

Sanctions Policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at ATC/Ps delivering IQL UK approved qualifications or units and who have failed to meet aspects of our delivery requirements and/or the standards as laid down by the regulatory authorities in respect of regulated qualifications and units. It sets out the sanctions IQL UK may impose on ATC/Ps in such situations.

It is also for use by our staff to ensure they apply any sanctions in a consistent manner.

ATC/Ps responsibility

It is important that your staff involved in the delivery of our qualifications are fully aware of the contents of the policy and any possible implications on your ATC/P should you fail to comply with requirements specified by IQL UK in relation to the delivery of our qualifications (some of which are required of us by the regulators).

Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer feedback, trends from our internal monitoring arrangements, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation.

If you would like to feedback any views please contact us via the details below.

Ensuring the standards of our qualifications

IQL UK has a responsibility to the learners taking our qualifications and the UK regulatory authorities to ensure that ATC/Ps deliver our qualifications and units in accordance with relevant national standards.

Approach to sanctions

IQL UK has a range of sanctions that can be imposed on an ATC/P depending on the seriousness of the situation, the level and track-record of the ATC/Ps non-compliance and the risk to the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications and units.

Nonetheless, IQL UK aims to ensure that the application of sanctions is a last resort and through our approach to ATC/P support and management, and the creation of appropriate action plans, we will work with ATC/Ps to prevent situations arising that would warrant a sanction being imposed.

In the event that sanctions are required, then they will be applied depending on the nature of the situation. For example if the ATC/P has¹:

- Outstanding actions
- Poor records to confirm assessment decisions
- No lead quality officer/internal verifier in place
- Proven collusion or persistent bad marking of assessments
- Suspected or proven cases of maladministration/malpractice which are being investigated
- Made certification claims before learners have completed the unit(s)/qualification(s)
- An increased likelihood of an adverse effect occurring (e.g. something that is likely to have an adverse effect on the standards of the qualifications they are delivering or public confidence in qualifications)
- Refused access to premises and/or records to the staff of IQL UK or the regulatory authorities

It is important to note that the following are not classified as sanctions, but standard good awarding organisation and/or business practice:

- Should an ATC/P refuse to pay outstanding fees after various contact with our Finance team, then we may remove approval and/or ATC/P recognition with immediate effect. Such a decision would not be considered a sanction but a commercial decision
- Undertaking additional visits to an ATC/P to provide them with a greater level of support and/or monitoring depending on their needs and performance and/or to follow-up on actions resulting from a malpractice or maladministration investigation
- Requiring specific ATC/P staff to undergo additional training and/or scrutiny of the ATC/P if there are concerns about their ability to undertake their role in the delivery of our qualifications effectively. Such decisions would normally be communicated to the ATC/P via an 'action' following an ATC/P monitoring visit. It is important to note that we reserve the right to impose a number of restrictions against individuals at any time. For example, certification may be suspended until actions identified have been completed. Ordinarily, restrictions would be imposed against individuals either during or prior to conducting an investigation into maladministration or malpractice connected to an ATC/P with whom the

¹ The examples for recommending and imposing sanctions in this section and below are only indicative and are not meant to form an exhaustive list.

- individual(s) is/are connected. Restrictions against individuals may include not permitting specific staff to be involved in the delivery/assessment of our qualifications
- Altering the way, and the period in which, ATC/Ps receive assessment materials from IQL UK if there are concerns around their ability to maintain the security and confidentiality of such materials
 - Appointing our staff to observe an assessment at the ATC/P if there are concerns around the ATC/Ps arrangements. Such actions will be discussed with the ATC/P during or after an ATC/P monitoring visit

Sanctions that may be imposed

Sanctions that may be imposed as part of a ATC/P recognition/qualification approval decision, monitoring activity or investigation into a complaint, appeal or allegation of malpractice and/or maladministration include **withholding certificates** (e.g. suspending certification status) and **preventing further learner registrations by the ATC/P** (e.g. suspending registration status) in relation to:

- A single qualification
- An entire qualification type
- All qualifications

Recommendations in relation to the above types of sanctions will be reviewed by the allocated Customer Engagement Manager. Where there is clear evidence of non-compliance by the ATC/P and/or a sufficient rationale, then the sanction will be imposed on the ATC/P.

In all instances the nature of the sanction and the rationale for its application will be communicated in writing to the ATC/P via the IQL UK Programme Manager.

If an ATC/P disagrees with the decision the first point of call is through the IQL UK's appeals arrangements.

Only in exceptional circumstances of extremely serious non-compliance or the persistent failure of the ATC/P to address outstanding actions, and/or the failure of previous sanctions to address the issue, would IQL UK impose the sanction of **removal of qualification approval** in relation to:

- A single qualification
- An entire qualification sector
- An entire qualification type
- All qualifications and in turn the ATC/P's 'recognition' with IQL UK

IQL UK expects that it would never impose the immediate withdrawal of approval for a qualification or range of qualifications without:

- The ATC/P being given an opportunity to address the area(s) of non-compliance
- First of all imposing one of the previous sets of sanctions
- There being evidence that the non-compliance poses a significant threat to the interest of learners or the integrity of the qualifications and units

Should an ATC/P have its approval for a qualification/suite of qualifications removed, we will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of any learners currently registered on the qualification(s). For example, we will either certificate them for any achievements achieved to date and/or seek to transfer them, where possible and feasible, to another ATC/P to enable them to carry on with their learning.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact IQL UK via

E: mail@iql.org.uk

T: 01789 773 994