

## **Conflict of interest policy**

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<b><u>Policy owner(s):</u></b>	Training Team
<b><u>Accountable officer:</u></b>	Head of Training/Responsible Officer

## **Introduction**

This policy sets out the guidelines and procedures for identifying, monitoring and managing actual, perceived and potential conflicts of interest relating to the End-point Assessment of apprentices being assessed by British Marine.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all key stakeholders engaged with the End-point Assessment activities on behalf of British Marine and any person who can influence the outcomes of End-point Assessment. This includes Employers, Contractors, Partner Organisations, and British Marine employees and volunteers.

For the avoidance of doubt, this policy applies whether work is being undertaken directly for British Marine or via one of its subsidiaries.

## **Definition**

A conflict of interest arises when competing interests impair our ability to make objective and unbiased decisions. British Marine will always seek to avoid situations where it has a conflict of interest and will not engage in any activity that is contrary to the specific requirements of the Government's Education and Skills Funding Agency's Register of End-point Assessment Organisations or Ofqual's conditions of recognition.

Some examples of actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest could arise if:

- British Marine became involved in both the End-point Assessment and the on-programme delivery of a standard.
- Staff or contractors of British Marine have links with and/or were employed by the same organisation as the apprentice or organisation undertaking the on-programme delivery. A link could be established by a number of factors, for example, family members studying at or employed by the main provider, employer provider or sub-contracted provider or a transactional link (in money or reciprocal in kind).
- Staff or contractors employed by British Marine who undertake End-point Assessment are also working for an organisation that is in direct competition with the organisation involved in on-programme delivery.

## **Expectations**

All staff and contractors of British Marine involved in the provision of End-point Assessment are expected to:

- Maintain the highest possible standard of integrity in all business relationships.
- Reject any business practice which might reasonably be deemed improper
- Never use authority or position for personal gain.
- At all times, act with impartiality, independence and integrity.
- Avoid being, or giving the appearance of being, in a position which may result in an actual or perceived detriment to British Marine's reputation and/or interests.

## **Disclosure**

End-point Assessors are required to complete a declaration of interest form. In all cases, individuals have an ongoing responsibility to assess the potential for conflicts of interest. Actual or perceived conflicts of interest must be disclosed. If an End-Point Assessor believes that a conflict of interest has arisen, or has potential to arise, they should notify British Marine immediately.

British Marine acknowledges that it is not always possible to pre-empt when a conflict of interest is likely to arise so mechanisms for identifying and reporting actual, perceived and potential conflicts of interest before, during and after End-point Assessment activities are also covered by this policy.

## **British Marine members and non-members**

As a trade association for the superyacht, leisure and small commercial sector, there will inevitably be instances where End-point Assessors will assess both members and non-members of British Marine. In these instances, British Marine will ensure the independence of the End-Point Assessment process and there will be no preferential treatment during assessment given to British Marine members. All assessments, regardless of membership of British Marine, will be carried out in a fair and consistent manner. This will be supported by British Marine's IQA policy. For further information on this, or to report any concerns, please refer to the contact details at the bottom of this document.

## **Interests in End-point Assessment**

British Marine acknowledges that there is a requirement to avoid, eliminate or minimise any conflicts of interest. British Marine will, therefore, take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the End-point Assessment of an Apprentice being undertaken by any person who has a vested interest in the result of the End-point Assessment.

Where, having taken all reasonable steps, an assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, British Marine will make arrangements for the relevant part of the End-point Assessment to be subject to scrutiny by another person. 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 individual, the End-point Assessment process or British Marine.

## **Managing Conflicts**

British Marine will put in place a number of systems and controls to prevent conflicts of interest arising or to manage/mitigate the conflicts of interest that do arise. Each case will depend on its own facts and circumstances but examples of actions that may be taken may include:

- exclusion of a party from any assessment or other decision-making/authorisation;
- reduction of a party's involvement in an activity;
- enhanced monitoring of a party's activity;

## **Responsibilities**

The Conditions for being on the Education and Skills Funding Agency's register of End-point Assessment Organisations state: *The independence of your decision on the competency of the apprentice is*

*paramount. Any actual or perceived conflict of interest can undermine both the outcome of the end-point assessment activity and your credibility as a trusted assessor of apprentices.*

It is the responsibility of all persons, when involved in the End-point Assessment of Apprentices and other associated activities to:

- conduct their activities so that British Marine maintains a high standard of Quality Assurance;
- ensure that they make their role clear - and separate this from their other functions, in so far as is possible;
- monitor their activities, so as to maintain the integrity of British Marine;
- devote enough time and intellectual ability to their specific responsibilities;
- recognise and report any potential or existing conflict promptly whether that be related to themselves, or others.

### **Investigation procedure**

Where a failure to disclose a potential or actual conflict of interest is brought to British Marine's attention, an investigation will take place to determine if there is an actual conflict of interest, any potential adverse effect and any mitigation measures or actions that may be required.

The investigation procedure is outlined below:

1. Record as much detail of the potential conflict of interest as possible, including the names of the person/people raising the concern, the person concerned, and any evidence provided.
2. Assign an investigator appropriate
3. Carry out the investigation within an appropriate timeframe, using relevant and appropriate methods
4. Produce a report of the findings from the investigation and send to the responsible officer for review (or if not appropriate, send to the CEO).
5. Take any necessary action from the outcome of the review, and mitigate any potential or actual conflicts of interest, or minimise any adverse effects.

### **Recording information**

All conflicts of interest (whether actual or perceived) will be recorded in a conflict of interest register, which will be regularly monitored and updated as appropriate.

### **Monitoring the Policy**

The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually, to ensure that they are fit for purpose and that they continue to reflect the types of conflicts that may arise, and how those conflicts are managed. Questions about the content or application of this policy should be directed to Blue Davies, Head of Training at [bdavies@britishmarine.co.uk](mailto:bdavies@britishmarine.co.uk) or 07584 563343.

