

Conflict of Interest Policy (Exams)

Role Responsible:	Vice Principal (Transition and Engagement)
Written by:	Vice Principal (Transition and Engagement)
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1. Introduction

1.1 Itchen Sixth Form College is required to have in place a Conflict of Interest policy that enables us to identify, manage and mitigate any potential conflict of interest. All staff and other individuals related to the college 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 provide guidance to staff and any other relevant individuals on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of their roles as teachers, invigilators, and assessment/exam-related administrators. The policy is designed to protect the integrity of our qualifications and the assessment process. It applies to all staff or other individuals whenever they interact or potentially interact with any of the college assessment/exam related functions. 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 college's role in delivering courses.

This policy:

- Defines what is meant by 'conflict of interest' in this context
- Describes the issues of conflict of interest in the context of working for the college in an assessment/exam related function or with, or for, an awarding organisation.
- Sets out which conflicts can be managed and how they should be managed, and those which are considered unmanageable and therefore cannot be allowed.

- Illustrates potential conflict of interest situations, some of which are not obvious

3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This policy applies to staff and other individuals who interact or potentially interact with the assessment related work/examinations of the college. This includes individuals involved with all aspects of devising, setting, marking, administering, invigilating, internally quality assuring or any other activity connected with the assessment of candidates and associated supporting resources and services.
- 3.2 The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include all staff employed by the college on a full-time, part-time, or casual basis.

4. Definition of 'conflict of interest'

- 4.1 A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual has competing interests or loyalties, which could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed. In this context there is a potential conflict of interest when a member of staff has friends or relatives taking assessments or examinations, at this college or elsewhere. A conflict of interest occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an examination/assessment at the college or another centre.
- 4.2 The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) use the term '**Related People**' to cover close friends and relatives. 'Related People' are those with whom the member of staff has a close relationship. It would certainly include spouses, children and siblings, but would also include close friends, relatives and members of the household where there is regular contact, such that privileged information might be shared inappropriately. A step relative, cousin, niece etc. would count if the contact with that person was close and frequent.
- 4.3 A conflict of interest also occurs if any member of staff is entered for an examination or assessment at the college or elsewhere.

5. Principles

5.1 The college will:

- Review its 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, family or other 'Related People' sitting examinations
- Ensure that no member of staff is asked to assess, invigilate or internally verify the work of a student who is a family member, other relative or close friend
- Ensure that no member of staff uses their role within the college to compromise the security and confidentiality of all assessment documents including examination papers

- Ensure that no member of staff makes live assessment materials available to individuals, whether or not students of the college, when not specifically tasked with assessing them as part of a timetabled activity

6. Responsibilities

- 6.1 Line managers are responsible for ensuring that all new staff are aware of, and understand, the Conflict of Information policy. Any day-to-day concerns identified by an individual should be raised with their line manager
- 6.2 The Exams Office will ensure that all JCQ requirements are adhered to and will maintain appropriate records accordingly (see **annexe 1**)
- 6.3 All individuals will be required annually to read and understand the Conflict of Interest Policy
- 6.4 The most important feature of the policy is the requirement that individuals should always disclose an activity if there is any doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an examination/assessment at the college or another centre. Prior to each examination series, all staff and other relevant individuals must inform the exams office of any 'Related People' being entered for examinations at the college and also at any other examination centre, during that exam series, if there is a potential conflict of interest. They do this by completing the form in **annexe 2**. Communication should be directly to the Examinations Manager who will liaise with the Assistant Principal (Students). Disclosures should be made as soon as potential or actual conflict is discovered.
- 6.5 Any concerns that the individual feels are urgent should be communicated immediately to the Assistant Principal (Students) and may be done so in confidence. It is an individual's right to raise concerns relating to the conflict of interest directly with the senior leadership team and to receive a response to their concerns.

7. Equality impact and monitoring the policy and procedure

- 7.1 In monitoring the impact of this policy and procedure, the College will have due regard to its Equality and Diversity Policy and its single Equality Duty. It will consider any concerns raised or complaints received, based on student and staff data, feedback, surveys and/or professional judgement. If you have a question or a suggestion to improve the policy, please contact the Assistant Principal (Transition & Engagement).

8. Related Policies and Guidelines

- 8.1 This policy is linked to the following policies and guidelines:

Staff Professional Code of Conduct
 Exams Contingency Plan
 Exams Management of Controlled Assessments
 Exams Access Arrangements
 Exams Coursework Malpractice Guidelines
 Exams Internal Appeals Policy

Annexe 1 (for exam office use)

Date recorded	Staff name & job title(s)/role(s)	Conflict of interest (COI)	Measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected

This log will be kept for a minimum of one year after results have been issued for the relevant exam series

Annexe 2 Declaration of Interest form (for staff use)

Conflict of Interest Declaration Form 2025-2026

The awarding bodies are required by the qualification regulators to ensure that any conflict of interest in relation to the design, delivery and awarding of exams/assessments is identified, recorded and managed effectively. In turn, centres are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the awarding bodies are able to comply with this regulatory condition.

A conflict of interest occurs where any member of staff who has access to privileged information, or is responsible for making decisions about assessment outcomes, could, potentially, use that information, or their position, to give an unfair advantage to a close friend or relative entered for an exam/assessment at your or any other centre. A conflict of interest also occurs if any member of centre staff is entered for an exam/assessment.

Therefore, centres are required to inform the awarding bodies for any of their specification of any specific conflict of interest. To ensure Itchen College complies, you must declare any conflict of interest using this form. Please tick all statements that apply and complete the information for that section.

Information regarding 'Related people'

'Related People' are those with whom you have a close relationship. It includes spouses, children and siblings, close friends, relatives and members of the household where there is regular contact, such that privileged information might be shared inappropriately. A step-relative, cousin niece, etc. would count if the contact with that person was close and frequent.

This form only needs to be completed if a conflict of interest is identified.

Name	
Job title	
Subjects you teach (if applicable)	

I AM SITTING AN EXAM/ASSESSMENT AT ITCHEN COLLEGE IN 2025-2026

☐

Exam series (Nov/Jan/March/Summer)	
Awarding body	
Qualification type (GCSE, A level, BTEC etc) and title	
Steps taken to seek an alternative centre	
Approval received from SLT	
Do you have access to confidential assessment materials? (centre secure storage and/or awarding bodies secure sites)	

I AM SITTING AN EXAM/ASSESSMENT AT ANOTHER CENTRE IN 2025-2026

☐

Exam series (Nov/Jan/March/Summer)	
Awarding body	
Qualification type (GCSE, A level, BTEC etc) and title	

Do you have access to confidential assessment materials? (centre secure storage and/or awarding bodies secure sites)	
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I HAVE ONE OR MORE ‘RELATED PEOPLE’ SITTING EXAM/ASSESSMENTS IN 2025-2026 ☐ (Please complete a separate form if more than one related person)

Name of related person	
Relationship to you	
Exam series (Nov/Jan/March/Summer)	
Entering centre	
Qualification type (GCSE, A level, BTEC etc) and title	
Do you have access to confidential assessment materials? (centre secure storage and/or awarding bodies secure sites)	

I AM INVOLVED IN MAKING ASSESSMENT DECISIONS FOR CENTRE-MARKED COMPONENTS FOR ‘RELATED PEOPLE’ IN 2025-2026 ☐ (Please complete a separate form if more than one related person)

Name of related person	
Relationship to you	
Exam series (Nov/Jan/March/Summer)	
Qualification type (GCSE, A level, BTEC etc) and title	
Do you have access to confidential assessment materials? (centre secure storage and/or awarding bodies secure sites)	

This completed form must be returned to the exams office before the entry deadline for the series concerned. The declarations provided will be used to inform the relevant awarding bodies where applicable and to record the steps being taken by Itchen College to manage the risk represented by any conflict of interest. You will be informed where any steps directly affect you or if any additional information is required.

All records are subject to inspection by the JCQ or awarding bodies on request and will be kept for a minimum of one year after results have been issued.

Signature to confirm declaration(s): **Date:**

Exams office use:

Declaration received: **Logged:** **AO advised:**.....