

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY**

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**Revised August 2022**

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**1. Introduction**

NESWEC takes into account the overview given by the Crossfields Institute Conflicts of Interest policy which is included among those available on our website. Our aim is that the integrity of NESWEC as a teacher education provider is protected, that assessment remains rigorous and fair in all circumstances, and that no student is adversely affected by factors arising from conflicts of interest.

This policy:

* provides a definition of conflict of interest and some relevant examples
* provides NESWEC’s principles underpinning the management of conflict of interest
* sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest
* outlines the procedures to mitigate potential conflicts of interest
* describes the action(s) which will be taken if the policy is breached

**Definition of conflicts of interest:**

A conflict of interest exists in relation to NESWEC where:

* Its interests in any activity undertaken by it, on its behalf, have the potential to lead it to act contrary to its interests in the delivery of qualifications.
* A person who is connected to the delivery of qualifications through NESWEC has interests in any other activity which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to NESWEC’s interests in the delivery of qualifications.
* An informed and reasonable observer would conclude that either of these situations was the case.

Examples might be:

* A tutor/assessor is a member of staff, a trustee or a mentor at a school or setting where a student is employed or regularly volunteering in order to achieve their placement requirement.
* A tutor/assessor and a student are part of the same family.

**Principle underpinning the management of conflicts of interest:**

NESWEC tutors and assessors adopt the general principles provided in the Crossfields Institute Conflicts of Interest policy for identifying and managing potential and actual conflicts of interest.

**Responsibilities for managing conflict of interest:**

The Course Coordinator is the Responsible Person to whom questions relating perceived potential or actual conflicts of interest should be brought. The Responsible Person can be contacted via email: jill@neswec.org.uk or by phone: 01782 504567

If anyone feels there has been an actual conflict of interest involving NESWEC then they should raise the matter with the Responsible Officer who will begin an investigation, unless they have an involvement/interest in the allegation, in which case it will be passed to another senior member of the NESWEC team (or, if required, an external party will be appointed to carry out the review).

If the breach is also classified as an Adverse Effect then the Responsible Officer must promptly inform the appropriate person at Crossfields Institute. She will inform Crossfields Institute of the reasonable steps that NESWEC has taken or intend to take to prevent, correct or mitigate the Adverse Effect.

An act, omission, event, incident, or circumstance has an Adverse Effect if it –

* gives rise to prejudice to students or potential students, or
* adversely affects the ability of NESWEC to undertake the delivery of qualifications.

**Procedures to mitigate potential conflicts of interest:**

* NESWEC course assessment is never in the hands of only one tutor/assessor. All Core tutor/assessors have assessment responsibilities in different areas of the NESWEC programme and all are part of robust IQA and EQA arrangements.
* Tutor/assessors are asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest as soon as they are envisaged, for example, when a student enrols with whom the tutor/assessor already has a professional or family relationship.
* The Core Tutor team will then assess the situation and consider effective mitigations, such as reassigning assessor visits to placements.

**Action(s) which will be taken if the policy is breached:**

The Course Coordinator, as the Responsible Person, will investigate the details of the breach and inform the Core tutor/assessor team. In addition, the Course Coordinator will inform Crossfields Institute and take advice. The Core tutor/assessor team will consult on what appropriate measures should follow in order to correct what has happened. Any member of the team who has an involvement/interest in the breach will be excluded from the decision-making processes. If the Course Coordinator has an involvement/interest in the breach, it will be passed to another senior member of the NESWEC team (or, if required, an external party will be appointed to carry out the review).