



Quality Assurance Criteria 2015-18 - Changes to Requirements on Centres (China) (July 2015, Updated August 2016)

The following are changes to requirements on SQA centres which have come into force since the publication of the Quality Assurance Criteria in 2013, or areas where there have been identified trends of non-compliance.

Compliance with these requirements will be checked through systems and qualification verification under the revised Quality Assurance Criteria, which take effect on 1 August 2015. Required actions will be set to address any areas of non-compliance and sanctions may be applied if the required actions are not completed within the agreed timescales.

New 2015 Quality Assurance Criteria	Specific requirements within the criteria	Change in policy or practice required in centres
1.5 Suspected candidate or staff malpractice must be investigated and acted upon, in line with SQA requirements	<p>The policies and procedures for malpractice must cover both malpractice by candidates and malpractice by centre staff. Procedures must include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reporting ◆ Investigation ◆ Communicating outcomes ◆ Sanctions ◆ Actions ◆ Appeals ◆ Record-keeping ◆ Retention of records of all investigations of malpractice to be provided to SQA on request (see criteria 4.7 and 6.4 below). 	<p><u>New requirement:</u> Centre procedures must include information on the right of appeal against malpractice decisions:</p> <p>Centres have the right to appeal a decision where a case of reported malpractice by the centre has been confirmed through investigation by the SQA.</p> <p>Centres also have the right to appeal a decision in the case of suspected malpractice by a candidate reported by the centre to the SQA.</p>

	<p>See <u>The Appeals process: Information for centres</u>.(published April 2015)</p> <p>Any suspected cases of centre malpractice must be reported to SQA.</p> <p>Definition of centre malpractice</p>	<p>Candidates have the right to appeal to SQA where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre has conducted an investigation, the candidate disagrees with the outcome and has exhausted the centre's appeals process. • SQA has conducted an investigation and the candidate disagrees with the decision. <p><u>New requirement:</u> All centres must make the necessary amendments to their own procedures for dealing with malpractice to state that all cases of suspected <u>centre</u> malpractice must be reported to SQA, and ensure that this is put into practice. This applies to all qualifications.</p> <p>Update August 2016 Revised definition of centre malpractice to be used in centre malpractice policy and procedures:</p> <p>Malpractice, which includes maladministration and non-compliance, means any act, default or practice which is a breach of SQA requirements and/ or which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any SQA qualification or the validity of a result or certificate; and/ or
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1.5 continued		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Damages the authority, reputation or credibility of SQA or any officer, employee or agent of SQA <p>Instances of malpractice arise for a variety of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage in an examination or assessment (non-compliance) ◆ Some incidents arise due to ignorance of SQA requirements, carelessness or forgetfulness in applying the requirements (maladministration). <p>Failure by a centre to notify, investigate and report to SQA allegations of suspected malpractice constitutes malpractice. Also failure to take action as required by SQA or to co-operate with an SQA investigation constitutes malpractice.</p>
4.5 Assessment materials and candidate evidence (including examination question papers, scripts and electronically-stored evidence) must be stored and transported securely.		This is a new criterion, added to the Internal Assessment and Verification category. This is not a new requirement, but it was not previously included as a specific criterion relating to internal assessment.

New 2015 Quality Assurance Criteria	Specific requirements within the criteria	Change in policy or practice required in centres
<p>5.2 Data on candidate entries submitted by centres to SQA must accurately reflect the current status of the candidate and the qualification.</p>	<p>Centres must have a process in place to ensure that their centre is approved to offer the qualification before starting delivery and making entries, and to check that the correct unit and group award codes are used for entries.</p> <p>All qualifications are subject to the requirement to submit candidate entries as soon as possible after their enrolment on the programme.</p>	<p>It is not a new requirement for centres to check the approval status of qualifications, but this was not previously stated explicitly within the quality assurance criteria.</p> <p><u>New requirement:</u> The former 2013 criterion referred to submitting entries “within published timelines”, but this does not apply to HN qualifications. It is now a stated requirement on centres to submit candidates entries as soon as possible after their enrolment on the programme to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Results corresponding to the entries can be submitted, to ensure the accurate certification of candidates ◆ SQA can plan its qualification verification selection and activities effectively ◆ Learners undertaking SQA qualifications are entered as SQA candidates, with the associated responsibilities and entitlements. <p>Centres must now address this requirement within their documented data management procedures and in practice.</p>

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<p>4.7 Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.</p> <p>and</p> <p>5.4 There must be an effective and documented system for the accurate recording, storage and retention of assessment records, internal verification records and candidate records of achievement in line with SQA requirements.</p>	<p>Where an investigation of suspected malpractice is carried out, the centre must retain related records and documentation for three years. In an investigation involving a criminal prosecution or civil claim, records and documentation will be retained for five years after the case has been heard. In the case of an appeal to SQA against the outcome of a malpractice investigation, assessment records must be retained for five years.</p>	<p>This is not a changed requirement, but the wording has been clarified regarding this relating to appeals to SQA against the outcome of a malpractice investigation.</p> <p>See Policy and procedures for dealing with malpractice in internally assessed qualifications: Information for centres (published April 2015)</p>