



Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of both the activities of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) Examinations Board, and that of employees, contracted workers, and those in a voluntary role (including Trustees) at the RAD, whose work is related to examinations, thereby ensuring the integrity of the RAD's qualifications and continued regulatory compliance.

2 Policy

- 2.1 Activities and employees of the RAD Examinations Board, contracted workers and those undertaking roles in a voluntary capacity must be free from conflicts of interest that could adversely influence their objectivity, judgment or loyalty to the organisation. Where this is not the case, conflicts of interest must be reported and will be mitigated as set out in the policy.
- 2.2 It is recognised that some employees, contracted workers and/or those in a voluntary role may take part in legitimate financial, business, charitable and/or other activities outside their work related to the Examinations Board. However, any potential conflict of interest raised by those activities must be disclosed at the point of engagement or promptly as and when they arise.

3 Definition of conflicts of interest

- 3.1 A conflict of interest exists when:
- (a) any activity undertaken by someone on behalf of the RAD Examinations Board (including activities related to other areas of the RAD), has the potential to lead him or her to act contrary to the RAD's interests in the development, delivery and award of qualifications
 - (b) a person who is connected to the development, delivery or award of qualifications by the RAD Examinations Board, has interests in any other activity (including activities related to other areas of the RAD), which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to his or her interests in that development, delivery or award
 - (c) an informed and reasonable observer would conclude that either of these situations was the case.

4 Identifying and monitoring conflicts of interest

- 4.1 The RAD Examinations Board will continuously monitor operations and employees, contracted workers and volunteers to ensure that any conflicts of interest in relation to either are identified and mitigated as soon as possible.
- 4.2 In order to achieve this, the RAD Examinations Board will ensure, through monitoring, that activities undertaken by employees, contracted workers and/or those in a voluntary role do not

conflict with core functions. Any conflicts identified must be reported to the Director of Examinations directly. The Director of Examinations is responsible for logging such conflicts and ensuring that they are dealt with as soon as possible, in liaison with the Chief Examiner and other staff as appropriate.

- 4.3 RAD Examinations Board staff are required to inform their line manager immediately of any personal conflicts of interest that arise at any given point, who in turn must report all instances to the Director of Examinations as soon as possible.

5 Areas of potential conflict of interest

The following are areas or activities related to the wider RAD where there is potential for conflict of interest:

- RAD Faculty of Education
- RAD Dance School
- The Benesh Institute
- RAD Bursaries and competitions
- RAD Registered Teachers
- RAD Examinations Board employees (including Examiners)
- Examination candidates
- RAD Trustees

6 Procedures in place to help mitigate conflicts of interest

6.1 RAD Faculty of Education, Dance School, Benesh Institute and RAD Registered Teachers

6.1.1 The RAD Examinations Board is a separate entity within the Royal Academy of Dance. It is led by the Director of Examinations who is responsible to the Board of Trustees via the Artistic and Examinations sub-Committee for the Examinations Board's activities.

6.1.2 The RAD Examinations Board employs an objective, criteria-referenced assessment model. Assessment is carried out on strictly neutral lines, both with respect to the work of examiners and the post-examination results moderation processes. Examiners receive comprehensive monitoring and training, as set out in the Reliability of Results Policy, and are instructed to apply the same criteria-based judgements to all candidates they examine, wherever the examinations may take place whoever has entered the candidates for examination, and whoever the candidates are. Results are analysed and moderated by identified RAD Examinations Board employees who normally have no interest in the result of any candidate (see 6.2.3 below).

6.2 Examinations Board staff

6.2.1 As part of the applications processes for both administrative staff and examiners, applications will be checked by appropriate senior staff, in order to identify any possible conflicts of interest. Where uncertainty remains, these will be explored as part of the interview process.

- 6.2.2 Employees without responsibility for assessment, upon appointment, are issued with either a temporary or permanent contract of engagement and are required to declare any known or potential conflict of interest. Employees are required to inform the Director of Examinations of any new potential conflicts of interest that arise during the period of their employment. Records are monitored by the Director of Examinations and stored by the Human Resources department, according to the RAD's Records Retention Schedule.
- 6.2.3 Where possible, procedures are in place to double-check the accuracy of examination results entered during results processing, so that the risk of any employee altering an examination result due to having an interest in that result is mitigated. Where this is not possible, staff involved in processing examination results are required to sign a statement on an annual basis confirming that they are not aware of any conflict of interest in respect of results which they have processed or are likely to process within six months of the date of the statement (see Appendix I).
- 6.2.4 Examiners, upon appointment to the Panel of Examiners, are issued with a contract (renewable every 3 years) and an annual letter of engagement that requires the declaration of any known or potential conflict of interest. They are also required to inform the Panel of Examiners Manager of any new conflicts of interest that arise which may affect their ability to examine in the immediate future. Records are kept and monitored by the Panel of Examiners Manager and stored according to the RAD's Record Retention Schedule.
- 6.2.5 As per the Examiner Allocation Policy, examiners will not normally be allocated examination tours in areas where they are likely to examine their own pupils; where they have disclosed that they know or have taught any student in the previous two years; or where they have carried out examining in the previous two years. This principle is only altered in exceptional circumstances, eg. in an emergency where to follow it would mean cancelling examinations or otherwise disadvantaging learners.
- 6.2.6 Where examiners are engaged to teach RAD student classes / courses or judge bursaries or competitions, they are asked to check their examining commitment to make sure there is no conflict of interest (ie. that there is no likelihood they will be required to examine candidates who they have previously taught or coached in a class or on a course).
- 6.2.7 Examiners are required to declare an interest in any candidates they examine who are known to them personally (see extract below from *Code of Conduct for Examiners of the Royal Academy of Dance*):

Examiners have a duty to candidates and to the Royal Academy of Dance to ensure that the objectivity of the examination process is neither compromised nor appears to be compromised. The examiner should not examine his/her own pupils, relatives or any student the examiner has taught two years prior to the examination. Should the examiner become aware of such a situation prior to a tour commencing, or during a tour but before the examination takes place, they should immediately seek guidance from the Royal Academy of Dance. If the examiner is unaware of such a situation until the actual day of the examination or is unable to contact the Royal Academy of Dance before the examination, the examiner should continue with the examinations and then at the earliest opportunity advise the Director of Examinations as to the nature of the potential conflict.

6.2.8 Where it is unavoidable that an examiner examines a candidate that is known to them in any capacity, the Examinations Results Quality Assurance Manager is made aware of the circumstances so that particular scrutiny can be applied to the moderation of results. Any concerns raised at that stage will be investigated by the Director of Examinations.

6.2.9 Particular scrutiny is applied to the moderation of results in respect of any examiner involved in the preparation of resources related to a qualification being assessed.

6.3 Entry to RAD Examinations

6.3.1 Procedures for entry to RAD examinations are outlined in the Specifications. The Applicant, irrespective of any association with the RAD or the RAD Examinations Board, is responsible for the submission of accurate entry information, including any appropriate conflicts of interest information. Procedures are in place to verify the data given on the entry forms where necessary.

7 Conflict assessment

7.1 Where a conflict of interest is declared or arises, this should be reported to the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee for discussion at its next meeting, for resolution, or outside of the meeting if the matter is urgent.

7.2 Any member of staff declaring a conflict of interest may not be allowed to work for the organisation in the intervening period until the matter is resolved.

7.3 The Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee may impose such measures as seem to it to be fit and proper in relation to the resolution of a conflict of interest. For example, a data processor who is entering data relating to a candidate who is known to that data processor may be required to have their work checked and countersigned by their line manager.

7.4 On conclusion or termination of a contract, employees are bound by the Confidentiality Agreement signed upon their engagement. The terms of this agreement are dependent on the role.

8 Action to be taken in respect of conflicts of interest

8.1 Should any conflicts of interest be found as a result of ongoing monitoring, and particularly those which may lead to operations being compromised, disadvantage to learners, or any other Adverse Effect, these will be mitigated to ensure that there is the minimum amount of impact on learners. This may result in the application of a Special Consideration mark or in some cases, re-examination. Impact on results and certification timescales will be monitored closely and where target dates are not met, learners informed accordingly.

8.2 The Specifications provide for the postponement or re-scheduling of any examinations where a candidate is known personally to the examiner. Where such action cannot be taken because to do so would disadvantage learners, particular attention is paid to the results during the post-examination monitoring procedures.

- 8.3 Where a conflict of interest has had an Adverse Effect, appropriate steps are taken to mitigate the Adverse Effect and to correct it.
- 8.4 Any action taken as a result of a conflict of interest must be reported to the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee.

9 Responsibilities

- 9.1 National Directors, National and Regional Managers, RAD Representatives, and Examinations Department Managers, are responsible for identifying and monitoring conflicts of interest in their areas.
- 9.2 Employees of the RAD Examinations Board are responsible for identifying and reporting conflicts of interest to their line manager, and in the case of examiners, to the Examinations Resources Manager.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 The Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy is reviewed annually and monitored on a regular basis by the Examinations Regulatory and Standards Committee.
- 10.2 The Director of Examinations is responsible for signing off the Examinations Conflict of Interest Policy.

Policy Sign-off: February 2018
Policy Review Date: January 2019



Dr Andrew McBirnie
Director of Examinations

Circulation list:

- National Directors, National and Regional Managers and RAD Representatives
- RAD examiners
- RAD websites

APPENDIX I



Data Processor Conflict of Interest Statement

If you are not able to sign the statement below as being true and accurate, please inform your line manager as to the reasons.

I, _____ [print name]

confirm that I was not involved in processing the results of any examination candidate in whom I have a personal interest (eg. a friend or family member) during the six months prior to the date of this statement.

I further confirm that I have no knowledge of any examination candidates in whom I have a personal interest whose results I am likely to process during the six months following the date of this statement.

Signed _____

Date _____