



Sanctions Policy

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FutureQuals Sanctions Policy

Introduction to FutureQuals

FutureQuals is forward thinking, learner and customer-focussed, and committed to delivering inspiring learning and skills.

Our Values

“We are a Visionary, Supportive, Innovative and Professional Awarding Organisation that is committed to excellence”.

Our Vision

“We envisage a place in which every learner realises their full potential”

Our Mission

“To provide respected and valued qualifications and assessment to enable quality assured learning”

FutureQuals is recognised to deliver regulated qualifications by Ofqual in England, CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA Accreditation) and Qualifications Wales to offer a comprehensive and diverse range of qualifications across a wide range of vocational areas many of which are transferable across industries and sectors.

A full list of FutureQuals current qualifications can be accessed at <http://www.futurequalsquals.com>
We have developed a genuine understanding and insight into all types of educational organisations, which ensures that we are highly responsive to their needs. We offer a wide range of benefits and support for our learners, our approved centres, and their assessment and quality assurance teams.

FutureQuals offers a wide range of benefits and support for all of our educational products and services including:

- Vocational qualifications accredited by the UK regulators and recognised by employers, universities and professional bodies
- 24/7 online management systems for the registration of learners, ensuring highly efficient services and access to assessment and results.
- A diverse range of qualifications
- A flexible approach to assessment
- A network of professionals who examine and quality assure our regulated qualifications and assessments
- Regular updates on new developments in education and training
- Unrivalled customer service support and extensive guidance materials

Policy Scope

FutureQuals has a responsibility to protect the interests of learners completing our qualifications to ensure that centres deliver qualifications in accordance with our requirements and standards. We also have a responsibility to the UK qualifications regulators to maintain the standard of our qualifications.

This policy outlines the sanctions that FutureQuals may impose on centres that fail to meet delivery requirements and the standards we set for the delivery and assessment of our qualifications. The policy is used by FutureQuals staff and External Quality Assurers to ensure the application of sanctions is consistent.

Centres and learners should familiarise themselves with contents of this policy and the implications should there be a failure to comply with FutureQuals requirements.

Approach to Sanctions

The purpose of this policy is to set out a range of sanctions that can be imposed on a centre, centre staff and learners that are suspected of or have been proven to have not adhered to FutureQuals rules and requirements. The level of sanctions imposed will depend on the seriousness of the situation, the performance record and the level of a centre's non-compliance.

FutureQuals approach to how it supports its centres is set out the Centre Manual and compliance with this document is checked by our team of External Quality Assurers (EQA's) during verification visits, as part of other quality assurance monitoring we undertake and through our awarding activities.

The aim of any sanction imposed will be to minimise the risk to the integrity of all aspects of our awarding functions, the standard of our qualifications and the risk to learner's interests.

In some cases, imposing a sanction will enable us to investigate suspected malpractice and/or maladministration whilst maintaining the integrity of the qualification involved in an allegation. Please refer directly to the FutureQuals Malpractice and Maladministration Policy should you require further information on the processes that relate to the investigation of malpractice and/or maladministration.

Types of sanctions and how we would apply them

For the purposes of this policy and to ensure that we impose sanctions consistently, this policy provides examples of circumstances and situations that may lead to a sanction and indicates the level of sanction that could be imposed. We will review each potential case on an individual basis and therefore this is not an exhaustive list.

If an EQA determines that a centre needs extra assistance, we may identify actions that it needs to complete and we will work with a centre to prevent any situations arising that would merit the application of a sanction. However, if a centre fails to complete the actions or, if an EQA identifies something further that would threaten the integrity of FutureQuals awards, this could result in a sanction being imposed.

There are a number of situations which could result in a sanction being imposed and when we impose sanctions, we do this by applying a level that relates to the type of sanction.

Level 2	Removal of direct claims status
Level 3	Suspension of registration and/or certification
Level 4	Temporary suspension or permanent withdrawal of centre approval for specific qualifications
Level 5	Temporary suspension or permanent withdrawal of centre approval

In addition to sanctions that are imposed specifically on centres, where we suspect, or have proven evidence, that a serious malpractice and/or maladministration incident has taken place by a member of centre staff or a learner, we may place a temporary or permanent sanction on that member of staff/learner.

In the following pages of this policy, you will find examples and descriptions of situations that may arise and the indicative sanction that could be imposed as a result. The list of sanctions is not exhaustive and each case will be reviewed and dealt with on an individual basis.

To assist and support you, in Appendix One at the rear of this document, you will find a list of examples that could result in a sanction being imposed. This list is not exhaustive.

When a sanction is recommended we will inform you by telephone (or face to face during a visit) providing an explanation of the type of sanction that has been applied or will be applied and the reason why. The verbal confirmation will be followed up by a written notification either by email or letter.

If we require you to take any action, we will outline what it is you need to do to resolve the matter and the deadline in which it must be completed. Any sanction imposed will remain in place until we are reassured that there has been satisfactory resolution and any potential or adverse effect has been mitigated.

FutureQuals recognises the duty of care it has to protect the interests of its learners and, when imposing a sanction, considers the impact carefully. Where necessary we will take steps to ensure that learners are supported during the period a sanction is imposed.

If the sanction has been imposed because you are not responding to communications or correspondence from FutureQuals, we will take reasonable steps to inform you of the sanction.

You have the right to appeals against a sanction that we impose and information on how to do this can be found in our published Appeals Policy.

Sanctions specific to Centre's

Area of Concern	Indicative Sanction
Failure to maintain standards in assessment and/or internal quality assurance processes	Removal of Direct Claim Status
Non-compliance with FutureQuals requirements in relation to registration and/or certification	Suspension of registration and/or certification
Non-compliance with FutureQuals requirements in relation to online, offline, paper-based and controlled assessments	Suspension of registration and/or certification including the release of results and any other specific entry requirements
Non-compliance with regulations relating to registration, certification and external/controlled assessments	Suspension of registration or certification (this may also include results and/or entries for external assessments)
Failure to comply with the FutureQuals Centre Contract	Temporary centre suspension or permanent withdrawal of centre approval
Failure to communicate with FutureQuals	Temporary centre suspension or permanent withdrawal of centre approval
Failure to co-operate with investigations undertaken by or on behalf of FutureQuals	Temporary centre suspension or permanent withdrawal of centre approval

Sanctions Specific to Centre Staff

Area of Concern	Indicative Sanction
Centre staff failure to maintain standards and/or to meet FutureQuals requirements in assessment and/or internal quality	Temporary or permanent suspension from involvement in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of

<p>assurance processes including online tests and external or controlled assessments</p>	<p>FutureQuals qualifications, online, offline, paper based, external or controlled assessments.</p> <p>Imposition of special conditions for a staff member's involvement in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of FutureQuals qualifications, online tests and external or controlled assessments.</p> <p>We may also require that a staff member (s) commit to training (at a centres cost) as directed by FutureQuals before he/she is permitted to be involved in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of FutureQuals qualifications, online, offline, paper based, external or controlled assessments.</p>
<p>Failure to adhere to FutureQuals invigilation rules and requirements</p>	<p>Temporary or permanent suspension from involvement in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of FutureQuals qualifications, online, offline, paper based, external or controlled assessments.</p> <p>Imposition of special conditions for a staff member's involvement in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of FutureQuals qualifications, online tests and external or controlled assessments.</p> <p>We may also require that a staff member (s) commit to training (at a centres cost) as directed by FutureQuals before he/she is permitted to be involved in the administration/delivery/assessment/verification/invigilation of FutureQuals qualifications, online, offline, paper based, external or controlled assessments.</p>

Sanctions specific to Learners

Area of Concern	Indicative Sanction
<p>Under the broad classification of cheating:</p> <p>Plagiarism of any nature Collusion Falsification or fabrication of assessment evidence Any form of impersonation Any form of cheating to gain an advantage</p>	<p>Barring a learner from registering on a qualification at any centre for a set period of time.</p> <p>Temporary and/or permanent disqualification from the qualification(s) involved or wider disqualification.</p>

	Disallowing all or part of a learner's marks for that specific test or assessment. FutureQuals may require the learner to be re-entered for an online test or external/controlled assessment that would be invigilated by an invigilator appointed by FutureQuals at a cost to the centre.
Failure to obey invigilator or assessor instructions during an assessment or test.	Disallowing all or part of a learner's marks for that specific online, offline, paper based, external or controlled assessments. FutureQuals may require the learner to be re-entered for a test or assessment that would be invigilated by an invigilator appointed by FutureQuals at a cost to the centre.

Continuous Improvement

This policy is subject to a three-year review cycle, or earlier should any feedback or concern be brought to the attention of FutureQuals, to ensure it remains fit for purpose and the process and its outcomes are deliverable.

It is also reviewed as part of FutureQuals continuous improvement monitoring through its annual self-assessment arrangements.

Contacting Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd

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Future is registered under the Data Protection act and handles all data in accordance with the required procedures of the Act.

Appendix One

Entry in an Action Plan

The below information is for guidance and provides examples that are not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with the policy information for sanctions specific to Centre's, centre staff and learners. A sanction may be applied as a preventative measure to protect the interests of learners and potential learners, a breach of contractual arrangements with FutureQuals or failure to communicate with FutureQuals.

Entry in an Action Plan

Whilst an action is not a sanction, below you will find examples of circumstances that may lead an External Quality Assurer to require an action plan to be put in place at a centre to mitigate any concerns highlighted during normal quality assurance activities. It should be noted that in some circumstances the below could result in a sanction being imposed if any actions put learners at risk.

- Centre's aims, policies and assessment practices, and responsibilities of personnel are not clear or well understood, are not available or are insufficient
- Communication within the assessment and verification team and/or with FutureQuals is ineffective
- Feedback from assessors and internal quality assurance personnel demonstrates a lack of understanding of centre policies and responsibilities of personnel
- Insufficient managerial resources
- Changes to personnel of the assessment and verification team are not notified to FutureQuals
- Changes that affect the centres ability to meet FutureQuals requirements have not been notified to FutureQuals
- Assessors/internal quality assurance personnel do not have adequate development in line with identified needs
- Range of assessment methods is insufficient to encourage access
- Insufficient qualified assessors
- Unit certification is not made available to learners
- There is inadequate monitoring or review of procedures
- There is inadequate evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of qualification provision
- No appeals procedure for learners
- There is inadequate assessment planning/review with learners
- Internal verification procedures and activities not clearly documented, sufficient and/or not available and do not meet FutureQuals requirements
- Queries are not resolved or recorded
- Information, advice and guidance have not been provided to learners and consequently are not aware of their rights and responsibilities
- Equipment and accommodation do not comply with health and safety acts (dependent on the severity of the issue/concern this may escalate to a Level 2 sanction)

Removal of direct claims status- Level 2

When this sanction is imposed, claims for certification must be authorised by the EQA and close scrutiny of the integrity of assessment decisions required. The below list of examples is not exhaustive.

- Previously agreed corrective measures relating to an action plan are not implemented or addressed
- Assessors have insufficient time, resources, expertise or authority to perform their role
- Decisions of unqualified assessors have not been monitored or countersigned by qualified assessors
- Insufficient internal verifiers

- Records of assessment outcomes are insufficient to allow audit of assessment
- Lack of standardisation activities to ensure consistency of assessment decisions
- Information and recording systems do not enable learner's achievements to be monitored and reviewed in relation to diversity and equality and/or monitoring and review does not take place (dependent on the severity of the issue/concern this may escalate to a Level 3 sanction).
- Equipment and accommodation do not comply with health and safety legislation
- No RPL arrangements (where applicable)
- Malpractice and/or maladministration taking place

Suspension of Registration/Certification – Level 3

In some circumstances the examples below could also constitute a higher level sanction dependent on the risk posed to the integrity of assessment decisions and FutureQuals awards.

- Previously agreed corrective measures relating to level 2 non-compliance are not implemented or addressed
- The centre fails to provide access to requested records, information, learners and staff
- The centre fails to assist FutureQuals or the regulators in carrying out monitoring or investigation activities
- Records of assessment show serious anomalies
- The internal quality assurance process has not identified remedial action to address serious anomalies in assessment
- Assessment processes disadvantages learners
- Learner feedback indicates that their development needs are not matched to the qualifications requirements
- Learner assessment requirements are not identified and/or considered
- Lack of or insufficient materials/equipment/facilities to support learners with particular requirements
- Assessment methods are not valid and consequently assessment does not meet required standards
- Assessment decisions are not consistent and/or unfair (assessor/assessment practice prevents learners achieving)
- Assessed evidence is not the authentic work of learners
- Certification claims made before all the requirements of assessment are satisfied
- No qualified and/or occupationally competent internal quality assurance personnel
- Malpractice and/or maladministration taking place
- Non-compliance with FutureQuals requirements in relation to online assessments
- Non-compliance with regulations relating to registration, certification and external assessments
- Failure to adhere to FutureQuals invigilation rules and requirements
- Failure to maintain standards and/or to meet FutureQuals requirements in assessment and/or internal quality assurance processes including online tests and external or controlled assessments

Withdrawal of centre approval for specific qualifications – Level 4

When this sanction is imposed, there may be an irretrievable breakdown in the management and quality assurance of specific qualifications by the centre. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of the qualifications which result in an on-going failure to meet the core requirements for the conduct of assessment
- Systemic malpractice and/or maladministration taking place
- Previously agreed corrective measures relating to a level 3 non-compliance have not been implemented or addressed.

Withdrawal of centre approval – Level 5

When this sanction is imposed, there is an irretrievable breakdown in the management and quality assurance of all qualifications by the centre.

- Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of all qualifications
- Systemic malpractice and/or maladministration taking place
- Previously agreed corrective measures relating to a level 4 non-compliance have not been implemented or addressed

FutureQuals[™]

INSPIRING LEARNING AND SKILLS

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