

- Leadership
- Skills
- Foundation

Sanctions Policy



Sanctions Policy

The scope of this policy

This policy gives guidance on how and when the Leadership Skills Foundation can apply sanctions on centres that deliver our qualifications and awards.

The policy will come into force when a centre has failed to meet aspects of our delivery and/or assessment requirements, the standards required by the regulatory authorities and/or are in breach of our terms and conditions or other associated policies.

In such situations, actions will be set and appropriate sanctions will be placed on a centre to ensure that the risk to further non-compliance is mitigated against.

Please refer to the Centre Standards Manual and the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy for guidance on actions set for centres.

The responsibility of the centre

All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure centre staff involved in the management, administration, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications or awards are made aware of this policy, its contents and the possible implications on the centre if sanctions were to be applied.

Our approach to applying sanctions on centres

Sanctions that may be placed on a centre

The Leadership Skills Foundation uses five levels of sanction to determine the sanction that can be applied to a centre. The following table outlines the potential sanctions that may be placed on a centre for each of the five level of sanctions identified. The examples in the table are not exhaustive nor are they sequential.

Sanction level	Example of when the sanction level can be placed on a centre	Example of sanctions that can be applied
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are immediate actions to be completed following the completion of a quality assurance engagement with a centre. The centre has made certification claims before learner assessment has been completed and/or verified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withholding of certificates. Action plan for addressing immediate actions.
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The centre is not responsive to regulatory communications from the Leadership Skills Foundation (e.g. emails requesting a quality assurance engagement). The centre does not act to address actions set as part of quality assurance engagements. There is no centre manager, or other required roles, in place at the centre. Reasons for lower level sanction have not been addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withholding of certificates. Suspension of ability to apply for new courses. Suspension of ability to register new learners. Medium risk given to the centre. Action plan created for addressing actions and maintaining future compliance. If applicable, suspension of 'centre of excellence' status. Non-compliance fee invoiced.
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Leadership Skills Foundation significant concerns about the future compliance of a centre's delivery and assessment. Access to course evidence or centre premises has been refused by the centre. Suspected malpractice/maladministration at the centre or with learners/delegates – low risk of significant adverse effects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withholding of certificates. Suspension of ability to apply for new courses. Suspension of ability to register new learners. Action and support plan created for the centre to address future risk of non-compliance. High risk status given to the centre. Qualifications regulator informed. If applicable, removal of 'centre of excellence' status.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliance or investigation fee invoiced (could include both standard and variable fees).
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected malpractice/maladministration at the centre or with learners/delegates – medium to high risk of significant adverse effects. • Proven maladministration at the centre that has significant adverse effect on learner/delegates and/or the validity of the qualification. • Proven malpractice where the centre is able to give the Leadership Skills Foundation confidence that it will not be repeated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withholding of certificates. • Suspension of ability to apply for new courses. • Suspension of ability to register new learners. • Action and support plan created for the centre to eliminate the risk of future non-compliance. Directly supported by a named Leadership Skills Foundation colleague. • Approval of future courses required. • Relevant training to be repeated by centre staff (as required). • High risk status given to the centre. • Other awarding organisations informed. • Qualifications regulator informed. • Any other appropriate authorities informed. • If applicable, removal of ‘centre of excellence’ status. • Fees relating to the investigation invoiced (could include both standard and variable fees).
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant adverse effects have occurred through breach of terms and conditions of being a centre. • Proven malpractice where the centre is unable to give the Leadership Skills Foundation confidence that it will not be repeated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action and withdrawal plan created for the centre to eliminate the risk of future non-compliance. Directly supported by a named Leadership Skills Foundation colleague. • Removal of centre approval and termination of agreement with the centre. • Other awarding organisations informed. • Qualifications regulator informed. • Any other appropriate authorities informed. • If applicable, removal of ‘centre of excellence’ status. • Fees relating to the investigation and withdrawal invoiced (could include both standard and variable fees).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees relating to additional assessment costs or transferring of learners to other centres.
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Please note that where the process to imposing a sanction and placing the sanction itself involve additional engagements with the centre, fees will be invoiced to the centre to cover any associated fees and expenses. Please refer to the fees section of the Centre Manual.

Applying sanctions

When placing a sanction on a centre the Leadership Skills Foundation will ensure there is clear evidence of non-compliance by the centre and/or a sufficient rationale for the sanction to be imposed.

Normally the centre will be given an opportunity to address or avoid the area(s) of non-compliance prior to a sanction being placed on the centre.

Any sanction placed on a centre will be at a level appropriate to the severity of the situation, e.g.:

- the severity of the breach of terms and conditions;
- the level and track-record of the centre's non-compliance;
- the risk to the interests of learners/delegates;
- the level of risk to the integrity and/or validity of our qualifications;
- the level of risk to public confidence in our qualifications.

The following outlines the Leadership Skills Foundation colleagues that are able to apply each level of sanction on a centre:

- Levels 1 and 2 – a member of the Quality Assurance team, typically as a result of unsatisfactory quality assurance activities.
- Levels 3 and 4 – the Head of Accreditation and Standards, typically during or as a result of investigations suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration.
- Level 5 – the Head of Accreditation and Standards and the Responsible Officer, typically as a result of proven malpractice that cannot be mitigated against recurring in the future.

The timing of applying a sanction will depend on a number of factors like those identified above. For levels 3 to 5, sanctions may be placed on centres with immediate effect.

If the Leadership Skills Foundation decides to place a level 5 sanction on a centre, we will communicate the decision and implement the sanction in accordance with the arrangements outlined in the Centre Withdrawal Policy.

Notifying a centre of the decision to apply a sanction

The Leadership Skills Foundation will inform all relevant personnel at a centre of the placing of a sanction on the centre.

For sanction level 1, the centre manager will be informed of the sanction through the communication of the quality assurance engagement report outcomes.

For sanction levels 2 to 5, the centre manager will be informed through email. A copy of this email will also be sent to the head of centre (e.g. the head teacher, managing director, etc.).

All notifications will provide the centre with:

- the details of the sanction;
- justification for the sanction being placed on the centre
- the actions that need to be addressed, and the timelines they need to be addressed in, before the level of sanction can be amended or removed;
- the steps that the Leadership Skills Foundation will take to mitigate against any current or future risk.

Appealing against the decision to apply a sanction

If a centre disagrees with the decision to place a sanction on the centre, they should appeal in accordance with Appeals Policy.

Policy review arrangements

The Leadership Skills Foundation will review the policy as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to centre, learner/delegate and third party feedback or requests from, or good practice guidance issued by, the regulatory authorities

Contact us

If you would like to feedback any views, please contact the Leadership Skills Foundation via policies@leadershipskillsfoundation.org or in writing to Leadership Skills Foundation, Loughton Lodge, Bradwell Road, Milton Keynes, MK8 9LA.



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