



AIMASSESSMENT

policies

for training providers



AIM Assessment

Conflict of Interest Policy

PD/06/2020 | Version 1 - April 2020

Document version history

Version Number	Date	Description
1	April 2020	- Document Created

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Welcome

AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group is an end-point assessment organisation approved on the register for a range of apprenticeship standards. AIM Group are also a regulated awarding organisation and Access Validating Agency.

Aim

The aim of this document is to provide information on:

- potential situations where conflicts of interest may arise
- identify the principles that AIM will adopt in the management of conflicts of interest
- set out what actions should be taken by individuals who encounter conflicts of interest
- set out how we will manage identified conflicts of interest.

Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest is where an individual or organisation has competing interests or loyalties. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances and it is likely that people working with or for us may encounter potential conflicts of interest from time to time.

Examples include:

- where someone has a position of authority in one organisation which conflicts with their interests in another organisation
- where someone has personal interests that conflict with their professional position
- where someone works for us or carries out work on our behalf, but who may have paid or unpaid personal interests in another business which uses our products or services or produces similar products
- where someone works for or carries out work on our behalf who has friends or relatives taking our assessments or examinations
- where there is a conflict between income and regulatory responsibilities
- where training and delivery and awarding rest within one umbrella organisation
- end-point assessment organisation activity, or activity undertaken on its behalf, has the potential to lead it to act contrary to the EPA framework
- when one part of AIM creates and follows a procedure that conflicts with its regulatory responsibilities as an end-point assessment organisation

It is the responsibility of all staff at AIM, employers, training providers and apprentices to ensure that they are familiar with this conflict of interest policy and the requirement to disclose any activity that has the potential to represent a conflict of interest.

Identifying conflict of interest in the end-point assessment of apprentices

The following guidance is provided regarding the management of conflict of interest in the assessment of end-point assessments:

- 1.** We will take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment of an apprentice's work being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment.
- 2.** Upon contracting, associate assessors will be asked to disclose all other employment/contractual relationships, for example with training providers, employers.
- 3.** At the point of allocating an apprentice to an assessor/IQA/invigilator/assessment facilitator, all parties are asked to state any conflicts of interest (for example if the apprentice recognises the assessor) using the [conflict of interest declaration form](#) (available on the AIM Assessment website).
- 4.** In any event that an apprentice, employer, training provider, assessor, invigilator/assessment facilitator or IQA identifies a conflict of interest, the parties involved need to inform us immediately by completing and submitting via email to assessment@aim-group.org.uk the [conflict of interest declaration form](#) (available on the AIM Assessment website).
- 5.** In the event that the conflict of interest is identified after an assessment has taken place the parties involved need to inform us immediately by completing and submitting via email to assessment@aim-group.org.uk the [conflict of interest: change in circumstance form](#) (available on the AIM Assessment website).
- 6.** We will take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of the assessment development or delivery of an apprentice being undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. In any event that a staff member identifies a conflict of interest, the parties involved need to inform us immediately by completing and submitting the [conflict of interest declaration form](#) (available on the AIM Assessment website).

How we will consider declarations of conflict of interest

All declarations of conflict of interest will be logged.

Declarations will be considered by the assessment team and we will agree one of the following possible outcomes:

- **Approved** - the staff member is approved to assess and/or invigilate/quality assure the assessment
- **Referred** - further information is required to demonstrate suitability
- **Approved with actions** - further appropriate steps agreed to have the invigilation or assessment second assessed or moderated by another person
- **Declined** - the member of staff has a conflict of interest that cannot be managed appropriately and the application has been declined

If a declaration has been made after the assessment has taken place, we will agree an appropriate course of action to ensure that all affected apprentices' assessed work is subject to additional levels of scrutiny.

How AIM staff implement the policy

Corporate conflict of interest

Corporate conflict of interest resolution lies principally with the board of trustees and the executive group (EG). Corporate conflict of interest includes the balance between maintaining financial stability and compliance with regulation, for example the types of training providers and employers we work with or engaging in activities which require resources or expertise we cannot supply. Trustees have a responsibility to ensure AIM meets its mission and is financially viable alongside a responsibility to ensure we are compliant with our regulators. The Board of Trustees and EG must balance these conflicts by:

Examples include:

- recognising and recording where and when they occur
- making transparent decisions about the resolution of such conflicts

Individual conflict of interest

1. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff receive the conflict of interest policy and training.
2. Any member of staff considering taking on any additional paid/voluntary work on either an employed or self employed basis must seek written agreement from their line manager beforehand as soon as possible.
3. If a member of staff identifies an activity that could lead to a conflict of interest they must notify their line manager as soon as possible. Members of the EG should consult the chair of the board of trustees. It should be noted that individuals are protected under [the company's whistleblowing policy](#).
4. The line manager must either resolve the issue or escalate the issue to the quality team within two working days.
5. The quality team will begin an investigation of any issues identified within two working days.
6. The quality team will decide when and how matters relating to potential or actual conflicts of interest should be escalated, including when they are reported to the Board of Trustees and to our External Quality Assurer within five working days. Should any potential conflicts of interest have the potential to lead to an adverse effect, the quality team will follow the adverse effects procedure to avoid or mitigate the adverse effect.

7. A preliminary report will be made available to the EG within five working days who will agree the course of action to be taken.
8. If a member of staff feels that the issue has not been resolved they have the right to bring it to the attention of either the EG or to the board of trustees as soon as possible.

Conflict of interest in confidential assessments

Contracts of employment for all members of staff require staff to maintain confidentiality whilst in and after employment.

All staff involved in the creation, assessment and moderation of end-point assessments must follow the following instructions:

1. You must maintain complete security and confidentiality of material at all times.
2. The requirement extends to a period of two years following termination.
3. Any information or material that assessment writers/reviewers/assessors/IQA have access to as a result of work carried out on behalf of AIM at an external organisation must be kept confidential at all times, for an indefinite period.

Any training delivered about confidential assessments will only utilise assessment materials and questions that are not nor will not be used for any live assessments. Training to all assessment facilitators about confidential assessments will not be delivered by any person involved with the development of those assessments.



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