SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY

JANUARY 2026

To be reviewed January 2027

This Policy should be read in conjunction with all other Sacred Heart High School Policies

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1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy is in place to inform the protocols for identifying and managing conflicts of interest for the current academic year from all centre staff relation to public exams and internally assessed components/NEAs.

It ensures Sacred Heart High School (SHHS) is compliant with the current JCQ guidelines and advice regarding identifying and managing conflicts of interest, and is available to a JCQ inspector on request.

2 WHAT DOES THIS POLICY AFFECT?

It is the responsibility of the head of centre to ensure that SHHS has a written conflicts of interest policy in place available for inspection. This policy confirms that SHHS manages conflicts of interest by informing the awarding bodies, before the published deadline for entries for each examination series, of:

- any members of centre staff who are taking qualifications at their own centre which include internally assessed components/units;
- any members of centre staff who are teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units and

maintains clear records of all instances where:

- exams office staff have members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) being entered for examinations and assessments either at the centre itself or other centres
- centre staff are taking qualifications at their own centre which do not include internally assessed components/units
- centre staff are taking qualifications at other centres

3 PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING AND MANAGING CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

3.1 The process

The Examinations Officer (EO) contacts all school staff in good time prior to the submission of entries for any exam season, explaining the JCQ definitions of conflicts of interest and asking them to declare any.

The EO maintains a log of any declared conflicts of interest and agreed mitigations and shares this with the Head Teacher (HT). Depending on the nature of the conflict, the school will:

- Notify the exam boards before the deadline for initial submissions of exam entries and/or,
- Maintain a log of conflicts and measures taken to mitigate them, which will be made available to a JCQ inspector

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre will:

- Ensure that centre staff are aware of the requirement to declare any interest and that any declarations are recorded and logged
- Ensure conflicts of interest are managed according to the requirements
- Ensure clear records are maintained and that the records include details of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected
- Ensure the records are available where they may be requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector and/or awarding body staff
- Ensure the records are retained until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later
- Ensure that entering members of centre staff for qualifications at this centre is as a last resort in cases where the member of centre staff is unable to find another centre
- Ensure that proper protocols are in place to prevent the member of centre staff having access to examination materials prior to the examination and that other centre staff are briefed on maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the examination materials
- Ensure that during the examination series the member of centre staff is treated in the same way as any other candidate entered for that examination, does not have access to examination materials and does not receive any preferential treatment

4.2 Exams Officer

The Exams Officer will:

- Ensure the process for collecting declarations of interest is undertaken
- Identify and follow the awarding body's administrative process for submitting details of members of staff who are:
  - Taking qualifications which include internally assessed components/units at their own centre
  - Teaching and preparing members of their family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar (close relationships) or close friends and their immediate family (e.g. son/daughter) for qualifications which include internally assessed components/units
  - Retain the records of the measures taken to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected until the deadline for reviews of marking has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or other results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later

5 MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO MITIGATE AGAINST THE RISK OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

This list offers a range of actions which can be taken to mitigate against the risk to the integrity of examinations, of a conflict of interest involving any school staff. It is generic and not exhaustive – each case must be assessed individually.

- Where staff are wishing to take a public examination themselves,
  - to explore all possibilities of this being managed by another centre
  - ensure they do not have access to any secure materials and, if necessary, temporarily disable their access to any exam board secure websites
  - liaise with other centre and outline the measures we have taken
- Where staff are teaching and preparing a member of their family or close friends and their immediate family for a qualification which includes an internally assessed component/unit,
  - make every effort to avoid situations where a candidate is assessed by a person who has a close personal relationship with the candidate
  - ensure the member of centre staff is not solely involved in making assessment decisions for the affected candidate for any internally assessed component/unit
  - ensure the marked work will be submitted for moderation whether or not it is part of the moderation sample
- Where member of exams office, administration or site staff has a member of their family or close friends and their immediate family being entered for examinations and assessments at this centre or another centre
  - prevent the member of centre staff having access to confidential examination materials prior to exam
  - ensure that another person is present for particular administrative arrangements relating to the candidate's exams/assessments

6 RATIFICATION

This policy has been approved and ratified by the Headteacher in January 2025. The policy will be reviewed for January 2026.

Mrs S O'Donovan
Headteacher