# Registration and Certification Policy

| Document Control | | | |
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| **Linked Regulatory Requirements:** | General Conditions of Recognition https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook<br><br>G5 – Registration of Learners<br><br>I3 – The design and content of certificates<br><br>I4 – Issuing certificates and replacement certificates | | |
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| Revisions | | | | |
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| **Version Number** | **Date** | **Changes** | **Author** | **Approved by** |
| V1.0 | 10-2023 | Section 2 of<br><br>Withholding Learner Achievement (WLA) policy merged into this document under section 5.2. All other sections of the WLA policy<br><br>(Section1 Overview Section3 WLA procedure) are either sufficiently | Claire Appleby | Jayne Consadine |

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| | | covered in this policy or no longer relevant, therefore the WLA policy will be retired with immediate effect | | |
| V1.1 | 26-03-24 | Added to approved template. Executive Owner confirmed and reviewed. Responsibilities updated | Dawn Joy | N/A |
| V1.2 | 08-05-24 | QMS ORC Subgroup review. Duties section updated; Qual hub removed. | Dawn Joy | N/A |
| V1.3 | 06-2024 | Document on hold while update of owner and clarification of late registration fees and certification. | Dawn Joy | N/A |
| V1.4 | 29-07-24 | Due to the critical need of the document and the fees and pricing going live on 1st Aug. Document approved by COO with the recommendation the document is revised upon KT return from annual leave | Dawn Joy | COO and QMS Team |
| V1.5 | 08-08-24 | Minor update to revision history sheet (v1.3). | Dawn Joy | COO |
| V1.6 | 04-11-24 | No changes next review date updated to 04/01/25 due to two new documents being drafted | Dawn Joy | Director of Data Tech and PMO |

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| **Essential Reading for:** | All centres and all colleagues who deal with registration and certification processes |
| **Method of Dissemination:** | Available on QMS SharePoint |
| **Dissemination Date:** | 08-08-2024 |
| **Implementation Date:** | 08-08-2024 |

**Table of Contents**

## 1. Policy Principles

This policy sets out NCFE's framework for dealing with Registration and Certification, by outlining the processes and procedures for our centres.

## 2. Introduction

This policy sets out the responsibilities of NCFE as a regulated awarding body and our approved centres when registering and certificating learners.

### 2.1. Purpose

This policy forms part of a suite of awarding policies, all of which are designed to:

- Protect learners who are registered with us
- Minimise the risk of an Adverse Effect occurring (as specified in the regulators' Conditions of Recognition)
- Help ensure NCFE and our centres comply with GDPR
- Help improve and refine our products and services.

This policy also supports centre compliance with the Centre Agreement. It does not replace any of the requirements contained within that agreement. Non-adherence to our awarding policies and mandatory documentation may constitute maladministration, malpractice and/or a breach of the Centre Agreement.

The policy should be read in conjunction with NCFE's Mandatory Policies and the Centre Agreement which are available on the NCFE website. Please ensure you read the policies in this suite carefully and implement them fully.

### 2.2. Scope

This policy relates to NCFE (we, us, our etc). The use of 'NCFE' refers to NCFE and NCFE owned brand names (such as 'CACHE'). This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of NCFE, including all colleagues at all locations and at all levels including members of the Executive Team, external contractors, flexible workers, agency workers, partners, suppliers, centres, customers, any associates, any subsidiaries or their employees or any other person associated with us (collectively referred to in this document as 'individuals').  This policy excludes AIQ until fully integrated into NCFE which is scheduled to occur within the next year.

This policy, where applicable, also relates to our regulated qualifications and unregulated products which are owned and/or offered by NCFE.

We'll ensure our colleagues, including temporary colleagues and flexible workers are fully appraised of the contents of this policy.

As a centre you must make your staff (including centre, satellite, sub-contract centres or contractual staff) that are involved in the administration, design, delivery, management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications and products and your learners aware of, and familiar with, the contents of this policy and any policy you have relating to your own practice and procedures with regards to registration and certification.

## 2.3. Responsibilities/Duties

The Document Owner is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to.

Head of Delivery and EUC is responsible for maintaining the NCFE Awarding systems in terms of Registration and Certification functionality.

Director of Tech, Data and PMO is responsible for ensuring this policy is up to date.

Head of Assessment Delivery is accountable for the Certification process and management of the Adare relationship.

Customer Service Team will be responsible for answering queries relating to Registration and Certification.

T level Certificates will be issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

Subject matter experts are responsible for reviewing the specific content, within the document and associated procedures.

## 2.4. Definitions

| Word/Acronym | Definition |
|---|---|
| COO | Chief Operating Officer |
| DCS | Direct Claims Status |
| EQA | External Quality Assurance |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation |
| LRS | Learner Record Service |
| PLR | Personal Learner Record |
| SLT | Senior Leadership Team |
| ULN | Unique Learner Number |

## 2.5. Location

Available on QMS SharePoint and NCFE website

## 3. Registration information

### 3.1. Learner identification and data protection requirements

As an approved centre you must have procedures in place to enable you to verify the identity of your learners and ensure that upon completion of our qualifications or products, procedures are in place to validate that the achievement is issued to the correct learner who completed the qualification or product.

All records and evidence which are used to identify learners should be retained for quality assurance purposes and in compliance with relevant data protection legislation.

### 3.2. Qualification and certification dates

NCFE will ensure that all approved centres are updated on any changes to our qualifications and products. This includes new qualifications and unit programmes, extensions, withdrawals, amendments and any qualifications or products that are due to expire, along with the dates that the changes come into force.

You must ensure that your contact information is correct and inform customersupport@ncfe.org.uk if there are any changes. We also expect that you are fully aware of all dates and changes to our qualifications and products to ensure that learners are registered and certificated in line with our published timescales.

### 3.3. The Portal

The Portal is a secure website which allows you to register learners, book learners for external assessment, submit internal units for graded qualifications, claim certificates and view learner information 24 hours a day, except for downtime for system maintenance.

It's important that you check that learners have been registered onto the correct qualification or product. If an incorrect registration occurs centres have five working days to cancel the registration to avoid any fees.  Each qualification has a unique code which is published on our website and in the qualification specification. Once a qualification is no longer available for registrations, you will still be able to see External Quality Assurance (EQA) reports.

### 3.4. Invoices and refunds on registration fees

Further information about invoicing and refunds can be found within the Fees and Pricing Guide 24-25.

### 3.5. Unique Learner Numbers (ULN)

We advise you to always register learners with their ULN as part of the registration process. We'll validate this during the initial registration and verify with the Learner Records Service (LRS). If any ULNs are invalid, we will notify you of this and advise you of the actions we require you to take to rectify the error. We will only send achievement data to the Personal Learner Record (PLR) if a learner has a valid ULN.

T levels and integrated dental qualifications now require the ULN as mandatory at the point of registration.

Further information on the LRS can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/lrsunique-learner-numbers.

## 4. Results and certification information

### 4.1. Results

Results will be processed and issued for learners that have been registered with us, in line with our published Service Level Agreements, which can be found on our website.

### 4.2. Certification

If you have Direct Claims Status (DCS) you can submit a claim for learner certificates on the Portal. Your claim will be sent straight to be printed, and your certificates will be issued. Your e-Certificates will be available to view immediately.

If you don't have DCS you can still submit a claim for learner certificates. Your claim will be sent to your External Quality Assurer who'll be able to 'sign off' the claim, any claims not completed correctly can be put on hold or rejected. These will then be sent to print, and your eCertificates will be available to view.

When you claim for certificates, you can select which delivery address you would like us to send them to via the Portal.

Certificates will be processed within our published Service Level Agreement, except for externally assessed only qualifications, which will be issued once the learner has achieved the external assessment.

Certificates are printed and despatched by our external supplier the next working day. V Cert Model 5 and certificates will be issued six weeks after results release day and printed and despatched up to ten weeks after results release calendar day

Please note that certificates for Technical Qualifications (TQ) which are part of the T Level programme, will be issued by the Department for Education (DfE).

### 4.2.1 Reprint and replacement certificates

Certificates are issued in the legal name of the learner at the time they were certificated by us.

If the name has changed because of gender reassignment, witness protection or deed poll, we can issue a certificate showing the learner's new legal name.

If the certificate we issue contains errors or requires a name change, you must securely destroy the original certificate and submit a name change on the NCFE Portal within 90 calendar days of the certification issue date.

To order a replacement certificate you need to complete the Replacement Certificate Form.

The charges for a replacement certificate can be found in our Fees and Pricing guide 24-25.

### 4.2.2 Certificate design

To ensure we meet our regulatory requirements on regulated qualification certificate design, we're unable to amend the layout of our certificate template. Any replacement certificates we issue will clearly be identified as such.

## 5. Registration and Certification Requirements

## 5.1. Registration

To meet the requirements of our Registration and Certification policy you must:

- Register and enter learners for any qualification and/or product in an efficient and timely manner in line with our published timescales, where applicable. When registration occurs outside of our published timescales, for some of our products a late registration fee shall be charged per

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learner in addition to the relevant registration and certification fee. Further details of the late registration fee can be found in our current Fees and Pricing Guide 24-25 List.

- Take appropriate and reliable steps to confirm each learner's identity before registration takes place. This will include using appropriate visual identification.

- Use the record of the learner's previous achievements to make sure that, where possible, credit transfer, exemptions and equivalences are applied, with the learner's consent.

- Comply with any limitation on the minimum amount of time that learners must be registered with us before certification

- Take reasonable steps to stop incorrect certificate claims being made by mistake or dishonest claims for certificates being made

- Only submit certification claims for learners who have met the requirements of the qualification and/or product. Repeated incorrect claims will be considered maladministration and will be dealt with in accordance with our Mandatory Policies, which are available on our website at https://www.ncfe.org.uk/qualifications/mandatory-policies-fees/

- Regularly withdraw learners via the Portal, that are no longer on programme.  We will also automatically withdraw leaners after 36 months; these can be un-withdrawn if required via the Portal. For any T Level learners we will automatically withdraw learners at 48 months unless they are marked as complete.

- Access the ULN from the LRS and work with us to ensure the ULN is correctly validated for the learner.

- Support the learner in accessing their PLR when available.

- Take reasonable steps to ensure that all relevant staff understand how and when to register learners and claim for certification

## 5.2. Withholding Learner Achievement

In some circumstances we may request that centres withhold learner achievements on behalf of NCFE. In such an event, we'll request centres to securely store learner achievements until further notice or advise centres to return the learner achievements to NCFE.

There may also be times when centres may need to withhold learner achievement following an identified incident of maladministration and/or malpractice. This should be dealt with in compliance with JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures, which NCFE aligns to and is available on the JCQ website https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/

In the event of maladministration and/or malpractice, centres still require permission to withhold learner achievements unless they have been instructed by NCFE. This should be requested by centres at the point of notifying NCFE of the incident or allegations.

Centres are not permitted to withhold learner achievements because of non-payment of fees or internal disputes. We expect that our centres, where possible, have arrangements in place to secure all associated fees and/or outstanding payments and manage all internal disputes by the time learners are ready to be awarded their achievements. Any learner who has successfully met the requirements of the qualification or product, should expect to receive their achievement in a timely manner irrespective of outstanding fees or internal disputes.

Learner achievements must not be withheld by the centre for any other reason and will only be approved by NCFE in exceptional circumstances.

## 6. Initial Equality Impact Assessment

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy, and no concerns were raised. A copy is stored within Camms.Policy.

## 7. References to Associated Documents

Link to mandatory policies https://www.ncfe.org.uk/qualifications/mandatory-policies-fees/

## 8. Implementation and Dissemination

This document is available on QMS SharePoint for internal colleagues and via NCFE Website for centres.

## 9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## 10. Data Retention

We may need access to confidential information and where this is necessary, we will ensure that such information is kept secure, only used for the purposes of the relevant request, and always handled in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.

We do not disclose confidential information to third parties unless we are required to do so, for example by our regulators, law enforcement or statutory bodies.