

Approved Rater – Frequently Asked Questions



- Q1. I work for an organization that is a Head Start grantee. I do not supervise the classroom or its staff; however, I am paid by the organization. Does this fall under the conflict of interest statement about having a relationship with the program that results in financial gain?**
- A. No, this does not represent a conflict of interest specific to financial gain. An Approved Rater cannot be directly paid by the center/program/classroom they are assessing.
- Q2. I used to work at a Head Start or NAEYC program. Now that I no longer work there can I be their Approved Rater?**
- A. Consideration will be given to the length of time that has passed, as well as staff turnover, to determine if past employment represents a conflict of interest. Detail regarding past employment at a Head Start or NAEYC accredited program should be shared during the Approved Rater certification process and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- Q3. I am employed as a Great Start Collaborative Director/Coordinator, Great Start Parent Liaison, Great Start to Quality Resource Center Director, Quality Improvement Consultant, Quality Improvement Specialist, or other Great Start to Quality contractor; am I eligible to serve as an Approved Rater?**
- A. No, members of the Great Start Network are not eligible to serve as Approved Raters. This has been determined by the Office of Great Start and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation to be a conflict of interest.
- Q4. The Approved Rater fact sheet says I have to be trained by HighScope in the appropriate Program Quality Assessment. What does that mean?**
- A. Individuals who wish to conduct the PQA as an Approved Rater must be trained in the PQA version that reflects the type of program they are assessing. For example, an Approved Rater that is conducting the PQA for a Great Start Readiness Program classroom would need to be trained in the Preschool version of the PQA by a HighScope Trainer.

- Q5. Does my training count regardless of when I completed it? Do I need to renew my training?**
- A. Once you have been trained by HighScope in the appropriate PQA version you do not need to renew as long as you maintain reliability on an annual basis.
- Q6. I am trained in the PQA and have been assessing programs for years. Why do I have to complete reliability testing every year?**
- A. Great Start to Quality Assessors complete online reliability testing on an annual basis. Approved Raters are conducting the PQA on behalf of Great Start to Quality and must have their reliability tested each year to maintain the integrity of program's Star rating.
- Q7. Does Great Start to Quality pay for the training or reliability testing for Approved Raters?**
- A. No, there are no financial supports provided for Approved Raters. All costs associated with meeting the eligibility criteria for an Approved Rater is the responsibility of the individual.
- Q8. If I have completed reliability testing more than a year ago do I have to complete it prior to conducting a PQA for an eligible program?**
- A. Yes, reliability testing would need to be completed annually after the initial certificate expired.
- Q9. I am trained and reliable in the Preschool PQA and work for Head Start. I have a friend or family member that works at a Head Start program in another county. Can we be each other's Approved Rater?**
- A. No, the conflict of interest form states that an Approved Rater cannot have a personal relationship with the program director, owner, or staff. Even though the programs are in different counties the personal relationship represents a conflict of interest.
- Q10. What is meant by personal relationship? Can I serve as an Approved Rater for a friend of family member's program?**
- A. A personal relationship would be defined as a friend or family member. An Approved Rater would not be able to conduct a PQA at a friend or family member's program. Specific situations can be shared during the Approved Rater certification process and will be considered on a case by case basis.