



Supporting Excellence in Early Education

## Approved Assessor Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

**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?**

No, this does not represent a conflict of interest specific to financial gain. An Approved Assessor cannot be directly paid by the center/program/classroom they are assessing.

**I used to work at a Head Start or a nationally accredited program. Now that I no longer work there can I be their Approved Assessor?**

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. Details regarding past employment at a Head Start or accredited program should be shared during the Approved Assessor certification process and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**I am employed as a Great Start Collaborative Director/Coordinator, Great Start Parent Liaison, Great Start to Quality Resource Center Director, Quality Improvement Coach, Quality Improvement Specialist, or other Great Start to Quality contractor; am I eligible to serve as an Approved Assessor?**

No, members of the Great Start Network are not eligible to serve as Approved Assessors. This has been determined by the Michigan Department of Education - Office of Great Start and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation to be a conflict of interest.

**The website says: *I have to be trained by Teachstone for the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) and Weikart for the Social Emotional Program Quality Assessment (SEL PQA) in the appropriate assessment tools.* What does that mean?**

Individuals who wish to conduct the CLASS and SEL PQA as an Approved Assessor must be trained in the tool that reflects the type of program they are assessing. For example, an Approved Assessor that is conducting CLASS for a Preschool Head Start Program classroom would need to be trained in the Pre-K version of the tool by Teachstone.

**Does my training count regardless of when I completed it? Do I need to renew my training?**

Approved Assessors reliability must be current with Weikart for the SEL PQA or with Teachstone for CLASS. Once you have been trained and are reliable in the tools, you must maintain your reliability as required by the creators of the tool. Weikart, for SEL PQA, requires reliability testing every two years, while Teachstone, for CLASS, requires reliability testing every year.

**I am trained in the CLASS and SEL PQA and have been assessing programs for several years. Why do I have to complete reliability testing again?**

Great Start to Quality Assessors complete online reliability testing every year for each CLASS tool, and every two years for SEL PQA as required by the creators of the tools. Approved Assessors are conducting the CLASS and SEL PQA on behalf of Great Start to Quality and must have their reliability tested in the same way to maintain the integrity of a program's quality level.

**Does Great Start to Quality pay for the training or reliability testing for Approved Assessors?**

No, there is no financial support provided for Approved Assessors. All costs associated with meeting the eligibility criteria for an Approved Assessor are the responsibility of the individual.

**If I have completed reliability testing more than two years ago, do I have to complete it prior to conducting a CLASS or SEL PQA for an eligible program?**

Yes, reliability testing would need to be completed annually for CLASS and for SEL PQA every two years.

**I am trained and reliable in CLASS and SEL 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 Assessor?**

No, the conflict of interest form states that an Approved Assessor 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.

**What is meant by personal relationship? Can I serve as an Approved Assessor for a friend or family member's program?**

A personal relationship would be defined as a friend or family member. An Approved Assessor would not be able to conduct a CLASS or SEL PQA at a friend or family member's program. Specific situations can be shared during the Approved Assessor certification process and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Which child care programs can use an Approved Assessor?**

To be eligible to use an Approved Assessor, the program must have completed the accreditation process with either NAEYC or NAFCC or have an agreement (grant-funded or otherwise) for implementation of a program whose operation is overseen by an external partner that supports program quality, such as:

- Great Start Readiness Programs
- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- 21st Century Learning Community Centers
- Local Pre-K Programs

*Funding from the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education supports the implementation of Great Start to Quality.*