

## Welcome

The IAT is recognised as an Awarding Body by Ofqual and offers qualifications that encourage animal technologists to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes so the highest standards of animal welfare and good science are maintained. Our products are flexible enough to be delivered in a range of settings, from small providers to large colleges, in the workplace, classroom, or remotely. We pride ourselves on offering the best possible customer service, and are always on hand to help if you have any questions. Our organisational structure and business processes enable us to be able to respond quickly to the needs of customers to develop new products that meet their specific needs.

## Introduction

This document is intended for centre staff and provides details on everything you will need to know about why and how we apply sanctions. The purpose of this policy is to:

- set out what actions we will take when issues of non-compliance arise at our approved centres
- set out how we will enforce the terms of our centre agreement
- provide guidance about the meaning of sanctions and how to comply with them

## How to implement the policy

### Applying sanctions

If you follow our policies and procedures and address actions set by our external verifiers/ moderators and quality managers then it is unlikely that sanctions will be applied. However, we do know that things can go wrong and we urge you to get in touch with any problems, as soon as possible, so that we can help you get things right.

Sometimes problems can occur at centres that mean we need to apply sanctions in order to ensure that the centre returns to compliance within the terms of our centre agreement, to ensure the integrity of our qualifications/diplomas and certification and maintain our compliance with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition and other licensing criteria.

We will use all available information that may lead to sanctions being applied from a range of sources, including members of our team, including notifications from our regulators, from other Awarding Organisations or from whistle blowers.

Level one and level two sanctions will be applied by external quality managers, external verifiers or moderators and will usually result in a comment in a report and the agreement of an action plan.

Higher level sanctions will be applied by the director of quality and operations. We will inform you when we have applied a higher-level sanction and what you must do to rectify the situation. In most cases once you have rectified the situation the sanction will be removed, however in some cases if a high-level sanction has been applied we may instead reduce the level of sanction applied.

The table below outlines our sanctions with a rationale for application. A list of examples of situations that may lead to sanctions is at the end of this document.

Level	Rationale	Sanction
1	Some non-compliance with centre recognition criteria but no threat to the integrity of assessment decisions	Comment and action point in external verifier/moderator or quality reviewer report
2	Some doubt about the integrity of assessment decisions	Greater scrutiny of assessor/internal verifier decisions and temporary practice suspension of certification for specific qualifications/ diplomas/units/learners or areas of provision
3	Loss of integrity of assessment decisions, exam material compromised, invalid claims for certification (eg maladministration) Non-payment of invoices	Temporary suspension of registration for specific qualifications/diplomas/units or areas of provision AND/OR removal of Direct Claims Status (if applicable) and claims for certification must be authorised by the external verifier
4	Breakdown in communication, management or quality assurance of specific qualifications/units	Withdrawal of IAT centre recognition for specific qualifications/diplomas/units or areas of provision
5	Breakdown in communication, management or quality assurance of all qualifications/units	Withdrawal of IAT centre recognition for all qualifications/diplomas/units

NB. Lower level sanctions not acted on / actions set not adhered to / corrective measures consistently not put in place over a period of time will result in a higher-level sanction being applied.

## Action you need to take

If we inform you that a sanction has been applied we will tell you what action you need to take. For example if we don't approve a recommendation because you have not assessed work consistently, the external verifier/moderator will set an action with a deadline on their report for you to reassess and internally verify the work before presenting it for external verification/moderation again. The sanction set in this instance would be level 2 'temporary suspension of certification for specific qualifications/diplomas/units/learners or areas of provision'.

When imposing sanctions on a centre we will carefully consider the impact this may have on learners who may be affected through no fault of their own. If the sanction applied leads to non-certification we will take steps to ensure that the learners affected are appropriately supported, for example by signposting them to other centres or making arrangements for them to retake their assessment or complete their Diploma. We expect your full cooperation in any issue that affects your learners.

## Appealing a decision

If you disagree with a decision made by us in respect of this policy then you have the right of appeal. Appeals must be submitted to the Chair of Board of Education Policy who will acknowledge within 5 working days. Full details about our appeals process is described in our enquiries and appeals policy.

## Reviewing and removing sanctions

The sanction will remain in place until:

- you have addressed the issue to our satisfaction
- we have completed an investigation and concluded that there is no longer a threat to the integrity of our qualifications, our ability to effectively award certificates or our compliance with our regulator
- your appeal has been upheld

The level of sanction applied may be increased if:

- you do not address the issue
- we uncover further issues as a result of our investigations

In some cases we may reduce the level of sanction applied rather than remove the sanction in order to ensure that there is no longer a threat to the integrity of our qualifications, our ability to effectively award certificates or our compliance with our regulators.

## Notification to other Awarding Organisation and our Regulators

We have a duty to inform our regulators if we have reason to believe the issues identified that have led to us applying a sanction could lead to an Adverse Effect. We are also required to inform other Awarding Organisations where we have reason to believe that the identified issues could affect them.

## Examples of issues that can lead to sanctions being applied Level 1

Centre agreement category	Issue
Assessment	Guidance on the assessment of learners with particular requirements is not followed
	Assessment scheme has not been implemented correctly
	Recognition of Prior Learning not effectively applied (RPL)
Compliance	Centre's use of our logo does not comply with our guidance
	Requested evidence for centre recognition (eg staff CVs) not supplied
Quality Assurance	Candidates are not aware of their rights and responsibilities eg lack of appeals procedure for candidates
	Centre staff not fully aware of policies and procedures
	Centre's assessment processes are not clear or not understood by assessors
	Internal verification procedure not correctly implemented
	There is inadequate monitoring or review of procedures
Records	Accurate records of learners, qualifications and achievements not maintained or retained
	Course, qualification and learner registrations are not submitted in line with deadlines
	ULN/Enrolment number not obtained/used
Resources	Appropriate resources required for delivery and assessment not in place
	Communication within the assessment team is not effective
	Communication with the moderation team and/or with the awarding body is not effective
	Equipment and accommodation do not comply with health and safety acts

## Level 2

Centre agreement category	Issue
Assessment	Assessment decisions are not consistent
	Assessment scheme continues to be incorrectly applied
Quality Assurance	Appropriate staff and policies detailed in centre recognition still not in place
	Approved internal verifier has approved a claim outside their designated curriculum area
	Centre does not provide samples for standardisation when requested
	Unit specifications not fully understood or adhered to
Records	Learner registration does not follow our requirements
	Records are insufficient to allow audit of assessment
Resources	Any specialist assessor/internal verification requirements have not been met
	Assessors have insufficient time, resources or authority to perform their role
	Insufficient assessors or internal verifiers
	Specified required resources for delivery and assessment not in place (including moderation requirements)
Compliance	Standards in partner organisations are inconsistent with standards in the centre
	Lower level sanction has not been adequately addressed

## Level 3

Centre agreement category	Issue
Assessment	Assessment decisions are unfair and/or doesn't give due regard to equality
	Grading decisions are invalid
	Assessment does not meet national standards
Quality Assurance	Certification claims made before all the requirements of assessment are satisfied
	Records of assessment show serious anomalies
	Certification claims have been made by personnel who do not hold appropriate status
Compliance	Assessed work is not the authentic work of candidates / learners not correctly identified
	Centre fails to provide access to requested information, records, candidates work, candidates and staff within reasonable timeframe
	Exam material compromised (eg not stored correctly)
	Non-payment of invoices
	Lower level sanction has not been adequately addressed

## Level 4

Centre agreement category	Issue
Assessment	Ongoing failure to meet the requirements for reliable, robust assessment
Malpractice	Investigation and action planning arising from malpractice/ maladministration is not an effective preventative measure
	Significant malpractice/maladministration identified
Quality Assurance	Centre not complying with requests for monitoring and investigation
	Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of a specific programme(s)
	Standards in partner organisations are significantly inconsistent with standards in the centre
Records	Significant concerns over storage and use of learner information and data
Compliance	Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of some IAT programmes
	Lower level sanction has not been adequately addressed

## Level 5

Centre agreement category	Issue
Malpractice	Centre not assisting with investigation into malpractice/ maladministration
	Significant malpractice/maladministration identified
Withdrawal	Centre not following withdrawal process correctly
Compliance	Centre does not comply with conditions of recognition
	Lower level sanctions not acted on / actions set not adhered to / corrective measures consistently not put in place over a period of time
	Significant faults in the management and quality assurance of all IAT programmes