

Apprenticeship End Point Assessment

EPA Conflict of Interest Policy

Summary	This Policy details the Institute of Conservation’s (Icon) responsibilities in relation to the management of conflicts of interest in the delivery of Apprenticeship End Point Assessments.
Who this policy applies to	The Policy applies to Independent End Point Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and Icon Staff involved in the delivery of Apprenticeship End Point Assessments.
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Date effective:	10 th September 2020
Last reviewed or updated:	1 st December 2022
Frequency of review:	Annually

1.	Introduction
	<p>The Institute of Conservation (Icon) recognises the vital importance of ensuring that all assessments it undertakes in its capacity as an Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) are valid, fair, objective and independent. This includes ensuring that there is a clear separation between the Apprenticeship programme delivery along with the EPA process.</p> <p>This policy details Icon’s approach to identifying and mitigating the risks of conflicts of interest in undertaking End Point Assessments (EPA) for candidates completing the relevant Apprenticeship Standards.</p>
2.	Definitions
	<p>Conflict of Interest: A situation in which an individual or organisation is unable to make a fair, objective and unbiased decision because of competing interests, loyalties or personal relationships with an individual or organisation.</p> <p>EPA: End Point Assessment</p> <p>EPAO: End Point Assessment Organisation</p>
3.	Types of Conflict of Interest
	<p>The nature of an actual or perceived conflict of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances, examples of which include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An individual independent end point Assessor or Internal Quality Assurer is currently involved in Apprenticeship on-programme delivery and/or assessment. • Has links to or is employed by the same organisation as the Apprentice. • Has a prior link with the Apprentice, or a link with the employer over the preceding five-year period (including having friends or relatives involved in the on-programme delivery). • Has friends, relatives or colleagues undertaking the Apprenticeship programme to which the EPA is aligned.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is working for an organisation which is in direct commercial competition to that of the Apprentice. • Might derive personal or business gain from the outcome of the assessment. • Has any other interest(s) that may compromise their assessment decisions.
4.	Responsibility
	<p>Ultimate responsibility for Icon’s Conflict of Interest Policy rests with the Head of Skills.</p> <p>Icon’s Accreditation Manager is responsible for communicating the Policy to all individuals involved in the delivery of the EPAs and ensuring that it is reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>Icon’s Accreditation Manager is responsible for documenting and reviewing all actual or perceived conflicts of interest (unless the conflict of interest relates to them, in which case the Head of Skills will follow the processes outlined in this policy to assess and manage the conflict of interest).</p>
5.	Disclosure
	<p>All staff involved in the delivery of EPAs are required to immediately declare any conflict of interest.</p> <p>Icon staff involved in the delivery of EPAs are required to raise their own conflicts of interest in writing with their supervisor as soon as the actual or perceived conflict of interest becomes apparent.</p> <p>Independent End Point Assessors are required to immediately inform the Accreditation Manager of any actual or perceived conflict of interest as soon as they are contacted to undertake an assessment of an Apprentice.</p> <p>In the case of standardisation or internal quality assurance meetings, independent end point Assessors, internal quality assurers and staff are required to declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interests as soon as the agenda is sent out prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Failure to disclose any conflict of interest would be considered a serious matter and may lead to disciplinary action being taken in line with Icon’s disciplinary policy.</p>
6.	Managing Conflicts of Interests
	<p>Icon’s Accreditation Manager will review and assess each actual or perceived conflict of interest on a case-by-case basis to assess whether the conflict is actual or perceived.</p> <p>This will follow an assessment in line with the types of conflict of interest outlined in section 3. If the conflict of interest relates to the Accreditation Manager, the Head of Skills will make the decision.</p> <p>If conflict is assessed as an actual conflict of interest Icon will identify an alternative independent end point Assessor or internal quality assurer for whom there is no actual conflict of interest.</p>

	In the instance of a meeting, Icon will ensure that no documentation relating to the Apprentice is shared with the individual. The individual will be required to excuse themselves from discussions relating to the individual with whom they have a conflict of interest.
7.	Managing implementation and review.
	This Policy will be reviewed on annually to ensure that it is reflective of current legal regulations and guidance and is responsive to local, national and international events.