

Reference Number: AQ_10

Centre Sanctions Policy

Revision History

Version	Last reviewed	Next review date	Policy Owner	Notes
AQ10-a10	14 November 2019	30 June 2021	HQC	Minor amendments by OB
AQ10-a11	11 February 2021	30 June 2022	HQC	Modified by OB

1. Introduction

1.1. Policy Statement

NCC Education is committed to ensuring every Centre maintains the integrity and security of qualifications which we award, and to maintain full compliance of our regulators, Ofqual. To that end, this policy is designed to define the range of possible sanctions which NCC Education may impose on Centres and Centre staff, as a response to incidences of malpractice or maladministration.

1.2. Centre Sanctions

NCC Education reserves the right to apply sanctions, up to and including disaccreditation, to Centres which fail to maintain standards and do not develop a credible action plan for improvement, as well as Centres which breach any part of NCC Education's Academic or Centre Regulations, or their Accredited Partner Centre agreement with NCC Education.

Sanctions will be imposed by NCC Education in the following circumstances:

- a) a Centre or one of its staff has been found to have committed malpractice or maladministration, as defined in NCC Education's *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*
- b) a Centre has been found to have otherwise breached NCC Education's accreditation/approval standards or Academic or Centre Regulations
- c) a Centre has breached NCC Education's Marketing Guidelines
- d) a Centre has breached their Accredited Partner Centre agreement with NCC Education
- e) a Centre has failed to pay an invoice or invoices within the stated terms.

Sanctions against Centres and Centre staff are imposed under the authority of the Head of Quality and Compliance, or the General Manager.

Suspension of accreditation or disaccreditation of a Centre are imposed under the authority of the Head of Quality and Compliance and/or the General Manager.

1.3. Communications

NCC Education will normally communicate with the Head of Centre on the subject of sanctions against the Centre (or its staff), except where the Head of Centre is or has been subject to a malpractice case. In such cases, NCC Education will communicate with another appropriate person, such as the Chair of the Centre's governing body or the Centre owner. However, NCC Education reserves the right to communicate directly with employees of Centres who have been sanctioned where circumstances warrant this (for example, if an individual is no longer employed by a Centre). In such instances, NCC Education will advise the Head of Centre of our intention to contact such a person directly, and it is expected that the Head of Centre will co-operate in the provision of the person's contact details.

Any enquiries about sanctions which have been imposed (other than appeals against decisions, which are covered later) or about the content of this policy can be addressed to the Head of Quality and Compliance using the following methods:

By email: quality@nccedu.com

By post: For the attention of the Head of Quality and Compliance
NCC Education
The Towers
Towers Business Park
Wilmslow Road
Didsbury
Manchester M20 2EZ
UK

By phone: +44 (0)161 438 6200
By fax: +44 (0)161 438 6240
Opening hours: Monday - Friday 08:30-17:00 (GMT)

2. Sanctions against Centres

Sanctions which may be imposed on Centres, either individually or in combination, are as follows:

- Written Warning** The Centre will be warned in writing of whatever matter has caused NCC Education to consider sanctions. Normally this approach will be used for a first/minor breach of regulations.
- Action Plan** NCC Education will agree an action plan with the Head of Centre outlining the changes to Centre systems which are required to address the issue which has arisen and prevent it from recurring in future. For an Action Plan to be deemed complete, NCC Education will need to receive a report from the Head of Centre with appropriate supporting evidence.
- Additional monitoring / inspection** Where there are doubts about the way in which qualifications are being delivered at a Centre, NCC Education may impose additional monitoring and inspection visits. The cost of such visit(s) will be charged to the Centre and may not be announced in advance.
- Independent Invigilators** Where there are concerns about the way in which examinations are being conducted at a Centre, NCC Education may appoint independent invigilators whose cost will be charged to the Centre.
- Suspension of Accreditation/ Approval (Placed 'On Stop')** The Centre's accredited/approved status will be suspended when there are significant and/or repeated concerns about delivery at a Centre, and/or when significant unpaid debts have been accumulated. Suspension can be applied when Centres have been consistently non-compliant with requests for information requested by NCC Education including declarations of compliance as required as part of annual Centre monitoring.
- Suspension of accreditation/approval means that **no services** will be provided. Access to Connect and Campus will be suspended as well as listing at www.nccedu.com.
- Disaccreditation** In the case of severe breaches of regulations or for Centres who have been repeatedly sanctioned in other ways, NCC Education reserves the right to disaccredit Centres. NCC Education may also warn other awarding bodies when a disaccreditation has been imposed.

3. Sanctions against Centre Staff

NCC Education does not have a role in matters affecting a member of staff's contractual relationship with a Centre or with the application of the Centre's disciplinary policy. However, NCC Education does reserve the right to make directions to Centres about the engagement of particular members of staff in the delivery of our qualifications, in order to maintain the integrity of our assessments, as follows:

Written warning	The Centre will be warned in writing of whatever matter has caused NCC Education to consider sanctions. Normally this approach will be used for a first/minor breach of regulations.
Special conditions	NCC Education may require the Centre to impose limits preventing an individual from engaging in all or part of the assessment process.
Suspension	NCC Education may require the Centre to impose a bar preventing an individual from the delivery or assessment of qualifications for a defined period. NCC Education may also warn other awarding bodies when a suspension has been imposed.

Failure of a Centre to impose such sanctions on its own staff will be construed as malpractice and may result in Centre sanctions.

4. Sanctions Against Candidates

Sanctions may be imposed against individual candidates as set out in NCC Education's *Academic Misconduct Policy*. Please refer to this document for detailed information on the sanctions that may be applied where a candidate is deemed to have committed academic misconduct.

5. Appeals against Sanctions

When any sanctions have been imposed there is a right of appeal as follows:

- where sanctions have been imposed on Centres and/or Centre staff, letters of appeal should be addressed to:

General Manager
NCC Education
The Towers
Towers Business Park
Didsbury
Manchester
M20 2EZ
- where sanctions have been imposed on an individual candidate, a review of the sanction applied can be requested through NCC Education's *Post Results Services Policy*.