



Withdrawal Policy

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF QUALIFICATIONS

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to state the procedure to be followed by NCFE and its registered centres in the event of a qualification or unit(s) being withdrawn.

NCFE will ensure that any qualification withdrawal will be managed with the interests of NCFE's candidates and centres foremost.

NCFE will do this by ensuring centres have sufficient notice to make entries and certifications, and by giving guidance on alternative qualifications, where necessary.

NCFE will comply with any requirements communicated to it by the regulatory authorities in regard to the withdrawal of qualifications.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers the following:

- All qualifications offered by NCFE.
- All NCFE staff and associates, qualification regulators, centre staff and candidates who use NCFE qualifications.

3. REASONS FOR WITHDRAWING A QUALIFICATION

There are several reasons why a qualification might be withdrawn by NCFE, including:

- lack of demand for the qualification
- qualification no longer meeting regulatory requirements
- qualification subject matter no longer relevant
- revision of a level assigned to a qualification

A registered centre may also withdraw a programme leading to an NCFE qualification. The reasons for this might include:

- lack of demand for the programme which leads to NCFE qualification
- NCFE imposing sanctions on a centre
- withdrawal of the qualification by NCFE

4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGISTERED CENTRES

In the event of a centre ceasing to operate, it must take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of the candidates. It must also notify each of the awarding organisations it is approved by.

Centres must inform NCFE of any intention to cease to be a provider or withdraw provision of any of NCFE's regulated qualifications. Centres with such intentions must ensure that candidates are not disadvantaged through such a decision and are allowed to claim unit/credit certification to which they may be entitled.

When a centre withdraws from providing an NCFE qualification (whether through its own choice or not) it must:

- ensure candidates and potential candidates are informed in a timely fashion
- ensure the interests of candidates already entered for the qualification have been provided with support to find alternative options for them to complete the qualification
- not make any misrepresentations in any marketing material regarding qualifications that have been withdrawn
- notify NCFE of any candidates who may be affected by the withdrawal
- comply with any written instructions by NCFE with regard to the withdrawal of its qualifications.

5. NCFE'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO CENTRES

In the event that the centre withdraws from its role in delivering a qualification, NCFE will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of the candidates.

When notified by a centre of its intention to cease delivery of an NCFE qualification, for whatever reason, NCFE will confirm with the centre their arrangements for allowing candidates who have already embarked on a course leading to that qualification to complete it and receive due certification.

We will ensure that any current external moderation, certification claims and financial transactions are completed prior to de-registration, and we will provide assistance to the centre in finding alternative provision for candidates where necessary, to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.

Should NCFE decide to withdraw a qualification, we will give all centres registered for the qualification reasonable notice of the decision, to allow all candidates to complete the qualification where possible.

6. NCFE'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE REGULATORS

In line with General Conditions of Recognition published by the regulators in England and Northern Ireland, NCFE will withdraw a qualification at the point of time when it first:

- ceases to register learners for the qualification
- ceases to deliver or award that qualification to learners
- surrenders its recognition in respect of that qualification, or

- has its recognition withdrawn by the regulators in respect of that qualification

In Wales, NCFE will withdraw a qualification when it first:

- ceases to register learners for the qualification
- ceases to deliver or award that qualification to learners
- has its designation revoked by Qualifications Wales in respect of that qualification
- surrenders its recognition in respect of that qualification, or
- has its recognition withdrawn by Qualifications Wales in respect of that qualification

All qualifications will be subject to annual review as part of the business planning process and as part of the quality assurance self-assessment and evaluation process. These reviews will consider, for each qualification, issues such as:

- the number of centres registered
- the number of candidates registered
- the number of candidates receiving certification
- the income/expenditure from the operation
- problems arising from the delivery, assessment and/or quality assurance of the qualification
- enquiries and appeals
- potential for, or actual, irregularities (especially malpractice)
- the future demand in the light of a changing national situation
- the development of a new qualification

Discussions on any of the above issues may result in the decision by NCFE Senior Managers and/or Trustees to withdraw the qualification from national availability. In this event the following procedures and timescales apply:

- The Responsible Officer will prepare a written withdrawal plan, specifying how the interests of learners in relation to that qualification will be protected and the method and timing of the communication of information about the withdrawal to users. The plan will comply with any written regulatory requirements.
- The Responsible Officer will inform the Regulators in writing of the decision to withdraw a qualification and request withdrawal of the qualification. This process will take place a minimum of 12 months prior to the date for last candidate registration.
- The Responsible Officer will inform all centres registered for the qualification, in writing, of the decision to withdraw the qualification, the date for last candidate registration



and the final date for certification. This process will take place a minimum of 12 months prior to the date for last candidate registration. The date for final certification will be a minimum of 12 months following the date for last candidate registration. NCFE will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of learners by offering advice to centres on comparable alternative provision.