

FDQ Sanctions Policy

Introduction

1. FDQ will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the interests of learners/apprentices are protected and that the delivery of FDQ qualifications, units and EPA qualifications is undertaken in accordance with FDQ and regulatory requirements.
2. FDQ has in place published centre approval criteria, a centre enforceable agreement, and apprentice contracts relating to the delivery of individual products.

Awarding Organisation

1. Centres are rigorously assessed to ensure their compliance with FDQ approval criteria prior to centre and qualification approval being given. The FDQ centre agreement and related FDQ centre documents establish a sanctions policy to be applied in the event that the centre fails to comply with these requirements. Centres are continually monitored against the content and criteria in the FDQ documents and the centre Monitoring Agreement.
3. Centres are also continually monitored against published Centre Monitoring Criteria, in order to ensure they continue to comply with all FDQ requirements and in particular, those requirements that are set out in the enforceable agreement. The Centre Monitoring Criteria are published in the FDQ Centre Handbook.
4. Centres are given a Centre Quality Rating (CQR), from 'very low' to 'high', based on the extent to which they comply with the Centre Monitoring Criteria and in accordance with the Centre Quality Rating Tariff, which is published in the EQAC Handbook. The CQR is approved by FDQ following EQA activity FDQAwards (FDQ's centre management system) is updated accordingly. Depending on the CQR given, different levels of controls and sanctions will be imposed on centres.
5. Within a centre, the delivery of each qualification is also monitored and given a Qualification Quality Rating (QQR). Through this means FDQ can apply differential sanctions within a centre depending on the performance of the centre in the delivery of each qualification.

Types and levels of sanctions

6. Where non-compliance issues have been identified sanctions will be imposed on centres and/or specific qualifications within the centre. The level of sanction will be dependent on the CQR and/or the QQR and will be proportionate to the seriousness of the non-compliance, the risk it poses to the integrity of assessment and/or other aspects of qualification delivery and any adverse effect it could have on learners.

Full details of the circumstances that will lead to a particular level of sanction are given in the Centre Quality Rating Tariff. These are summarised in the table below.

FDQ sanctions for centre non-compliance

Level	FDQ centre Quality Rating	Non-compliance	Sanction
1	Green	No non-compliance issues	Not applicable
2	Double amber (low risk)	Centre systems and/or one or more qualification are not fully compliant with FDQ requirements but there is no actual threat to the integrity of assessment decisions	Centre is subject to agreed actions to address low risk non-compliance issues Monitoring of centre performance is set at 'low' level
3	Amber (medium risk)	Centre systems and/or one or more qualifications are not fully compliant with FDQ requirements and could lead to a threat to the candidates and the integrity of the assessment decisions, risking invalid claims to certification.	Automatic certification claims for the qualifications concerned are suspended – all such certificate claims must be approved by FDQ Centre is subject to an agreed action plan detailing corrective actions that must be implemented

		Non-compliance leading to a Level 2 sanction has not been rectified.	before automatic certification is resumed. Monitoring of centre performance is set at 'medium' level
4	Red (high risk)	Centre monitoring indicates that for centre systems and/or one or more qualifications, there are serious non-compliance issues relating to assessment and/or quality assurance and/or centre resources and management, which are likely to lead to a threat to the candidates and the integrity of the assessment decisions, risking invalid claims to certification. Non-compliance leading to a Level 3 sanction has not been rectified.	Registration and certification rights for the qualifications concerned are suspended. Centre is subject to an agreed action plan detailing corrective actions that must be implemented before registration and certification is resumed. Monitoring of centre performance is set at 'high' level
5	Red (high risk)	Irretrievable breakdown in management and quality assurance of specific qualifications delivered by the centre Non-compliance leading to a Level 4 sanction has not been rectified.	Withdrawal of approval for specific qualifications
6		Irretrievable breakdown in overall centre management and/or quality assurance of all	Withdrawal of centre approval and approval for all qualifications

qualifications delivered by the
centre

Where a centre has attempted to rectify a fault leading to a sanction but has been unable to do so for reasons that can be justified, FDQ will take this into account when deciding whether to impose a higher-level sanction.

Where a centre has temporarily rectified non-compliances, only to display the same weaknesses again at a later date, FDQ will take into account the track record of the centre in considering whether to impose a higher level sanction.

End-point Assessment Organisation

1. FDQ is requested by organisations including training providers, colleges and employers to deliver EPA services. FDQ is committed to ensuring assessment is valid and authentic and does not disadvantage and apprentice.
2. Organisations requesting EPA services must complete a contractual agreement for each apprentice submitted to EPA Gateway. The contract includes FDQ and regulatory requirements that the organisation must agree to adhere to and must cooperate with FDQ in the delivery of EPA services.
3. FDQ has in place a malpractice and maladministration policy applicable to EPA delivery, the policy references this Sanctions policy. The combination of policies provides FDQ colleagues and external organisations with guidance where an issue of malpractice or maladministration to occur specifically relating to the actions of a training provider or employer requesting EPA services.
4. See FDQ's Malpractice and Maladministration policy for examples of such issues.
5. Where malpractice (also known as fraud) or maladministration (also known as administrative malfunction) to be identified FDQ will review the issue, an action plan put in place and where applicable a sanction applied. All sanctions are communicated to the training provider or employer.
6. Sanctions could include:

- an increased level of monitoring activities
- suspension of apprentice registrations
- withdrawal of EPA services.

Monitoring the policy and procedures for imposing sanctions.

FDQ will ensure that:

1. Appropriate records are maintained about sanctions that have been imposed on centres and/or organisations and their specific activities.
2. Information about sanctions imposed on centres and organisations, is used to inform any adjustments needed to FDQ policies, procedures or operational practice. , centre approval and/or monitoring criteria, or other requirements
3. Operation of the policy is reported to the S&QG
4. Reports are made to the FDQ Governance Committee as part of the self-evaluation procedure
5. Guidance from the Regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice
6. Information from monitoring activities is made available to Regulators as part of the awarding organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request.

