

Communication and Co-operation Policy and Procedure

APRIL 2020

1. Introduction

- Qualifi understands that we must establish and maintain effective communication with our Users if we are to achieve our objectives as an awarding organisation. We also understand that we must communicate and cooperate with the Qualifications Regulators to help secure standards and protect Learners.
- This document has been written specifically to confirm our commitment to meeting the communication and co-operation aspects of the General Conditions of Recognition.

2. Audience

The audience for this document is:

- Users of our qualifications and units,
- Qualifi governing body,
- Qualifi senior officers,
- Consultants working on behalf of Qualifi,
- Qualifications Regulators.

3. Scope

This document applies to all aspects of our business relating to the regulated qualifications and units.

4. Qualifications Regulators

We understand that as a recognised awarding organisation we must communicate and co-operate with the Qualifications Regulators to assure them that we develop, deliver and award our qualifications and units to the required standard, protect Learners as necessary and seek to promote confidence in the qualifications system.

We will provide the Qualifications Regulators with all such assistance as they may request to undertake their duties. We will comply with requirements communicated to us in writing and meet any undertakings given to them by our nominated Responsible Officer.

We will establish the Responsible Officer as the authoritative point of contact who is authorised to speak on behalf of the awarding organisation to the Qualifications Regulators. The Responsible Officer will seek to ensure that communication is clear, accurate and prompt based on the information available on matters such as:

- compliance with our Conditions of Recognition,
- our ability to undertake the efficient development, delivery and award of units and qualifications,
- the standards of units and qualifications that we make available or propose to make available,
- any matters which may affect public confidence in units and qualifications, and,
- the accessibility of our units and qualifications, including compliance with Equalities Law.

The Responsible Officer will promptly:

A4: Conflicts of interest

- submit our Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure to the Qualifications Regulators if requested in writing.

B2: The Annual Statement to Ofqual

- provide to Ofqual an accurate annual statement formally approved by the governing body and signed by the Chair of the governing body and Responsible Officer specifying that we are fully compliant with our Conditions of Recognition at the date of the statement or describe each instance of non-compliance and the date by which we expect to rectify the failure, and whether there is cause to believe that we are likely to fail to comply with our Conditions of Recognition during the period of 12 months immediately following the date of the statement and if there is cause for belief describe each instance of potential non-compliance, the grounds for believing it to be likely to occur, and the steps being taken in relation to it.

B3: Notification to Qualifications Regulators of certain events

- notify Ofqual via the portal when we have cause to believe that any event has occurred or is likely to occur which could have an Adverse Effect
- notify the Qualifications Regulators if we are, or have cause to believe that it we are likely to be, subject to (a) a material change in our governance or legal status, (b) a change of control, (c) a merger with another body, or (c) any insolvency or bankrupt proceedings,
- notify the Qualifications Regulators if we propose to make available qualifications which are substantially different in type or content to any which we have previously made available,
- update the Qualifications Regulators with any steps taken by us or that we intend to take to prevent any incident or event having an Adverse Effect or correct or mitigate that Adverse Effect if it occurs.

B4: Notice to provide information to Ofqual

- provide accurate and complete information to the Qualifications Regulators in response to a written notice.

D7: Management of the Withdrawal of Qualifications

- give to the Qualifications Regulators reasonable notice if we anticipate withdrawing qualifications or units prior to the time at which we provide that information to Centres, Learners or other Users. This will be managed through our Withdrawal of Qualifications and Units Policy and Procedure.

5. Users of our Qualifications and Units

We wish to communicate and cooperate effectively and constructively with our Users, defined by the Qualifications Regulators as:

'Persons who have a legitimate interest in the qualification or type of qualification made available by the awarding organisation, which may include –

1. Learners and Learners' representatives,
2. Centres,
3. employers and employers' representatives,
4. further and higher education establishments,
5. schools,
6. government departments and agencies, and
7. professional bodies.'

As a minimum we will meet our regulatory responsibilities as set out below. Users should understand that we may use units in our qualifications that are owned by other organisations, and which may be amended or withdrawn by the owning organisation beyond our control. In these cases, we will seek to protect the interests of our Centres and learners as far as reasonably possible.

A8: Malpractice and maladministration

- where we have any cause to believe that an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence may affect a Centre undertaking any part of the delivery of a unit or qualification we will inform the Centre and any other awarding organisation which may be affected. This will be managed through our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure.

B5: Representations regarding qualifications

- we will not (and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with us does not) make any statements that would be likely to lead Users of our qualifications and units to believe that a qualification or unit we make available is a regulated qualification or unit when it is not a regulated qualification or unit,
- we will not (and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any person connected with us does not) advertise or promote our qualifications and units in a manner that is likely to be misleading to Users of qualifications and units,
- we will ensure that our use of the Ofqual complies with Logo Requirements and Certificate Requirements that may be published and revised from time to time.

This will be achieved by mechanisms such as induction of members of the governing body, officers and consultants and through our Centre Approval process.

C2: Arrangements with Centres

We will:

- enter into a written agreement with each of our Centres,
- provide effective guidance to our Centres in respect of the parts of the delivery of units and qualifications which the Centre undertakes.

This will be managed through our Centre Approval process.

D3: Reviewing approach

- we will have due regard to all information, comments and complaints received from Users of our qualifications and units which suggests that a change of approach to the development, delivery and award of our qualifications and units would improve our performance. The information will be considered as part of our Self-Evaluation arrangements. Information about units owned by other organisations will be passed to the organisation that owns the unit.

D4: Responding to enquiries and complaints procedures

We will:

- answer accurately, fully and within reasonable time any reasonable enquiries received by Users about the qualifications and units we make available. We define reasonable time in our Service Statement as 10 working days from receipt of the enquiry,
- establish, maintain, publish and at all times comply with our written complaints procedure. Our written Complaints Policy and Procedure will be made available to all our Users.

D7: Management of the withdrawal of qualifications

- we will provide clear and accurate information about the withdrawal of qualifications and units we make available to any Learners, Centres, and purchasers of our qualifications and units who are likely to be affected by the withdrawal. We will aim to give a minimum of 6 months notice of withdrawal of our qualifications and units to prevent undue disadvantage to Learners. This will be managed through our Withdrawal of Qualifications and Units Policy and Procedure. We cannot give any guarantees about notice periods for withdrawal of units owned by other organisations.

E1: Qualifications having an objective and support

- where we propose to make available any new qualifications or units, we will first consult Users of our qualifications and units to ascertain whether there is sufficient support for the qualifications and units. This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

E2: Requirements on qualification titling

We will:

- ensure that our qualification and unit titles on the Register of Regulated Qualifications reflects the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of the qualifications and units,
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that our qualification and unit titles allow Users of our qualifications and units to identify similar qualifications and units which we make available or are made available by other awarding organisations,
- ensure that each qualification and unit we make available, or propose to make available, has a title which we use consistently in our advertising and in our communication with Users of the qualifications and units,

- ensure that the titles of the qualifications and units which we make available, or propose to make available, are not misleading to Users of our units and qualifications.

This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

E3: Publication of a qualification specification

- before first making available a particular qualification we will publish a specification for that qualification, we will ensure that the specification for the qualification is clear, accurate and communicates to the reasonable and informed person
 - (a) what the units and qualification requires of the Learner in respect of the details that are applicable to the units and qualification and
 - (b) how the units and qualification are fit for purpose.

This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

F1: Information on fees and features of a qualification

- on request we will provide to a potential purchaser clear information as to our fees for qualifications and units and services sufficiently far in advance to satisfy the reasonable planning requirements of the potential purchaser. This is set out in the Fees and Charges Policy.

F2: Packaging qualifications with other products or services

We will:

- if our qualifications and units are part of a package, inform purchasers prior to the time of purchase that our qualifications and units may be purchased separately or in a package. This is set out in the Fees and Charges Policy,
- from time to time seek comments from purchasers on whether the packaging of qualifications and units with the particular products or services is appropriate. This will be managed through our Review of Qualification and Units Policy and Handbook for the Review of Qualifications and Units.

F3: Invoicing

- we will ensure that our invoices in relation to the provision of qualifications, units and associated services are issued in a timely manner with a breakdown of our fees, as set out in our Invoicing Policy and Procedure.

G1: Setting the assessment

- we will produce a written document in relation to an assessment which sets out clear and unambiguous criteria against which Learners' levels of attainment will be differentiated. This will be managed through

our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

G3: Use of language and stimulus materials

- we will ensure that assessments for qualifications and units which we make available use only appropriate language and Stimulus Materials, if relevant. This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

G6: Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments

- we will have in place clear arrangements for making Reasonable Adjustments for our qualifications and units which will be made available to our Users. This will be managed through our Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure.

G7: Arrangements for Special Consideration

- we will have in place clear arrangements for Special Consideration for our qualifications and units which will be made available to our Users. This will be managed through our Access to Fair Assessment Policy and Procedure.

H1: Marking the assessment

- for each qualification and unit we make available we will have in place effective arrangements to ensure that, as far as possible, the criteria against which Learners' performance will be differentiated are understood by Assessors. This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

H2: Moderation where an assessment is marked by a Centre

- where evidence generated by a Learner in an assessment for our qualifications and units is marked by a Centre we will have in place clear and effective arrangements to undertake Moderation of the assessment as set out in our Centre Manual.

H5: Results for a qualification must be based on sufficient evidence

- where we set a rule as to the quantity or type of evidence generated by Learners which will be admissible in an assessment, we will ensure that the assessment makes the rule clear through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units,
- where we set a rule as to how the final mark for a qualification or unit will be calculated from marks for different assessments we will ensure that the qualification or unit makes the rule clear. This will be managed through our Development of Qualifications and Units Policy and Handbook for the Development of Qualifications and Units.

H6: Issuing Results

- in relation to any qualification we make available we will (a) publish expected timescales for the issue of those results and (b) issue results which are clear and readily capable of being understood by

Users of our qualifications and units. The timescale is set out in our Service Statement and we will check on understanding by Users through our self-evaluation arrangements.

I1: Appeals process

- we will make available to Users information on our Appeals Policy and Procedure to enable the results of assessments to be appealed.

14: Issuing certificates and replacement certificates

- in relation to the qualifications and units which we make available we will
 - o publish expected timescales for the issue of the issue of certificates and
 - o (b) issue only certificates which are clear and readily capable of being Understood by Users of our qualifications and units. The timescale is set out in our Service Statement and we will check on understanding by Users through our self-evaluation arrangements.

6. Review

We will review this policy and procedure every three years or more frequently if required, for example in response to User feedback, changes in practice, requirements of the Qualifications Regulators or other external agencies or changes in legislation.