

The Priory Training Conflict of Interest Policy

Policy Code:	VO11
Policy Start Date:	January 2018
Policy Review Date:	January 2021

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- Code of Conduct and Dress Code
- HR12 Staff Disciplinary Policy
- HR4 Recruitment and Selection Policy

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Priory Training centre staff, including all staff who assess, internally verify and administer qualifications within the Priory Training centre.
- 1.2 This policy sets out guidance on how to identify and manage a Conflict of Interest and the procedure to follow.
- 1.3 The Conflict of Interest Policy supports the Trust's commitment to integrity, by encouraging the declaration of conflicts of relevant interests so that they be appropriately managed.

2 Responsibility and Implementation

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Human Resources Director.
- 2.2 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of all employees to adhere to this policy and, wherever possible, to resolve issues informally. The implementation of this policy on an operational level is the responsibility of the Human Resources Director.
- 2.4 The principles on which these requirements are based are that employees must ensure their personal interests do not conflict with their duty or the interests of the Trust.
- 2.5 The Priory Federation of Academies Trust acknowledges that there is a wide range of situations in which conflicts of interest may arise and will strongly encourage staff to seek advice where necessary.

3. Aims

- 3.1 Priory Training is committed to maintaining rigorous quality standards and ensuring that it complies with regulatory requirements and best practice. The Trust manages this commitment through continual risk assessments and takes all reasonable steps to prevent Conflicts of Interest from occurring; and to manage Conflicts of Interest to prevent any adverse effect.

3.2 The Trust is responsible for this policy and for ensuring that there are appropriate systems in place to promote and monitor compliance with it.

4. What is a Conflict of Interest?

4.1 A conflict of interest arises where there is an actual or potential risk or a perceived conflict of commitments which might affect an individual acting in the best of interests of the Trust.

4.2 This may arise where an individual might be seen to be influencing matters for actual or potential personal benefit or when a member of staff is in a position to influence, directly or indirectly, in ways that could lead to gain for them, their family or others.

4.3 Examples of situations in which conflicts of interest, both for financial or personal gain, include:

- Where there is or there is the potential for there to be personal gain or gain to immediate family/close contact/associate.
- Where an individual is in a position to directly or indirectly enhance their career or the career of others with whom they are personally associated.

4.4 Any individual concerned should also consider the perspective of an independent external observer and whether they would perceive there to be a conflict of interest.

5 Declare Interest

5.1 All Priory Training staff are required to sign a Conflict of Interest statement annually to declare identified potential or actual conflict between a learner and a member of staff. If there is any doubt that the interest is a conflict, it is recommended that it should be declared and the Priory Training Governance Board will make the decision, so that Priory Training can mitigate against any adverse effect.

The information provided by key stakeholders will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only for the purpose set out in this policy and not for any other purpose.

5.2 While an interest may not necessarily give rise to a conflict, in the interests of transparency, it should still be declared.

- 5.3 If a conflict of interest is not declared at the outset, this may constitute a breach of Priory Ethics and, depending on the nature of the conflict, could lead to disciplinary action.

6. Resolution of Conflict

- 6.1 The Priory Training Governance Board will be advised of any conflict of interest declared and will then:
- Assess the nature of the conflict.
 - Assess the risk or threat to the function of Priory Training.
 - Decide whether the conflict is non trivial.
 - Decide what steps to take to avoid or manage the conflict or adverse effect.

- 6.2 The purpose of the discussion is to reach a decision about how the conflict will be managed. Generally, the discussion will take place between the Head of Priory Training and the nominated representative of the Governance Board, unless they are involved. In this case, representatives from the Governance Board will make the decision about who should hold the discussion. The individual raising the possibility of a conflict will also take part in the discussion, if this is appropriate.

7. Decision

- 7.1 Normally it will be sufficient to:-
- Gain an undertaking from the individual to conduct their responsibilities in such a way that the integrity of Priory Training is maintained, as well as their own integrity.
 - Reorganise activities and/or key functions so that the conflict is mitigated.
- 7.2 If neither of the above steps is possible, another solution must be agreed by the Governance Board. The solution should be in proportion to the nature of the conflict; in extreme circumstances, activities may need to be monitored or even restricted. The decision as to how the conflict is managed is final.

8. Interests in assessment

- 8.1 Priory Training will take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of a Learner (including Moderation) 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, Priory Training will make arrangements for the relevant part of the assessment to be subject to scrutiny by another person/body.

- 8.2 Priory Training requires all staff and contractors to declare any involvement in the preparation of any resource or learning materials designed to support learners, or likely learners, in the assessment of any qualification for which they are under contract. Any such declarations will be carefully monitored to ensure that those assessments are not compromised.

9. Log conflict and resolution

- 9.1 A Declaration of Interest Form is provided for this purpose; it must be completed by all relevant stakeholders and returned to Priory Training so that it can be recorded on the full register.
- 9.2 Any unresolved matter shall be referred to the Human Resources Director.
- 9.3 Should the conflict of interest concern the Head of Priory Training, then this will be declared to and resolved by the Chair of the Governance Board.

10. Monitor and Review of the Register

- 10.1 Priory Training is responsible for maintaining the register of interests and will:-
- Record in the register all conflicts and interests.
 - Circulate amendments or additions to the register (if any) to the Governance Board.
 - Keep a log of any actions taken to manage a conflict of interest.
- 10.2 The register of conflicts and interests will be available for inspection by interested stakeholders. At least once in every 12-month period, all Priory Training staff are required to complete a new Declaration of Interest Form and a new Conflict of Interest register is created.
- 10.3 At each annual centre visit, the Quality Manager will review the centre procedure around conflicts of interest and will evidence any recommendations or improvements on the centre visit form in discussion with the Quality Nominee/Head of Priory Training.

11. Policy Change

This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



The Priory Federation of Academies Trust Conflict of Interest Policy

This Policy has been approved by the Priory Federation of Academies Pay, Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.