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| Conflict of InterestGuidance for End Point Assessment (EPA)  |
| **2024-2025**  |

**Conflict of Interest Guidance for End Point Assessment (EPA)**

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# Summary

This guidance

# Glossary of Terms

**EPA** End Point Assessment

**EPAO** End Point Assessment Organisation

**ESFA** Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

**IA** Independent Assessor

**IfATE** Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

**KSB** Knowledge, skills and behaviours

# Purpose

This guidance sets out the policies and procedures governing apprenticeship End Point Assessments (EPA) delivered as part of the apprenticeship programme for employers at Edge Hill University. Every EPA requires an independent, objective assessment of the knowledge skills and behaviours as set out in the relevant Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) apprenticeship standard. As a registered End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) we must meet the requirements in the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) ‘Conditions for Organisations on the Register of ‘End Point Assessment Organisations.’

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate that we understand and meet these conditions and provide a framework for staff to identify, manage and mitigate any conflict of interest that may occur as part of an End Point Assessment.

# Guidance

## 1. Policy

This policy:

* Defines what is meant by conflict of interest
* Describes the role of conflict of interest in the context of delivering End Point Assessment
* Sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at individual, departmental and organisational level.

## 2. Scope

This guidance covers the delivery of all apprenticeship End Point Assessments undertaken as part of our apprenticeship programmes.

The University, as the organisation accountable and responsible for EPA, and the independent assessors/external assessors/external examiners and invigilators that we use must be free from conflicts of interest that could adversely affect their judgement or objectivity in administering and undertaking a robust and consistent EPA. We must ensure that none of the individuals undertaking the EPA are involved in or are responsible for any on programme delivery, line management or on programme assessment of the same apprentice.

This guidance applies to all staff, consultants and partner institutions/organisations taking part in or supporting an End-point Assessment as defined above. This includes individuals involved with any aspect of the delivery of an End-point Assessment, and also in the creation, marketing, sales, distribution, marking or any other activity connected with tests and assessments, resources or services used within the End Point Assessment.

Explicitly included in scope for this policy are all employees, contractors, agency, or associate staff, including assessment associates, verifiers/examiners, and other support roles. This list is not exhaustive. Every individual must complete a Conflict of Interest form (set out at Annexe A) when asked to do so, and we will assess the risk and impact based on each set of circumstances.

Where mitigating action is needed as a result of a declaration on a conflict of interest form, this may mean that an individual will not be able to take part in a specific EPA, or they may be moved to different duties. EPA Leads will, working with the Senior Management Team, consider whatever action is needed to protect the objectivity and integrity

## 3. Accountability and Principles

The EPAO Lead is accountable for our Conflict of Interest guidance, for the briefing and training of staff and for the management and decisions regarding conflicts of interest.

This responsibility includes the annual review of policy and process, and the action taken regarding instances of conflict of interest or a breach of the conflict-of-interest guidance and associated policies. This guidance and any occurrences or breaches must be reviewed annually, with any recommendations for action implemented immediately in response.

## 4. EPA Lead

EPA leads are responsible for early identification of, and planning for conflict of interest as part of their department responsibilities and the planning for every individual EPA.

EPA Leads are responsible for ensuring that all individuals contributing to an EPA are clear on the impact of the guidance on their roles and for full implementation of this policy.

EPA Leads must ensure that all those in scope complete conflict of interest forms prior to each EPA. Where needed the EPA Lead must implement mitigating actions, agreed with the Senior Management Team before the EPA commences.

Where an EPA is to be hosted at the employer or training provider premises the EPA Lead must as part of the planning process, review any conflict of interest risks and, where identified, set out the actions required to avoid potential conflicts of interest in the EPA Plan. This must be documented and evidence that this has been implemented must be included in the EPA record.

Individual conflict of interest forms must be stored securely and electronically with EPAO admin and available as part of internal and external audits.

EPA leads are accountable for briefing any contactors, consultants agency or other workers not employed by the university, for collation of the EPA conflict of interest form and agreeing mitigation action as required, liaising with Senior Management Team. They must ensure that only the agreed contract template, which includes a requirement to uphold this policy is used between both organisations, or individuals and this organisation. All contracts and conflict of interest forms must be in place before the start of the EPA.

EPA Leads are responsible for ensuring that all new staff receive conflict of interest training. All relevant staff must be aware of and declare conflict of interest prior to an EPA raking place.

Programme and EPA leads are responsible for escalating reports of actual or potential conflicts of interest identified by the EPA Lead, or other routes set out in this guidance to the Senior Management Team.

# Key to Relevant Documents

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents, which are available via the links below:

* [Edge Hill University’s Whistleblowing Policy](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/whistleblowing-policy/)
* [Edge Hill University’s Complaints Policy](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/complaints-procedure/)
* [Edge Hill University’s Assessment Policy](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/assessment-policy/)
* [Edge Hill University’s Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy and Response Plan](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/document/counter-fraud-and-corruption-policy-and-response-plan/)

# Annexes

# Annexe A: Conflict of Interest Form

| Part A: EHUEPAO to complete |
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| Apprenticeship Standard |  |
| Cohort |  |
| Date of End Point Assessment |  |
| Independent Assessors |  |
| Part B: Apprentice to complete |
| Name |  |
| Student ID number |  |
| ULN |  |
| Apprentice, please sign the most appropriate statement (A or B) |
| 1. To the best of my knowledge, I confirm that there are no known potential or actual conflicts of interest between myself (the apprentice), and the Independent Assessors named above
 |
| Signed and dated |  |
| 1. I wish to raise a concern that there may be a conflict of interest between myself (the apprentice) and the Independent Assessor
 |
| Please clarify the relationship below |
| Signed and dated |  |
| Independent Assessor to complete |
| Name |  |
| IA, please sign the most appropriate statement (A or B) |
| 1. To the best of my knowledge, I confirm that there are no known potential or actual conflicts of interest (including those listed above) between myself (the Independent Assessor) and the Apprentice named above
 |
| Signed and dated |  |
| 1. I wish to raise a concern that there may be a conflict of interest between myself (Independent Assessor), and the Apprentice named above
 |
| Please clarify the relationship below |
| EPAO comments:  |

# Endmatter

| Title | Conflict of Interest Guidance for End Point Assessment (EPA) |
| --- | --- |
| Policy Owner | Denise Dutton EPAO Lead |
| Policy Manager | Kathryn Drury Associate Dean |
| Approved by | FASQEC |
| Date of Approval | 22/5/24 |
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