

How to get started: Gaining approval

1.1 Centre Approval

1.1.1 What is centre approval?

Centre approval allows us to ensure that you have the necessary policies, procedures and systems in place to assure the quality and integrity of qualifications and programmes you provide to learners.

Gaining centre approval with us involves you providing evidence to us that you can meet our Centre Approval Criteria (Appendix A). The criteria sets out the necessary areas you need to evidence, the potential sources of evidence identified within the criteria are examples and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of evidence. We will also carry out a financial viability review of your organisation.

Our process requires you to be fully aware of the Centre Monitoring Criteria which will be applied on approval. This document details our sanctions policy and is available on our website for download.

In addition to providing this evidence a member of your organisation with the accountability and authority to do so, for example a director, must sign our centre agreement. A copy of the centre agreement can be downloaded from our website.

Although we take this very seriously we are here to help guide you through the process.

1.1.2 How do I gain centre approval?

Our process starts with you completing the relevant centre application form which is available for download on our website or by contacting us and simultaneously applying for one qualification approval.

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1. Fill in the centre approval application form and send to us at approvals@fdq.org.uk along with supporting evidence.
 2. We will review your application within 10 days of receipt and we may be in touch if we need to ask you for further information
 3. We will notify you of the outcome which will be either
Visit required or Approval Granted
 4. If a visit is required we will arrange for a member of the FDQ Quality
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Team to come and visit you. They will seek evidence during the visit to confirm that the centre approval criteria has been met. The visit should last no longer than half a day but will depend on the level of evidence required at the visit.

5. After the visit the FDQ Quality Team will make a recommendation to FDQ on the outcome of the visit. These will have been discussed with you at the visit. We will then confirm the outcome with you, which will be one of the following:

Approval Granted, **Approval withheld subject to an action plan**, **Denied**

6. FDQ will complete a financial health check on any prospective centres, including a review of any published accounts.
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7. Once approval is granted and financial health check completed, then two copies of the FDQ centre agreement is sent to you. Each copy of the centre agreement must be signed by a person accountable for the centre and authorised by the centre to sign the agreement.

Both signed hard copies of the agreement should then be returned to FDQ.

8. Once the signed centre agreement is received here at FDQ, our Chief Executive will counter sign the agreement, on behalf of FDQ and return a copy to you.

In addition the following will be forwarded to you:

- FDQ centre introductory letter, including External Quality Assurance Consultant details and password access to the FDQ centre management system FDQAwards.
- Centre Handbook
- FDQ Plaque.

Confirmation will be sent within 10 days of receiving the signed centre agreement.

1.2 Qualification Approval

1.2.1 What is qualification approval?

Our process starts with you completing the relevant qualification application form which is available for download on our website or by contacting us.

1.2.2 Which qualifications can I gain approval for?

FDQ offer a range of qualifications across the food and drink supply chain, including competency, vocational, apprenticeship and compliance qualifications e.g. food safety. Full details of these can be found on our website at www.fdq.org.uk.

1.2.3 How do I gain qualification approval?

Our process starts with you completing the relevant centre application form which is available for download on our website. When applying for qualification approval you need to be familiar with the competency requirements set out in the relevant assessment strategy and provide evidence of personnel meeting these requirements.

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1. Fill in the qualification approval application form and send to us at approvals@fdq.org.uk along with supporting evidence.

The forms must be signed by a person with sufficient responsibility to do so.

If the application is approved, the FDQ Centre Agreement must be signed by a person authorised and accountable for the centre.

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2. We will review your application within 10 days of receipt and we may be in touch if we need to ask you for further information

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3. Our Quality Team will review your application and make recommendations to FDQ. We will then confirm the outcome with you, which will be one of the following:

Approval Granted, **Approval withheld subject to an action plan**, **Denied**

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4. Once approval is granted we will send you confirmation within 10 days of
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Approval Granted

Centres who meet the centre and qualification approval criteria and provide sufficient and appropriate evidence will be granted approval. We will confirm this in writing and in the case of centre approval issue you a certificate of approval for display.

We will allocate you a centre number and send you access details to our online system and allow you to register learners on to qualifications you have been approved for.

Approval Withheld subject to an action plan

Where there has been insufficient evidence to satisfy you have met the necessary requirements of centre or qualification approval we will set you a timed action plan. This will detail the areas you need to develop, the date by which these need to be addressed and any evidence we will require.

Subject to the successful achievement of the action plan we will then grant you approval.

Denied

Where it is clear from the application and visit that you do not have the relevant systems, procedures or policies in place to guarantee the quality and integrity of delivery of qualifications and programmes we will deny you centre or qualification approval.

The centre agreement completed as part of the centre approval process applies to all qualification approvals, including those confirmed after centre approval.

1.3 How much will it cost?

We remain committed to be as competitive as possible with our pricing and therefore review our charges continually, ensuring you always get the best price from us.

Details of how much it costs to gain centre and/or qualification approval are detailed in Appendix B.

1.4 Guidance and Support

We are keen to support you through this process and are on hand to answer your questions throughout. If you need specific questions answering in relation to your application please contact our offices on 0113 3970 395 or contact your External Quality Consultant (EQAC) if you have one appointed.

Organisations that do not have approval to provide FDQ qualifications must apply for Centre Approval and Qualification Approval simultaneously.

The current versions of forms are available for download from www.fdq.org.uk

Appendix A Centre Approval Criteria

The following table sets out the criteria for approving centres to provide FDQ qualifications, and identifies potential sources of evidence for meeting the criteria. The potential sources identified are examples and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of evidence.

	Criterion	Centre agreement clause	Examples of evidence
1	All arrangements in place are applied effectively to the whole centre including its satellite sites.	1	Evidence of communications Communications strategy
2	Arrangements are in place for the identification and management of the occurrence of any incident which could have an Adverse Effect.	3	Related policy and procedure Staff training Documented evidence of related actions Meeting agendas and minutes
3	Arrangements are in place to ensure learners have a safe and managed environment for the provision of qualifications.	4	Health and Safety policy and procedures Safeguarding procedures Equality and diversity policy and procedures
4	Adequate personnel resources are in place to deliver all aspects of the qualifications. There is effective monitoring and appraisal of personnel performance and effective arrangements in place to identify training needs and ensure the adequacy of experience and qualifications.	4	Organisational structure Personnel records including CVs, qualifications, CPD records, monitoring and appraisal records Centre operational plans Meeting records Staff training

	CPD is actively supported, managed and recorded.		
5	Physical resources and arrangements are in place to deliver all aspects of the qualifications, including the identification, use and maintenance of facilities, tools and equipment necessary to deliver qualifications.	4	Plans Planning documentation Confirmation of physical resources including confirmation of specific equipment Meeting records Assessments of resources
6	Arrangements are in place for obtaining as required; either Unique Learner Numbers (ULNs) or Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) or learner records/plans for funded learners.	6	Student record systems Learner records/plans Systems and procedures manual
7	Arrangements are in place for the induction of learners including an initial assessment to identify development needs, eligibility for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), and the development and maintenance of learner plans and records to support progress and effective management of qualification provisions.	6	Induction and guidance materials Policies and processes for recognising RPL/APL Induction programmes Learner plans and records
8	Arrangements are in place for providing assessment of units and/or examination, and their internal quality assurance.	6	Assessment schedules Assessment processes and guidance IQA processes and guidance Outcomes from IQA activity

9	Arrangements are in place to address the eligibility and needs of learners in recognising, exemptions, proxies, reasonable adjustments and special considerations.	6, 8	Reasonable adjustment and special consideration policy and procedures
10	Arrangements are in place for the management and delivery of assessments, including administration, invigilation, marking, dealing with malpractice and maladministration and with claims for learner achievement in line with FDQ requirements. Learners understand and have access to tracking and recording of their progress. Learners understand assessment/examination arrangements and that they can accumulate units, qualifications and transfer credits where appropriate.	6, 9	Assessment instructions Staff handbooks and guidance Malpractice, maladministration and whistleblowing policy and procedure Internal systems and procedures guides Meeting minutes Documented cases Evidence of dissemination of access information to learners
11	Complaints and appeals processes for the use of learners are in place and managed in a timely way.	7	Complaints and appeals policies and procedures Evidence of related actions Monitoring of activity
12	Arrangements are in place to monitor performance and drive improvement in the provision of qualifications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measurement and evaluation of the performance of centre qualification provision, including all internal quality assurance arrangements, assessment/ examination and 	11	Quality assurance policies and procedures Records of monitoring activities Meeting notes Proformae Action plans and evidence of implementation Learner evaluations

	<p>moderation /standardisation to ensure they meet regulatory requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality assurance policies, procedures and practice which are fit for purpose, current and understood by personnel • obtaining and assessing learner feedback to determine how well the qualification provision meets learners' needs. 		
13	Secure arrangements are in place for managing learner records, examinations and the transmission of claims for learner achievement.	12	Secure storage, e.g. alarmed building, secure database Security training
14	Arrangements are in place to manage the withdrawal of qualification or centre approval, which prioritises the interests of learners	14	Withdrawal policy and procedures
15	Arrangements are in place to ensure learners have equality of opportunity and fair treatment in the provision of qualifications	17	Equality and Diversity Policy Equality and Diversity monitoring Reasonable adjustment and special considerations policy and procedure Malpractice, maladministration and whistleblowing policies and procedures
16	Arrangements are in place to manage data security and address any data security breach.	17	Data security policy and procedures Training documentation
17	Arrangements are in place for the management and quality assurance of all third party and sub-contractor agreements, ensuring that all relevant policies and requirements referred to in the	19	Enforceable agreements with third parties Evidence of monitoring arrangements

	Centre Agreement apply to these third parties and sub-contractors.		
18	Arrangements are in place to manage potential and actual conflicts of interest	10	<p>Conflict of interest policy and procedure</p> <p>Evidence of recording conflict of interest</p> <p>Evidence of related actions</p> <p>Meeting minutes</p>

Appendix B Centre and qualification approval charges

	Fee	Description
Centre approval	£600 - £1000	Prices depend on how much support is needed to gain approval including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviewing your application, - 1 visit if required and - 2 qualification approvals.
Re-approval for lapsed centres	£350	Lapsed FDQ centres within the last 2years
Additional visits to gain approval	£350	If more than 1 visit is required to gain approval
Qualification approval	£150 per qualification £600 for 4+ qualifications	One qualification includes the Award/Certificate/Diploma where available

Charges as of August 2019