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PART OF **nocn** GROUP

# Centre Approval Policy and Procedure

Version 2.1

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## 1. Scope

- 1.01 This policy and procedure outlines the requirements organisations must meet to obtain Centre approval to deliver and assess NOCN's regulated qualifications, assured courses and endorsed programmes.
- 1.02 The intended audience for this document is:
- a) NOCN Directors and Board of Trustees.
  - b) NOCN Core and Associate staff, including External Quality Assurers (EQAs).
  - c) All staff of NOCN Delivery Partners associated with NOCN provision.
  - d) All staff in NOCN approved and partner centres.
  - e) Organisations who are wishing to obtain Centre approval for their organisation from NOCN.
  - f) Qualification Regulators<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.03 **Please note that this policy and procedure is not applicable to learners.** Learners who are affected by a withdrawn Centre should contact the Centre directly to discuss the arrangements that are in place for displaced learners and continuation of study. Alternatively, learners may wish to contact NOCN for advice on 0300 999 1177 or via email at [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk).

## 2. Purpose

- 2.01 The purpose of this document is to:
- a) Outline NOCN's policy and procedure for both Centre approval and withdrawal.
  - b) Outline the criteria that an organisation must meet to obtain Centre approval from NOCN and where this may be removed.
  - c) Ensure that the required standards of delivery to become a NOCN Centre are being met and maintained.
  - d) Inform centres of the procedure to voluntarily withdraw their approval.
  - e) Minimise any risks to the integrity of NOCN products and to protect the interests of learners.

## 3. Centre Approval Policy

- 3.01 All organisations wishing to offer NOCN products must go through the NOCN Centre approval process. Organisations are not permitted to deliver, assess or promote NOCN products until Centre approval has been confirmed by NOCN in writing.
- 3.02 Due to the nature of NOCN's vocational and on-demand qualifications, NOCN designates the marking of the majority of assessments to centres, unless specifically specified within the qualification's specification. For this reason, all organisations who seek to gain Centre approval from NOCN must have a delivery system in place which encompasses effective, successful and consistent training and assessment, which is reviewed and monitored by the Centre's own internal quality assurance system.
- 3.03 The Centre approval process will seek to review an organisation's management systems, staff and physical resources to determine if the organisation has sufficient experience and capacity to successfully train learners, as well as to assess and internally quality assure learner work, to meet NOCN's standards and requirements.

<sup>1</sup> Ofqual in England; Qualification Wales; CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland or successor bodies.

- 3.04 The requirements of Centre approval are set out by the NOCN approval criteria, which must be met to both gain and retain Centre approval. The approval criteria are generic by design but will be applied by NOCN and its team of External Quality Assurers to the specific nature and requirements of the qualifications with which the Centre is requesting approval for. The full list of approval criteria can be found within the NOCN Quality Assurance Manual. It is important to note that centres must also meet the specific requirements dictated by the assessment requirements and strategies for each product approval is being sought for.
- 3.05 The NOCN approval criteria covers all aspects of Centre administration, delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of NOCN qualifications and are grouped into the following areas:
- a) **Internal Management and Systems** – Centres must have an effective management system in place, ensuring that there are appropriate and clear roles and responsibilities of all staff and that they are all sufficiently and effectively trained in their role.
  - b) **Delivery Staff, Resources and Equipment** – Centres must have a suitably experienced and qualified workforce for the training, assessment and quality assurance of NOCN assessments in place. Centres must also ensure they have the required resources and equipment to be able to perform successful training and assessment for each qualification they hold approval for.
  - c) **Assessment and Training** – Centres must ensure that their Trainers and Assessors are aware and make use of valid and reliable teaching and assessment methods, which are supported by valid, authentic, sufficient and reliable evidence, which is auditable.
  - d) **Internal Quality Assurance** – Centres must ensure that their IQAs and IQA processes support successful assessment within their Centre and allow the implementation of improvements where necessary.
  - e) **External Assessment Arrangements** (if applicable) – This includes ensuring that the Centre has appropriate venues and invigilators for carrying out external assessments, as well as ensuring that there are robust arrangements for the handling and storage of confidential assessment materials. Controls regarding external assessment arrangements are outlined in the NOCN Examination and Invigilation Policy and Procedure.
- 3.06 Where centres only deliver non-regulated provision, they will be reviewed and monitored against a tailored list of approval criteria which will aim to ensure a robust delivery model is in place. Organisations should contact the Quality Assurance Team for further support and guidance.
- 3.07 The terms and conditions of Centre approval are outlined within the NOCN Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions. Organisations who register an interest in obtaining Centre approval can request a copy of this document to enable them to become familiar with its contents before approval is granted.
- 3.08 Dependent on their geographical location, organisations may be managed by a recognised NOCN Delivery Partner or subsidiary rather than NOCN directly. This will be confirmed once an organisation has registered their interest in becoming a NOCN Centre. NOCN Delivery Partners and subsidiaries will conduct their own internal Centre approval procedure, which will be in line with this policy. A full list of NOCN Delivery Partners and subsidiaries can be found on the NOCN website.

## I. Applicable Fees

- 3.09 For centres requesting approval for NOCN's regulated qualifications, there are applicable fees at both stages of the Centre approval process, as detailed below (for the current charges, please refer to the NOCN Fees and Charges document):

- a) **Stage 1 – Application Fee.** This fee is non-refundable and will be invoiced at the commencement of the Centre approval process.
- b) **Stage 2 – Centre Setup Fee.** Upon Centre approval, this is charged to cover the quality assurance and administration costs of NOCN reviewing the Centre’s application.

3.10 There is a single approval fee for centres requesting approval for NOCN’s suite of SiteRight assured courses, which must be paid prior to approval being provided. Once approved, centres are able to pay an additional fee to gain approval for NOCN regulated qualifications. For the latest fees, please refer to the NOCN Fees and Charges.

3.11 For organisations which are based internationally, a separate fee structure is applied. Please contact NOCN to register your interest and for further support and guidance.

3.12 It is important to note that additional fees may apply throughout the approval process where additional quality monitoring activities are required, in line with the NOCN Fees and Charges. For example, if following an EQA risk assessment, the EQA sets actions and defers an approval application until the actions are addressed, a further EQA risk assessment activity may be required for sign-off of the actions. NOCN will discuss the requirement for this with the organisation during the approval process.

3.13 Once approved, centres are subject to the annual support fee (as detailed within the NOCN Fees and Charges), which must be paid to retain Centre approval Status for each new academic year. The annual support fee runs from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July of the following year. Centres who are approved part-way through the academic year will be charged pro-rata. Centres who are approved for SiteRight courses only are subject to a reduced fee. Failure to pay the annual support fee within agreed credit terms will result in NOCN withdrawing the Centre’s approval.

## 4. Centre Approval Procedure

### I. Approval Application

4.01 To obtain Centre approval, organisations are required to complete and submit the NOCN Centre Approval Application Form. Organisations must fully complete the form to enable NOCN to review the application and to make a decision on whether the application can be progressed. This includes details of the scope and purpose of the application, details of the organisation’s management systems, and details of the organisation’s staff and physical resources.

4.02 Regarding the **scope and purpose of the application**, organisations must provide:

- a) The details of the NOCN products that the organisation is wishing to gain approval for. To gain and retain Centre approval, all organisations must be approved to deliver at least one NOCN product.
- b) The number of learners that the organisation is expecting to register annually.
- c) Details of Centre or qualification approval that the organisation has, or has held, from another awarding organisation. This includes providing details regarding any sanctions or restrictions that other awarding organisations may have imposed on the organisation within the previous 3 years from the date of the application. NOCN will request copies of EQA monitoring or approval reports from other AOs from the applying organisation, where these are available.

4.03 Regarding **management systems**, organisations must provide:

- a) Confirmation and evidence of required insurance policies and certificates.

- b) Confirmation that they adhere to the relevant laws and acts of the United Kingdom or other regulatory jurisdiction, as appropriate.
- c) Details of all locations/sites the organisation intends to use (Note: these will be extensions of the main Centre and not considered to have their own NOCN Centre number).
- d) Details of any partnership arrangements that are in place, including identification of the roles and responsibility for quality assurance. NOCN will hold the approved Centre wholly responsible for such arrangements.
- e) Confirmation that they have all required policies, procedures and documents in place which define the quality assurance at the Centre and which support NOCN's requirements.
- f) Confirmation of arrangements that allow the dissemination of policies and procedures across the organisation and any partner sites/organisations.
- g) Evidence that systems are in place to track the progress of learners towards their chosen qualification, unit or programme.
- h) Evidence that the Centre has arrangements and procedures in place to identify and complete Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- i) Evidence to support the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to learners and identification of access arrangements to support individual learning needs.

4.04 Regarding **staff and physical resources**, organisations must provide:

- a) Details of a named contact that has overall accountability for the management and quality assurance of the organisation. This individual will be referred to as the Head of Organisation by NOCN.
- b) A named point of contact for general correspondence from NOCN, including certificates. This individual will be referred to as the Centre Contact by NOCN.
- c) A named point of contact for all quality assurance correspondence from NOCN. This individual must hold authority to oversee the Centre's quality assurance systems regarding NOCN provision. This individual will be referred to as the Quality Assurance Contact by NOCN.
- d) A named point of contact for all invoicing matters. This individual will be referred to as the Finance Contact by NOCN.
- e) Details of all delivery and quality assurance staff for the products that approval is being sought for. It is the organisation's responsibility to have completed relevant checks on their staff to ensure that they meet the requirements as detailed within each individual qualification or product specification, available on the NOCN website. NOCN retains the right to request copies of all relevant CVs, records of Continuous Professional Development and relevant qualification certificates.

4.05 NOCN will not consider an application until the NOCN Centre Approval Application Form has been fully completed, all supporting evidence has been provided and the initial application payment has been made.

4.06 The applying organisation can request a chargeable quality assurance support visit from NOCN during the application process. The support visit allows for an NOCN EQA to guide the Centre through NOCN requirements prior to the application being reviewed by NOCN. It is important to note that centres who have received a support visit from a NOCN EQA are not guaranteed subsequent approval.

## II. Initial Review

4.07 NOCN will conduct an initial review of all information and evidence provided by the organisation and will also conduct due diligence checks, including on any partner organisations, where

applicable. This will include a credit check to ensure that the organisation is financially stable. Where organisations fail to meet NOCN's credit requirements, they will be declined.

- 4.08 NOCN will not conduct its initial review of an application until the Stage 1 – Application Fee has been paid. Invoices must be paid **within 30 days** of the invoice date. If the invoice is not paid, the application will be declined.
- 4.09 Following a review of the application, NOCN will decide whether the application can be progressed and whether a Centre approval visit is required. This decision will be based on risk and the outcomes of the due diligence checks conducted by NOCN. Where an organisation is deemed high risk by NOCN, their application will not progress further and will be declined.
- 4.10 Decisions regarding approval applications is at the discretion of NOCN and NOCN is entitled to decline applications based on risk or without reasonable cause. **The decision to decline an application by NOCN is final and cannot be appealed.**

### III. EQA Risk-Assessment

- 4.11 As part of the application process, NOCN may require a risk-assessment conducted by one of NOCN's External Quality Assurers to take place. Where organisations apply for a variety of qualifications, NOCN may require multiple risk-assessment activities to take place, or for activities to be completed where different sector specialisms are required. Centres will be charged the NOCN fee for an additional EQA monitoring activity, in line with the NOCN Fees and Charges, for each additional risk assessment which is required.
- 4.12 The EQA will conduct the risk-assessment either face-to-face or remotely and will discuss the required arrangements with the Centre prior to it taking place. It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that everything that is requested by the EQA is made available to them on, or before, the day of the risk-assessment.
- 4.13 The purpose of the risk-assessment is to review all of the organisation's policies and processes, training and assessment materials, quality assurance arrangements, facilities and physical resources (including appropriateness of delivery staff) to seek assurance that the organisation is able to meet the NOCN approval criteria.
- 4.14 During the risk-assessment, the EQA will review evidence provided by the Centre to risk-rate the organisation as either low, moderate or high in the following risk areas:
  - a) Internal Management and Systems.
  - b) Delivery Staff, Resources and Equipment.
  - c) Assessment and Training.
  - d) Internal Quality Assurance.
  - e) External Assessment Arrangements.
- 4.15 The highest level of risk assigned across the risk areas by the EQA will determine the overall risk rating assigned to the organisation. If the organisation is approved as a Centre, they will be monitored in line with this risk. The risk ratings, alongside their description, are listed in the table below:

Risk Rating	Risk Descriptor	Indicative Timeframe of First Monitoring Activity If Approved
Low	Centre successfully meets approval criteria and regulatory requirements, or any remedial actions required to meet requirements are minor. The Centre does not pose a risk to NOCN qualifications or to learners.	Within 12 months
Moderate	Centre does not meet all approval criteria and/or regulatory requirements and there are concerns with regards to the risk to learners and/or the integrity of NOCN qualifications. Significant action is required.	Within 6 months
High	Centre does not meet approval criteria and/or regulatory requirements and there are major concerns with regards to the risk to learners and/or the integrity of NOCN qualifications. Urgent and significant action is required.	Within 3 months

4.16 Following the risk-assessment, the EQA will record their findings and recommendation on the NOCN Centre Approval Risk-Assessment Report and will share this with NOCN and the applying organisation within **5 working days** of the visit date. On the report, the EQA will either:

- a) Recommend Centre approval.
- b) Defer Centre approval until defined actions have been completed. Where this is the case, the Centre’s application will be put on hold until all actions have been completed.
- c) Decline the application for Centre approval.

4.17 Where an organisation has not been able to demonstrate that requirements are being, or can be, met in full, a recommendation will be made by the EQA on whether to agree an action plan or to decline the application. If further work is required before approval can be given, an action plan will be provided on the risk-assessment report. This will provide the organisation with clear instructions on what action is required to obtain approval, including appropriate timescales for their completion. Dependent on the nature of the actions set, an additional EQA risk assessment may be required, where charges will apply.

4.18 Organisations will not be able to register any learners, or promote NOCN approved status, until the action plan has been completed and approval has been granted by NOCN in writing. If organisations do not complete the action plan by the timescales provided, their approval application will be declined.

#### IV. Centre Approval Status

4.19 Once an organisation has been granted NOCN Centre approval, the Centre’s Head of Organisation will be provided with a copy of the NOCN Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions for signature. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions of NOCN Centre approval and the joint commitment between the Centre and NOCN to uphold the integrity of NOCN products and to ensure learner interests are protected.

4.20 NOCN will also issue an invoice for the Stage 2 – Centre Setup Fee and an invoice for the Annual Support Fee (on a pro-rata basis). Centres will not be able to submit registrations to NOCN until:

- a) The Centre’s Head of Organisation has signed and returned a signed copy of the NOCN Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions to NOCN. This will be issued to the Centre for signing upon their approval.

- b) The Centre has paid the Stage 2 – Centre Setup Fee and the pro-rata Annual Support Fee invoices. The invoices must be paid within **30 days** of issuing.

- 4.21 Where centres do not return their signed copy of their Centre agreement, or where they do not pay the invoices within **30 days** of issuing, their Centre record will be closed, and the Centre may be required to re-apply for Centre approval from NOCN.
- 4.22 Centre approval status will allow centres to operate in England, Scotland, Wales and in Northern Ireland. If centres wish to deliver qualifications outside of these territories, they must complete an additional approval process. Please contact [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk) for further guidance.
- 4.23 Centres will be informed of their agreed credit terms by the Finance Team upon Centre approval.
- 4.24 Once approved, all centres will be subject to ongoing monitoring activities to allow NOCN to ensure that they are consistently adhering to NOCN's approval criteria. As part of NOCN's strategy for Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny, the Quality Assurance Team, in conjunction with the Centre's assigned External Quality Assurer, will monitor Centre adherence to the Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions and approval criteria. For further information, please refer to the NOCN Risk-Based Approach to Centre Quality Monitoring Policy and Procedure.

## V. Additional Qualification Approval

- 4.25 Once Centre approval has been confirmed in writing by NOCN, centres are able to apply for additional qualifications to be added to their provision at any time. Centres must complete and submit the NOCN Additional Qualification Approval form and submit this to NOCN for review.
- 4.26 Centres must not begin delivering or assessing additional qualifications until approval has been confirmed by NOCN in writing. Delivery of qualifications prior to approval may affect NOCN's approval decision, as well as leading to the application of Sanctions.
- 4.27 Once all required information has been received, NOCN will review the Centre's application. Dependent on the risk of the qualifications being requested, the staff members being put forward for delivery and the Centre's range of current NOCN approvals, either an additional qualification approval visit, or a desktop approval will be completed by NOCN to progress the Centre's application.
  - a) An **EQA Risk-Assessment** will be required where the Centre is requesting high risk qualifications or qualifications in sectors where current NOCN approvals are not currently held. This will follow a similar format to the risk assessment conducted at Centre approval, with a specific focus on reviewing the Centre's systems and resources against those required for the requested qualifications.
  - b) A **Desktop Approval** allows for qualification approval to be provided without the need for an EQA risk-assessment activity. This may be an option where the Centre are requesting a qualification which is comparable to a NOCN qualification they already deliver, or where the qualification is deemed as low risk by NOCN. In considering the application, NOCN, or the Centre's EQA, will contact the Centre to discuss requirements and review current staffing and resources. Centres should discuss potential additional qualification requests with their EQA during monitoring activities as the EQA may be able to perform an immediate desktop approval.
- 4.28 Where a risk-assessment activity is required, centres will be required to pay the appropriate additional monitoring fee, as detailed within the NOCN Fees and Charges document, prior to the activity taking place.

4.29 Following the risk-assessment activity, or the desktop review, NOCN will either:

- a) Recommend the additional qualification approval.
- b) Defer the additional qualification approval until defined actions have been completed. Where this is the case, the Centre's application will be put on hold until all actions have been completed.
- c) Decline the application for additional qualification approval.

4.30 Where approval has been recommended, NOCN will add the relevant qualifications to the Centre's record. Once added, the Centre will be able to begin delivery and registration against the qualifications.

## 5. Centre Withdrawal Policy

5.01 NOCN recognises that there are three main routes of Centre withdrawal:

- a) **Voluntary withdrawal** – where a Centre informs NOCN that it no longer wishes to deliver NOCN products and wishes to renounce its Centre approval.
- b) **Involuntary withdrawal** – where NOCN or Delivery Partner terminate its agreement with a Centre, removing its Centre approval.
- c) **Cessation of trading** – where a Centre ceases to operate and can therefore no longer support its approved Centre status.

5.02 Both the Centre and NOCN can terminate the Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions at any point. Aside from cases of proven malpractice, the notice period for the termination of Centre approval for both parties is one-month's written notice.

5.03 The withdrawal of Centre approval, both voluntary and involuntary, is managed by the Quality Assurance Team. Centres should contact [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk), or their Delivery Partner directly, if they require any advice regarding removing their Centre approval.

5.04 Once Centre approval has been removed, the organisation will not be permitted to advertise, deliver or assess NOCN products. Withdrawn Centres must immediately remove all references to NOCN from their website, training and promotional materials.

### I. Protection of Learner Interests

5.05 In all cases where Centre approval is removed, NOCN is committed to ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to reduce the risk of an occurrence of an Adverse Effect and to protect the interests of learners registered on NOCN products.

5.06 NOCN will promptly notify the Qualification Regulators where it has cause to believe that the withdrawal of the Centre could, or is likely to cause, an Adverse Effect. NOCN will also notify the Regulators of the steps that it has taken or intends to take to prevent, correct or mitigate the Adverse Effect. In certain sectors, NOCN is also obliged to inform the Industry's Regulatory Body e.g. CSCS/CPCS in the case of construction and SIA in the case of security.

5.07 To support NOCN in ensuring that the interests of learners are protected at all times, all approved centres are required to have a contingency plan in place, which sets out the actions the Centre will take to ensure any displaced learners upon the event of Centre withdrawal are provided with reasonable opportunities for continued study. This includes the option for learners to transfer to a new provider.

- 5.08 Whilst NOCN have a regulatory responsibility to protect the interests of learners, the learners are recruited and registered by the Centre. Therefore, NOCN is not liable for refunding any fees paid by a learner to a Centre that has had its approval withdrawn. If learners are transferred to another approved NOCN Centre, NOCN will not charge a registration fee for the destination Centre, as long as the original registration fee was settled.
- 5.09 Where there are no options available for learners to complete their qualification or assessment, NOCN will produce a unit achievement certificate free of charge to enable the learners to apply elsewhere for transfer of achievements, where this is valid and applicable.

## II. Inactive Centres

- 5.10 If a Centre does not register any learners with NOCN for a two-year period, or where they fail to pay their Annual Support Fee, their Centre approval will be removed by NOCN. The Centre will be provided with 30 days written notice of NOCN's intentions.
- 5.11 NOCN will consider the re-activation of centres who voluntarily withdraw their Centre approval, or who have it removed due to inactivity, within one year of their closure date. To re-gain approval, an external quality assurance activity may be required (either face-to-face or remotely) to review the Centre's policies, procedures and resources to ensure they still meet NOCN requirements. Organisations must pay the relevant fee for the activity, as well as a pro-rata Annual Support Fee, in line with the NOCN Fees and Charges, to allow re-approval.
- 5.12 After one year of an organisation's withdrawal of Centre Approval date, organisations who wish to re-gain Centre approval will be required to complete the full Centre approval process again, where the relevant charges will apply.

## III. Curriculum Review

- 5.13 Centres must ensure that they keep under review their NOCN approvals and notify [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk) if they wish to rescind approval for any qualifications which they are no longer going to deliver. This allows NOCN to ensure that the Centre has an appropriately allocated EQA and is not subject to any unnecessary EQA monitoring activities.
- 5.14 Where a qualification undergoes incremental change or revision, NOCN will not apply the updated qualification to the Centre's record if they have not had submitted registrations to NOCN in the 2-year period prior to the launch date of the updated qualification.
- 5.15 NOCN will perform curriculum reviews of Centre approvals on an ongoing basis and may remove approvals for qualifications where they have not been delivered in 2 years. The Centre will be provided with 30 days' written notice of NOCN's intention to remove qualification approvals before this is actioned on NOCN systems. Re-approval of qualifications which have been removed due to inactivity will be considered, in line with any pertinent risks, on an individual basis by the Quality Assurance Team.

## 6. Centre Withdrawal Procedures

### I. Voluntary Withdrawal

- 6.01 Before renouncing its approved status, centres must ensure that they have reviewed and implemented their contingency plans for the required transitional arrangements of any learners still remain on programme. This includes taking all reasonable steps to provide learners with:

- a) Opportunities to complete the NOCN qualification/programme/assessment with their Centre or another appropriate provider.
- b) Information, advice and guidance on qualification/programme/assessment completion.
- c) Access to the Centre's complaints and appeals procedure.
- d) All due certificates upon qualification/unit achievement.

6.02 Centres must also ensure that they have settled any unpaid invoices to NOCN before requesting Centre withdrawal. The Finance Team can support in providing centres with copy of account statements.

6.03 The notice to withdraw should be provided in writing by the Centre's Head of Organisation and submitted via email to [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk), or Delivery Partner equivalent. Following receipt of the notification of withdrawal, the Quality Assurance Team will contact the Centre to discuss the withdrawal arrangements. The Centre will be asked to provide details of their contingency plan and the arrangements the Centre has made/will make to transfer any affected and registered learners.

6.04 The Quality Assurance Team will continue to liaise with the Centre until all on programme learners are transferred or certificated. The Centre should ensure that NOCN is kept appropriately informed regarding the progress of their transitional arrangements. Centres must ensure that transitional arrangements have been completed by the end of the one-month notice period.

6.05 Once the Centre has confirmed that there are no registered learners who will be affected by the withdrawal, the process of closing down the Centre record and removing NOCN Centre approval will take place, on the expiry of the one-month notice period. In some cases, this may occur sooner if the Centre grants permission for the Centre record to be immediately closed.

6.06 The withdrawal process will remove access from all Centre staff members to all NOCN systems. This will prevent the Centre from submitting any registrations or certification claims. Once the record has been closed, this will be confirmed to the Centre in writing.

## II. Involuntary Withdrawal

6.07 Under clause 23 of the Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions, NOCN may terminate the agreement, and therefore remove Centre approval from an organisation at any time. NOCN is not required to provide the Centre with justification for the removal of Centre approval. However, this may be due, but is not limited to:

- a) Risks regarding the Centre or their delivery staff.
- b) Loss of contact with a Centre or inability to arrange quality assurance monitoring activities.
- c) Failure by the Centre to pay invoices in line with agreed credit terms.
- d) Failure by the Centre to pay the NOCN Annual Support Fee.
- e) Failure by the Centre to sign and return the NOCN Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions (where re-issued after approval).

6.08 If NOCN or a Delivery Partner make the decision to terminate the Centre agreement and remove the approved Centre status, the Quality Assurance Team, will inform the Head of Organisation and Centre Contact with at least one month's notice.

6.09 Following the notification of NOCN's intention to withdraw Centre approval, the Quality Assurance Team will contact the Centre's Head of Organisation or Centre Contact to discuss the withdrawal arrangements and to confirm the details of any learners who may be affected. The Centre will be asked to provide details of their contingency plan and the arrangements the

Centre has made/will make to transfer any affected and registered learners. The Centre will still be liable to pay any outstanding invoices to NOCN in line with NOCN's payment terms.

- 6.10 The Quality Assurance Team will continue to liaise with the Centre until all on programme learners are transferred or certificated. The Centre should ensure that NOCN is kept appropriately informed regarding the progress of their transitional arrangements. Centres must ensure that transitional arrangements have been completed by the end of the one-month notice period. At the end of the one-month notice period, NOCN will close down the Centre's record.
- 6.11 Where a Centre fails to pay NOCN invoices in line with their stated credit terms, including where a Centre fails to pay their Annual Support Fee, NOCN will terminate the Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions.
- 6.12 NOCN may terminate the agreement, and therefore remove Centre approval, with immediate effect if the Centre commits a major breach of regulatory responsibilities (Level 5 Sanction). Please refer to clause 23b of the Centre Agreement and Terms and Conditions. Where NOCN have terminated an agreement immediately due to a quality or compliance risk, delivery at the Centre must cease immediately. If there are no registered learners at the Centre, the Centre's record and access to NOCN systems will be immediately removed.

### III. Cessation of Trading

- 6.13 Where NOCN become aware that an approved NOCN Centre has ceased trading, an investigation will take place to determine whether the Centre still has active learners registered with NOCN who may be affected. If it is determined that there are no registered learners, the Centre record will be immediately closed. NOCN will attempt to contact staff at the Centre to inform them of the withdrawal of Centre approval.
- 6.14 Where learners are deemed to be affected, NOCN will issue a statement and contact details on its website to assist any displaced learners. In the cases of a Centre ceasing trading, NOCN reserves the rights to contact affected learners directly. NOCN will work with any appointed administrators to protect the interests of learners, wherever this is possible.
- 6.15 Where learners are affected by an approved Centre ceasing trading, NOCN will promptly notify the Qualification Regulators. NOCN will inform the Regulators of the steps they have taken to mitigate any Adverse Effects.

## 7. Document Control

- 7.01 This policy is maintained by the Quality Assurance Team and will be reviewed and updated where necessary to reflect updated legislation, customer feedback, improvements of operation and changes to the regulatory environment. If you have any queries regarding the contents or the use of this policy, please contact the Quality Assurance Team directly on [assurance@nocn.org.uk](mailto:assurance@nocn.org.uk).
- 7.02 All NOCN policies and procedures are signed off by the NOCN Responsible Officer. The latest versions of which can be found on our website here: [www.nocn.org.uk/support/nocn-group-policies/](http://www.nocn.org.uk/support/nocn-group-policies/).