

Sanctions Policy

1. Introduction

As an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual, RSL is required to meet the General Conditions of recognition. As part of our recognition, we must ensure that our approved centres take all reasonable steps to ensure that we are able to comply with these Conditions of Recognition.

RSL has an arrangement with each approved centre that centres will abide by the requirements for approval as laid out in the Centre Handbook, Quality Manual and Delivery Centre Agreement. RSL will monitor regularly that examinations centres are complying with these requirements. RSL identifies issues with a specific centre through:

- On-going monitoring through the External Moderation
- External feedback received from regulators and/or external bodies
- External feedback from stakeholders

This policy sets out what sanctions that RSL will impose on centres that fail to comply with the conditions of approval.

Should any centre be found, or suspected of, not complying with any of RSL's requirements relating to quality assurance or academic governance, RSL reserves the right to impose a range of sanctions on that centre.

2. Issue and review

The date of issue of this policy is January 2017. This policy will be reviewed annually.

3. Approach to sanctions

Sanctions are the punitive actions which may be applied if a centre fails to comply with RSL's regulations.

Centre Responsibilities

The centre should ensure that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of RSL's qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

4. Approach to Sanctions: Non-formal actions

RSL will always seek to resolve non-compliance issues through discussion with centres in the first instance. The usual outcome of any such discussion and investigations into the non-compliance by RSL will be an action plan which will identify what actions the centre should take to resolve the non-compliance issue and the dates by which these actions should be completed.

Centres should provide a regular update to RSL detailing the actions that have been taken to show that progress is being made towards resolving the non-compliance issue.

On completion of all the actions the centre should report to RSL that the non-compliance issue has been resolved. RSL will reserve the right to further inspection of the centre's policies, procedures and activities.

RSL will expect the examination centre to keep under review any new policies, procedures or activities that arise from the actions detailed in the action plan.

5. Approach to Sanctions: Formal actions

Should RSL and a centre be unable to resolve the non-compliance issue by non-formal means and through the moderation process, a number of formal actions can be taken by RSL. These will be graduated and proportional to the issues involved.

RSL use the following levels of sanctions:

Low level (as part of the moderation process)

- Action planning
- Additional moderation activities such as sampling

Medium level

- Suspending certification of candidates registered for certain qualifications.
- Suspending certification of candidates registered for any RSL qualification at that centre pending the outcome of investigations
- Withdrawing centre approval for a specified qualification(s) for a specified period

High Level

- Withdrawing centre approval for a specified qualification(s) indefinitely
- Withdrawing centre approval for a specified period
- Withdrawing centre approval indefinitely

The level of sanction imposed will relate to the level of risk arising from the issue identified and, in all cases, the sanction will be designed to resolve the issue of non-compliance within a set timescale. Centres who do not comply with sanctions within the given timescale will be subject to an increased sanction level.

Approved centres must comply with all sanctions imposed upon them.

Examples of actions that are likely to trigger sanctions include:

- Failure to address issues identified in the external moderator action plan.
- Misleading information provided to RSL
- Insufficient or lack of adequate internal verification activities
- Failure to comply with any reasonable request for information by RSL

6. Appeals

If any centre wishes to appeal against RSL's decision to apply any given sanction they may refer to the Appeals Policy.