

Sanctions

Policy and procedures

Contents

Sanctions policy

Effective from:	September 2023
For the attention of:	Heads of Centre / ASDAN QA

Policy owner	Policy approver
Compliance Manager	Head: Quality and Qualifications

Review history		
Date	Version	Reviewed by
February 2015	Draft created and approved	Head: Quality Assurance and Qualifications
February 201	Updated	Head: Quality Assurance and Qualifications
February 2021	Updated	Compliance Manager
February 2022	New format adopted	Compliance Officer
October 2022	QA Review added to policy	Quality Assurance Officer
September 2023	Version 6 – effective from and next review dates updated to reflect policy review schedule.	Compliance Manager
Next review: August 2025	To be reviewed by Compliance Manager and approved by Head: Quality and Qualifications.	

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1 Introduction

As an awarding organisation, regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA, ASDAN is required to ensure that all centres registered to deliver qualifications fully meet ASDAN's terms and conditions and our Centre Agreement.

If at any stage a centre is found to be not fully meeting ASDAN's requirements, steps will be taken to support the centre. If this is not successful due to set actions not being met, or if there is a threat to the integrity of assessment decisions, then sanctions will be applied.

Issues identified during external quality assurance activities are usually supported by an action plan, detailing the issues to be addressed, by whom and when.

Major issues or continued failure to address actions may result in sanctions against the centre.

2 Policy

The purpose of ASDAN's sanctions policy is to set out the range of sanctions that will be applied to centres that are suspected or have been proved to have contravened ASDAN regulations.

The aim of applying sanctions is to:

- Minimise the risk to the integrity of all aspects of ASDAN's awarding functions, specifically the awarding of results and certificates
- Protect the interests of learners who may be adversely affected by a centre's action or failure to act in line with ASDAN's requirements
- Allow ASDAN time to investigate incidences of suspected maladministration/malpractice while maintaining the integrity of the qualification involved

This policy has been written to support ASDAN's policy on malpractice and maladministration, and other instances where a centre fails to comply with ASDAN's requirements.

2.1 Communication of the policy

It is important that all staff involved in the assessment and quality assurance of ASDAN qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy.

2.2 Review of the policy

The policy is reviewed annually and revised as necessary in relation to feedback from centres, changes in ASDAN procedures, or changes in regulation or legislation.

3 Examples of issues and sanctions

To ensure transparency and consistency of the application of sanctions, this policy gives examples of situations that could lead to a sanction and indicates the level of sanction that may be applied. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and each case will be reviewed on an individual basis.

2.2 Examples of issues and sanctions

This list is not exhaustive.

Issue	Possible Sanctions	Possible Further Action
Late candidate registration, additions or withdrawals or cancellation of moderation	Additional fees	Further instances will result in the centre being audited
Inaccuracies in candidate submissions for external moderation, so as to compromise the requested sample	Additional fees and moderation suspended pending additional sampling and/or further information	Centre selected for audit
Non-completion of Centre Approval process within agreed timeframe	Centre unable to access moderation	Qualification registration removed
Failure to maintain standards in relation to assessment and internal moderation (eg inconsistent assessment decisions, poor assessment practice, insufficient internal moderation)	Centre selected for audit	Centre unable to access moderation Qualification registration removed Centre Approval removed
Continued failure to cooperate with ASDAN request (eg for information or to allow auditor to undertake a centre visit)	Removal of Centre Approval	Removal of ASDAN registration status

3 Examples of issues and sanctions

Issue	Possible Sanctions	Possible Further Action
Evidence of malpractice or serious irregularity	Centre unable to access moderation Action plan and monitoring Withdrawal of certificates	Removal of ASDAN registration status Regulators/other Awarding Organisations notified Suspension of staff from involvement in specified qualification/s Disqualification of candidates from further moderation
Non-payment of invoice	Certificates withheld Action taken in line with ASDAN's invoicing policy	Legal action taken to recover the debt
Quality assurance actions not complete	Certificates withheld Centre unable to access moderation	Downgrade of centre membership to Programmes plus membership

4 Sanctions procedures for centres

4.1 Communication of necessary sanctions

Situations where a sanction may be required are identified during a variety of quality assurance activities, including centre moderation visits and audit visits.

Where the appropriate sanction is the application of additional fees and/or the suspension of an on-going moderation, centres will be invoiced for the relevant amount, and an explanatory email sent.

In other circumstances centres will be notified in writing of the possibility of a sanction being applied, explaining the type of sanction and the reasons for applying it. A copy of ASDAN's Sanctions Policy is included in the notification and the centre's named single point of accountability is copied in.

4.2 Actions required by centres

Any action required to be taken by the centre will be outlined in the communication, with an indication of relevant timescales.

Failure to address the issue in a timely fashion will result in the sanction being applied. Centres will be informed of their right to appeal against any sanction imposed.

If an investigation is required, e.g. because an allegation of malpractice has been made in relation to any aspect of a centre's delivery or assessment of an ASDAN's qualification, this will be completed in line with **ASDAN's Malpractice and maladministration policy**. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from the ASDAN website: asdan.org.uk/policies-regulations-and-centre-guidance

4.3 Candidates

The impact on candidates will be carefully considered when imposing sanctions upon a centre and ASDAN will take any appropriate steps to support candidates through this time.

4.4 Appeals

Centres have the right to appeal a sanction that is applied. Appeals must be made in writing stating the grounds on which the appeal is based. Please refer to the **ASDAN Enquiries and appeals policy**. A copy of the policy can be downloaded from the ASDAN website: asdan.org.uk/policies-regulations-and-centre-guidance

5 Next steps

5.1 Reviewing the decision to impose a sanction

Sanctions will remain in place until such time that:

- The issue has been satisfactorily resolved
- An appeal from a centre has been successfully upheld

Please note that the sanction applied may be reduced as a result of the above but ASDAN reserves the right to maintain a sanction to protect the integrity of our awarding functions.

Likewise, as a result of information received as part of any investigation, a higher sanction than originally communicated may be applied. If this is the case, the process outlined in Section 4 will be followed.

Centres will be contacted in writing to notify of any change to an applied sanction.

5.2 Follow up actions

If a sanction is imposed on a centre, ASDAN may notify other Awarding Organisations and/or the Regulators. It will be made clear in all such notifications whether the sanction has been imposed because of a suspected or alleged issue, or because of a proven issue.

Records of sanctions will be retained confidentially within ASDAN's centre file. Sanctions applied will be reported on at regular Quality Assurance Managers meetings, to regional managers and Trustees.

6 Associated policies and procedures

Document name	Responsible person
Centre Approval Policy	Qualification Manager
Certification Policy	Centre Support Manager
Customer Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy	Centre Support Manager
Enquiries and Appeals Policy	Compliance Manager
Malpractice and Maladministration Policy	Compliance Manager
Whistleblowing Policy	Compliance Manager
QA Review Process for Centres	Quality Assurance Officer



© ASDAN September 2023 | www.asdan.org.uk
Wainbrook House, Hudds Vale Road, St George, Bristol BS5 7HY
t: 0117 941 1126 | e: info@asdان.org.uk |    @ASDANeducation