



Conflict of Interest Policy

Bespoke Professional Development and Training Limited (BePro)

Last updated: August 2019

Purpose

This policy applies to all BePro employees and staff. This policy sets out guidelines and procedures for identifying, monitoring and managing actual and potential conflicts of interest.

Introduction

BePro recognises that its staff and stakeholders, and the individuals who work for them, will be keen to maintain the integrity of its business and the qualifications it offers. The policy aims to reflect this.

When a conflict or potential conflict is identified, attention should be drawn to it. Individuals should always disclose an activity if they are in doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest.

Scope

This policy applies to all BePro staff and stakeholders and any person who can influence the outcomes. This includes employers, venues, contractors, awarding bodies and employees.

Recognising Conflicts

BePro acknowledges that it is not always possible to pre-empt when a conflict of interest is likely to arise and this policy is not designed to cover every eventuality. Generally, there will be a conflict of interest, if an individual's interest and/or loyalties conflict with those of BePro.

Conflicts of interest can occur in a number of ways and from a variety of situations. For example, if, for any reason:

- BePro favours one learner above another
- a Verifier/Marker is verifying/marking a family member
- a Verifier/Marker is verifying/marking papers from a learner whose employer they have an interest in

Interests in assessment

BePro will take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of a learner (including verifying) being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. Where, having taken all such reasonable steps, an assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, BePro will make arrangements for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny or external verification by another person.



Minimising and Preventing Conflicts

BePro sees one of its functions as facilitating the process of learning by focusing on their responsibilities. In particular:

- providing and facilitating open dialogue with all learners
- not creating unreasonable barriers to any learners
- not favouring a particular learner
- providing all learners with equal access to services, information, notes and resources.

Although this list is not exhaustive, it is felt that by adhering to the principles of neutrality, openness and fairness, conflicts can be avoided or managed without compromising the integrity of the learner or BePro.

Managing Conflicts

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 BePro 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.

End Point Assessment (EPA) Conflicts of Interest

As an end point assessment centre, BePro must identify, manage and mitigate conflicts of interest. All staff, consultants and partners organisations have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for a conflict of interest.

As a company we must handle possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of our business as an End Point Assessment Centre.

Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances relating to EPA activity, for example:

- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation that conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.
- When an individual has interests that conflict with his or her professional position where someone works for or carries out work on BePro's behalf, but may have personal interests in another business which either uses BePro products or services, or produces similar products.
- Where someone works for or carries out work on BePro's behalf, who has friends or relatives taking BePro assessments or examinations.
- Organisations requiring EPA and for whom BePro already deliver apprenticeships.

As an end point assessment centre, BePro will:

- Ensure that when the Training delivery arm of BePro creates and follows a procedure, it does not conflict with BePro's regulatory responsibility as an end point assessment centre.



- Review our processes annually to ensure that all conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest are managed and resolved.
- Ensure that the contractual arrangements with our assessment associates clearly set out any obligations on them to manage conflicts of interest arising from other activities that they undertake.
- Ensure that anyone who has access to confidential assessment material for a qualification is not permitted to deliver or be present at training events on that qualification.
- Ensure that all members of staff declare any interest for friends or family sitting upcoming BePro examinations.
- Remain impartial in all business activity with other organisations.
- Document any potential or actual conflict of interest and escalate to the Quality Manager
- Seek another EPA organisation for our own apprentices.
- Not carry out EPA for other apprentices in our employer organisations unless we are confident there is no conflict and we can carry out the assessment objectively.
- Follow our strict policies and procedures at all times.

If BePro is approached to carry out EPA for our employer organisations, this will be raised to management and discussed in management and/or standardisation meetings. All staff and assessors will be informed of the outcome.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all persons, when involved in the development, delivery, assessment and awarding of BePro qualifications and other associated activities to:

- conduct their activities so that BePro maintains a high standard
- ensure that they make their role clear and separate this from their other functions, as far as is possible
- monitor their activities, so as to maintain the integrity of BePro
- devote enough time and intellectual ability to their specific responsibilities
- recognise and report any potential or existing conflict.

The possibility of a conflict or potential conflict may be declared by any key stakeholder as an entity, or any individual.

The ultimate responsibility for the Conflict of interest policy, dissemination of the policy and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the Quality Manager.

Monitoring and escalation

The Quality Manager is responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest to an appropriate level within the business. Any required guidance or interpretation on potential conflicts of interest should be directed to the Quality Manager.

BePro's Quality Manager is Tracey Carter who can be contacted on 07741592240 or tracey@beprodevelopment.co.uk

Recording Procedure



Conflicts of Interest will be raised in team meetings and noted, along with any action required and how they will be managed, if relevant.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at intervals of 2 years to ensure it remains up to date and compliant with the law.

The policy was last updated August 2019 and is due for review August 2021

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.