



Quality Assurance for Higher National and Vocational Qualifications 2015–18

Enhanced guidance on meeting quality assurance criterion 1.6

No-one with a personal interest in the outcome of an assessment is to be involved in the assessment process. This includes assessors, internal verifiers and invigilators.

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Introduction to your procedures

Your procedures must state that a personal interest in the outcome of an assessment amounts to conflict of interest, which poses a risk to the integrity of assessment. They should also indicate that all staff must take responsibility for reporting any personal interest and that your organisation will take steps to address this. This includes assessors, internal verifiers and invigilators (ie staff supervising assessments under controlled conditions).

State how you will disseminate this information to staff. Records of acknowledgement of receipt and understanding of this information by new staff should be kept, eg contracts, signed induction checklists. Existing staff should be made aware of this procedure through your established mechanisms for disseminating policies and procedures and keeping them updated.

Declaring conflicts of interest

Staff should make a declaration if they are related to, or have a personal relationship with, a candidate, and are currently deployed to:

- ◆ set assessments which this candidate will undertake
- ◆ make assessment judgements on this candidate's evidence
- ◆ internally verify assessment decisions on this candidate's work
- ◆ invigilate an assessment which this candidate is sitting

State how staff in your organisation should report conflicts of interest, eg to their line manager, to the Quality Manager/SQA Co-ordinator.

You may wish to provide a form for this (see Appendix 1).

Addressing conflicts of interest

The manager to whom the conflict of interest is reported (or to whom they refer it) should decide on a suitable action to address the conflict of interest, if they feel that this is required, eg move the candidate into another group, change assessor/IV/invigilator, include the candidate in samples for verification, or have the assessment marking supervised or re-marked. The decision and agreed action must be recorded.

Record retention

Copies of documentation should be retained for a year after completion of the assessments in question, including details of the action taken to address the conflict of interest.

Appendix 1

Declaration of conflict of interest in an assessment

The following example shows the type of information which should be included on a declaration-of-interest form. You may adapt this for use in your organisation.

Name of assessor/internal verifier/invigilator

Name of candidate

Candidate number

Qualification the candidate is undertaking

Unit(s) involved

Assessment(s) involved

Nature of relationship to candidate

Signature of assessor/internal verifier/invigilator

Date

Manager review and declaration

I have reviewed the above declaration and noted the issue raised, but have decided that no action is required.

or

I have reviewed the above declaration and recommend the following action to be taken to address the declared conflict: (eg move the candidate into another group, change assessor/IV/invigilator, include the candidate in samples for verification, have the assessment marking supervised or re-marked).

Signature of manager

Date