

Access, Fair Assessment and Conflict of Interest Policy.

1. Purpose

Our vision is to provide fair access to assessment for all learners on qualification-based courses.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of Cano Training Services and the integrity of its qualifications in order that learners are not adversely effected.

The policy is also designed to provide guidance to the relevant individuals on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise as a result of Cano Training Services role as an awarding organisation.

2. Scope

It is the policy of Cano Training Services that Tutors, Assessors and IQA's acting on behalf of Cano Training must be free from conflicts of interest that could adversely affect their judgement or objectivity to the organisation in conducting business activities and assignments. Cano Training recognises that tutors and assessors may take part in legitimate financial, business, charitable and other activities outside of the Cano Training centre and Cano Training recognised provider roles, but any potential conflict of interest raised by those activities must be acknowledged, disclosed and in relevant cases properly managed. It is the responsibility of each individual to recognise situations in which they have a conflict of interest, or might reasonably be seen by others to have a conflict, to disclose this conflict and to take such further steps that may be appropriate.

3. Access to Fair Assessment

Assessment practice will be open and consistent within the codes of practice and regulations laid down by the relevant awarding and validation bodies.

Assessment evidence will be judged according to the principles of; **Sufficiency**, **Currency** and **Validity**, addressing the; **Authenticity**.

The chosen format and method of assessment is appropriate to the qualification and any conditions as specified by Awarding Organisations. Assessment materials are presented in a clear and unambiguous language and must differentiate only on the basis of a learner's knowledge, skills and understanding.

Cano Training Services will appoint assessment staff whose knowledge, skills and understanding are appropriate for the programme(s) they assess.

- **Initial Assessment** – As part of the induction process all new learners will undertake an initial assessment of literacy and numeracy. This will be used to

assess Basic Skills Levels and to inform decisions about any additional learning support offered to learners in the early stages of their course.

- **Arrangements for learners with Special Assessment Requirements** - The assessment process will take into account the individual needs of learners with disabilities and learning difficulties and reasonable adjustments can be made. This means that they will need appropriate support in their development to help them meet the required standards such as: help with communication skills, confidence building, support time for exams etc.
- **Internal Assessment** – Assessment will be internally quality assured according to Cano Trainings Internal Quality Assurance Procedure. Written and oral feedback will be given to the learners as soon as possible after the assessment. Both formative and summative assessments will be recorded, tracked and given according to the planned assessment schedule.
- **External Assessment** – External assessment will be administered strictly in accordance with instructions issued by the relevant awarding organisations.
- **Assessment practice** - It will be monitored through assessor induction, IQA of assessment decisions, observation of Assessor/Tutor delivery and regular standardisation meetings. The internal quality strategy and appeals procedures will also help ensure assessment is fair and consistent.

4. Definition of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties and this may lead it to act contrary to its interest in the development, delivery and award qualifications in accordance with the regulatory body.

A conflict of interest may arise in a variety of circumstances in relation to awarding organisation activity, for example:

- A conflict of interest may generally be defined as a conflict between the official responsibilities of a tutor, assessor and IQA and any other interests the particular individual may have and as such could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions with learners.
- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation which conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation.
- Where the training delivery function and the awarding function rest within one organisation and the functions are not strictly defined.
- Where an individual is internally marking assessments of a learner who is a friend or relative.
- An assessment and internal quality assurance activity undertaken at a centre is undertaken by the same person.
- Where an individual is internally or externally marking assessments for Cano Training and works for a centre who delivers qualifications belonging to Cano Training.
- Where an individual has personal interests that conflict with their professional association with Cano Training.

5. Examples of conflict of interest

It is not possible to provide a definite list of examples of conflicts of interests, but actual or perceived conflicts of interest could arise where:

- Tutors, assessors and IQA's working with a business outside of the approved Cano Training centre or Cano Training recognised provider that is in direct competition with them.
- Tutors, assessors and IQA's participating in the appointment, supervision evaluation or assessment of a person with whom the person, has a close or family ties.
- Tutors, assessors and IQA's having a close or familial relationship with Cano Training registered learner(s), or learner's family whilst being involved in decisions about the outcome of their accreditation or qualification.
- Or where the person whose remuneration is in part determined by the outcome of the assessment.
- Tutors, assessors and IQA's using non-public Cano Training information or Cano Training learner data for personal gain or advantage.
- Cano Training is required to develop question banks and administer and mark those tests for End Point Assessments (EPA), they must have in place clear arrangements to ensure the development, administration and marking of the tests is not subject to conflict of interest and that there is clear separation across these activities.
- Or where the centre is involved in both EPA and the on programme delivery of a standard.

The existence of such interests as those outlined above, does not necessarily imply conflict, but is likely to give an appearance of conflict and as such should be declared.

6. Roles and responsibilities

It is contractual that all relevant staff undertaking assessment (assessors), IQA (internal quality assurer) and other individuals have a responsibility to be aware of the potential for conflict of interest. It is likely that individual working closely with Cano Trainings function will encounter potential conflicts of interest from time to time. Such situations must be carefully managed to ensure that any conflict of interest does not detrimentally impact on the standards of, or public confidence in, regulated units and qualifications and in Cano Training or any other awarding organisations reputation.

It is the duty of all tutors/assessors/IQA's to disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest and the process for doing this is documented below.

7. Action

Most situations require no further action than the completion of the conflict of interest form. In some instances, however, the information declared on the form will require some follow up action, in order for the conflict of interest to be managed appropriately. The approach agreed between the Centre Manager/Director and the tutor/assessor/learner will be documented and held with the conflict of interest forms. When a declaration of an actual or potential conflict of interest is identified then the process for managing the conflict will follow these steps:

1. Responsible officer assesses the impact of the conflict or potential conflict of interest

2. The conflict is either removed or managed
3. Where it requires to be managed then the responsible officer will liaise with the centre manager to discuss the necessary actions/controls to manage the conflict, mitigate any impact on the centre and ultimately to ensure that the learners are not adversely effected.
4. All conflicts of interest will be reviewed, maintained and monitored. Then evaluated on an annual basis and reported back to CEO.

Examples of actions that could be taken:

- Individual not taking part in discussions or decisions of certain matters
- Referring certain matters such as assessment, verification and recommendations for credit for decision to others with no vested interest
- Agreeing not to be involved in a particular project
- Declaring an interest when it is appropriate to do so
- Referring the matter to Cano Training for advice and guidance

8. Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with the data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that all persons to whom this policy relates act in the best interests of the learners, the centre delivering the qualifications and Cano Training Services. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

9. Policy review arrangements

Cano Training Services will review the policy annually as part of the self-evaluation arrangement and revise it as and when necessary in response to feedback, changes in internal practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

In addition this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure the arrangements for dealing with actual or potential conflicts of interest remain effective.

Revised Date: October 2021
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