom the employee has a relationship which may influence their objectivity.

Conflict of Interest

In order to determine whether a Conflict of Interest exists, it should be identified whether the private, personal or commercial interest of an employee is likely to interfere with the aims and objectives and the best interests of Welcome Skills.

If an employee or manager believes there may be a potential work conflict of interest regarding job roles or interests it should be identified immediately.

If an employee believes there may be a Conflict of Interest, they should discuss immediately with their line manager or the Director of Welcome Skills. In the same way if Management has any doubts regarding a Conflict of Interest they should raise this with the relevant employee.

Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest

The responsibility for avoiding Conflict of Interest, in the first instance, lies with the individual employee. If a Conflict of Interest situation arises, the employee should disclose the Conflict of Interest, in full, and seek a resolution. They must then take no part in the matter relating to that interest until the potential conflict is resolved.

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If an employee has not disclosed a potential Conflict of Interest or a manager identifies one it will be a matter for the Manager to raise immediately with the employee.

If a manager identifies that there may be a conflict in the job role this should also be raised immediately. All staff will be trained on potential conflicts in the various job roles and will be made aware of the Conflict of Interest policy.

Resolution of Conflicts of Interest

Once a conflict has been disclosed, the member of staff, with whom the discussions have taken place is responsible for resolving the Conflict of Interest as soon as is reasonably possible.

Every effort should be made to reach agreement with the employee regarding the solution.

Where the member of staff is unable to decide how to resolve the Conflict of Interest, then the matter must be raised with either the Director or a member of the Senior Management Team.

The employee should be kept up to date with all matters relating to the Conflict of Interest.

It may be agreed that there is no Conflict of Interest. In which case the employee will carry on as prior.

If there is a Conflict of Interest, the Director will make the final decision as to which course of action to follow. In most cases, it is envisaged that simple measures will be enough to manage Conflicts of Interest. It may be that the activity can be managed differently so that Conflicts of Interest are avoided. In other cases, a simple undertaking by an individual to prioritise the interests of Welcome Skills Limited will be all that is required. Only in extreme circumstances where the Conflict of Interest may be so fundamental and unmanageable, will an individual be prevented from undertaking specific activities.

All decisions will be recorded.

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Conflict of Interest Form

Person raising issue	Date	Nature of Conflict	Discussion/ Present	Resolution

DOCUMENT NAME/LOCATION	Date Produced	Version Number	Authorised By:	Document review date
Conflict of Interest	April 2019	3	K.Hussin	April 2020

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