

Process for Managing the Withdrawal of the Delivery of Accredited Qualifications

Introduction

This document outlines how qualifications may be withdrawn from centres, countries and/or regions. The impetus for the withdrawal in any circumstances may come either from an accredited centre or from ABE.

ABE offers its qualifications to any centre in any part of the world that can deliver them to registered learners in sufficient volumes to warrant continued operations at that centre. ABE, however, recognises that centres may not be in a position to offer its qualifications for any number of reasons. Similarly, ABE may decide to withdraw access to its accredited qualifications from a particular country or region if they cannot be delivered effectively, efficiently or viably.

This Policy outlines a number of scenarios in which the withdrawal of the delivery of accredited qualifications may take place and provides details on the process by which ABE will manage the withdrawal to protect the interests of any learners currently registered on the qualification(s) – these arrangements will also apply should the ABE remove a centre’s approval to offer a qualification in accordance with the arrangements outlined in our Sanctions Policy.

Please note that, whilst ABE has a regulatory responsibility to protect the interests of all learners, learners are recruited and registered by the centre and not by ABE. ABE is consequently not liable for refunding any tuition fees learners may have paid upon enrolment. ABE’s liability rests solely on the refund of any assessment fees paid by a learner to ABE where access to assessment is no longer available.

We strongly advise that all centre staff involved in the management of ABE qualifications, and any learners registered on ABE accredited programmes, are made aware of the contents of the Policy.

Review Arrangements

We will review the process and its associated procedures annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer, or regulatory feedback and any trends that may emerge in the types of queries we may have received.

If you would like to provide any feedback, please contact us via the details provided below.

Centres Seeking to Withdraw the Delivery of Qualifications

If the ABE decides to sanction a centre and withdraw its approval to offer a qualification, we will do so in accordance with our Sanctions Policy and will communicate this decision to the centre in accordance with the arrangements outlined in the Sanctions Policy.

In some instances, centres may cease to operate due to financial circumstances and may have no opportunity to provide ABE with due notice. In such circumstances once we are informed of the situation (e.g. by a member of staff at, or learners from, the centre) we will implement the following arrangements where appropriate.

Withdrawal from a Country or Region by ABE

ABE may decide that it is no longer viable to offer accredited qualifications at a particular centre or a country or region. The rationale for reaching such a decision may be based upon one or a combination of factors shown below:

- The volume of registered learners in a centre/country/region is not sufficiently large to warrant continued operation. The minimum number of new registered learners is set in the Centre Agreement per year at 30. Circumstances in a particular centre/country/region may mean that this number of new registered learners is not financially or operationally viable for a number of reasons;
- Operational circumstances in a country or region may change adversely, affecting the viability of offering ABE's qualifications in that country or region. Examples of these can be – war or internal political conflict; changes in local or regional governmental, educational or regulatory Policy and/or local accreditation arrangements; deterioration of economic circumstances; political instability; acts of God and/or other natural disasters.

What Will We Do Next?

Upon receipt of notification of withdrawal from a centre or if the decision has been made by ABE to withdraw centre accreditation, the Accreditation Officer will be responsible for actioning the withdrawal and for ensuring that we take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of any learners currently registered on the qualification(s).

For example, they will:

- Advise the centre that they have a specified teach out period (usually 12 months) in which the centre can continue to run the ABE programmes for any current learners which have already been registered and have a membership number to allow them to complete their qualification unimpeded.
- Work with the centre and/or any learners affected by the withdrawal to transfer them (where possible and feasible) to another ABE accredited centre, allowing the learners to carry on with the qualification(s) they are registered on.
- If no alternative centres are available/suitable for any learners affected by the withdrawal, and/or the learners do not wish to carry on with the qualification(s), seek to ensure the learners are certificated for any units they have completed to date in accordance with the requirements of the associated qualification specification(s). Unit certificates can be issued to learners upon receiving a formal request from the learners, or the centre acting on their behalf, and once they have supplied appropriate information to confirm their identity and the units/qualifications they were registered on.
- Update the centre's record upon activation of the withdrawal to reflect the fact the centre is no longer approved to offer the qualification(s).

At all times, ABE will seek to ensure that all parties affected by the withdrawal are kept appropriately informed throughout.

What If Learners Are Unhappy with The Situation?

If any learners are unhappy with the situation or with how the ABE may have dealt with the withdrawal, they should contact the either the Accreditation Officer or Products & Services Manager.

If they are still unhappy, they can then take the matter through our Complaints arrangements, outlined in the ABE Complaints Policy.

Contact Us

If you have any queries about any aspect of this process, please contact accreditation@abeuk.com. Any complaints arising from this Policy should be directed to complaints@abeuk.com.