

Sanctions Policy

1 General

- 1.1 As part of the Skills and Education Group Awards¹ quality assurance procedures, we monitor our centres to ensure they continue to comply with the requirements of our Centre Agreement and its supportive policies and procedures.
- 1.2 In the event of any proven failure by centres to comply with these requirements, we assess the potential impact on learners and determine the course of action required to support the centre and minimise the risk to learner achievement.
- 1.3 Issues identified during external monitoring activity are usually supported by a centre action plan, detailing the issue to be addressed, by whom and when.
- 1.4 Major issues or continued failure to address actions following moderation activity may result in sanctions against the Centre.
- 1.5 The table in Appendix 1 below outlines the level of sanction that may be applied, the reasons for it and the possible course of action we may take.

2 Sanction Procedure for Centres

- 2.1 Sanctions may be recommended by our sub-contractors or identified during other quality assurance activity.
 - 2.1.1 When sanctions are recommended by a sub-contractor we will discuss the recommendation with them, review the evidence and determine if a sanction should be applied.
 - 2.1.2 Issues identified following other quality assurance activity are notified to Compliance and Regulation where the evidence is reviewed and sanctions applied as necessary in line with this policy and tariff of sanctions.
- 2.2 Any sanctions to be applied are communicated in writing to the Centre's Quality Manager outlining the reasons for the sanction and the actions to be taken.

¹ ABC Awards is a brand of Skills and Education Group Awards, a recognised awarding organisation and part of the Skills and Education Group. Any reference to ABC Awards, its registered address, company or charity number should be deemed to mean the Skills and Education Group Awards.

2.3 Where a level 3 or level 4 sanction has been applied we may also notify the Regulators² or other Awarding Organisations. Such breaches will have the potential to have an Adverse Effect in that they may:

- seriously disadvantage Learners;
- adversely affect our ability to undertake the delivery or award of qualifications in accordance with our Conditions of Recognition;
- adversely affect the standards of qualifications which we make available;
- adversely affect our reputation.

2.4 In all cases we expect a timely response to these communications in terms of an acknowledgement, request for clarification if required and an action plan.

2.5 Any sanctions will remain in place until such time:

- any investigation has been completed;
- the Centre can confirm all actions have been carried out;
- evidence of these actions has been seen by us or one of our representatives;
- we have informed the Centre that the sanction has been lifted.

2.6 Centres may appeal against any sanction applied and must follow the process in our Enquiries and Appeals policy and procedures.

3 Sanction Procedures for Learners / Candidates

3.1 Although learner / candidate malpractice may typically be dealt with by centres within the assessment and internal quality assurance process, we may have cause to impose a sanction on an individual directly. This may occur in the following circumstances:

3.1.1 Where independent / external assessment has uncovered anomalies in the assessment evidence which are proved to be attributable to an individual learner / candidate.

3.1.2 Where external moderation uncovers plagiarism which is proved to be attributable to an individual learner / candidate.

3.2 In all such cases an individual's assessments, where proven to be invalid, will need to be redone and new evidence, which can be proved to be authentic, provided.

² Which may include Ofqual in England; Qualifications Wales; CCEA in NI

4 Quality Assurance

- 3.1 This policy is reviewed annually following stakeholder feedback and any changes to the requirements for regulatory compliance.

Appendix 1 Sanctions Table

Reasons for Sanction	Sanction Level	Possible consequences of Sanction at this level
Not responding to previously agreed actions within timescales specified	1	- Remote moderation rights removed;
Not responding to requests for further information		- Direct claim status removed;
Insufficient / unqualified assessors / internal moderators		- Additional moderation /compliance visit (at cost to the Centre);
Insufficient records to allow moderation		- Moderation of full cohort (at cost to the Centre);
Inconsistent assessment decisions / poor assessment practice		- Advisory visit (at cost to the Centre);
Internal assessment methods / tasks insufficient to allow learners to achieve		- Review/revalidation of internal assessment tasks (at cost to the Centre).
No internal quality assurance	2	- Temporary suspension of moderation / marking activity;
Potential/alleged Malpractice		- Temporary suspension of registrations;
Failure to respond to requests for payment		- Temporary suspension of certification;
Persistent non-compliance with awarding organisation procedures		- Temporary suspension of onscreen tests / independent assessments
Continued failure to meet assessment standards		
Inadequate invigilation procedures		
Permanent loss of integrity of assessment decisions leading to learner disadvantage	3	- Removal of Qualification Approval;
Persistent failure to comply with actions / respond to communications		- Removal of sub-sector approval;

Significant concerns / lack of confidence with centre quality assurance in curriculum area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the Regulators - Inform other Awarding Organisations.
Total breakdown of communications with centre.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of Centre Recognition and termination of Centre Agreement; - Inform the Regulators; - Inform other Awarding Organisations; - Inform any other stakeholder
Significant failure of management to address issues.		
Persistent failure to pay for services / respond to outstanding debts.		
Proven fraudulent activity		