

Qualifications Withdrawal Policy

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Introduction

CIOL Qualifications (CIOLQ) aims to secure standards for those qualifications that we certificate. As part of our commitment to candidates, we aim to provide guidance and support to enable them to achieve their learning and development goals.

This document outlines the procedure to be followed by CIOLQ in the event of a unit or qualification being withdrawn. We will ensure that any unit or qualification withdrawal will be managed with due consideration given to the interests of its candidates and delivery centres. We will do this by ensuring there is sufficient time for dealing with registrations and certifications so that we protect the interests of our candidates' achievement in line with published Operational End Dates (OEDs) and Certification End Dates (CEDs).

Scope

This policy applies to all regulated qualifications offered by CIOLQ.

This policy covers the following:

- all qualifications and units offered by CIOLQ
- all staff, contractors, members, qualification regulators, delivery centre staff and candidates who use CIOLQ

We will comply with any regulatory requirements as stipulated by the regulators with regard to the withdrawal of a unit or qualification.

Rationale for withdrawal of a unit or qualification

We may consider the withdrawal of a unit or qualification for the following reasons:

- lack of demand for the qualification
- qualification no longer meets regulatory requirements
- qualification subject matter is no longer relevant
- CIOLQ imposing sanctions on a delivery centre
- specification update
- lack of candidate registrations
- lack of sector demand for the unit or qualification
- change in the skills required by the sector
- other factors leading to a unit or qualification not being fit for purpose
- Ofqual has withdrawn its recognition of CIOLQ

CIOL Qualifications obligations

We will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of candidates in relation to a unit or qualification we withdraw.

We will produce, maintain and comply with a written withdrawal plan outlining how the interests of candidates will be protected and how the withdrawal will be managed internally and externally. This plan must comply with any requirements Ofqual has communicated to CIOLQ in writing.

Notification of withdrawal of a unit or qualification will usually be made at least 12 months before the final registration date agreed for the unit or qualification being withdrawn, however, consideration will also be given to the Total Qualification Time as published in the qualification specifications.

Clear and accurate information about the reasons for withdrawal and the withdrawal schedule will be provided and any transition arrangements will be published.

CIOLQ will also give reasonable notice to the relevant regulators regarding its intention to withdraw a unit or qualification and will do this before communicating to candidates and delivery centres.

Candidates and delivery centres will be required to comply with our procedures for the withdrawal of any unit or qualification.

Withdrawal procedures

Decisions to withdraw a unit or qualification will be made by the Responsible Officer in negotiation with the Senior Management Team. This decision will be made after consultation with key stakeholders, members, Trust Board and any other relevant advisory groups.

Any decision to withdraw a unit or qualification will be evidenced by a withdrawal plan to be signed off by the Responsible Officer.

Withdrawal process

The withdrawal plan will comply with any regulatory requirements and will:

- specify how the interests of candidates in relation to the unit or qualification will be protected
- specify any consequences of the qualification being withdrawn, and what particular steps will be taken to mitigate any possible adverse consequences of the qualification withdrawal
- specify how the withdrawal will be communicated (including timescales) to the regulators, delivery centres and candidates
- provide clear and accurate information to be communicated about the withdrawal to candidates and delivery centres, with detailed timelines and transition arrangements to other appropriate and relevant qualifications if applicable
- provide details of all deadlines including the last date for accepting registrations, the last assessment date/s, re-sit opportunities and the last date for certification
- provide transition arrangements if relevant, for old units or qualifications onto a new qualification
- confirm the date at which the unit or qualification will no longer be recognised for exemptions or transition under the latest qualification
- comply with any requirements that the regulators have communicated

Communication

The Awarding Body will construct a communications plan that outlines how the withdrawal will be managed and communicated to staff, contractors, members, qualification regulators, delivery centre staff and candidates.

The communication plan will include:

- the rationale for the withdrawal of the unit or qualification
- the last date for registrations
- the last date for certification
- any other information about how the withdrawal will be managed and communicated
- contact details for further guidance

Delivery centres withdrawing from CIOL Qualifications (CIOLQ)

When a delivery centre withdraws from providing our qualification, whether through choice or instruction, it must:

- ensure current and future candidates are informed in a timely fashion
- ensure candidates already entered for the qualification have been provided with support to consider options for them to complete their learning
- not make any misrepresentations in any marketing material regarding qualifications that have been withdrawn
- notify CIOLQ of any candidates who may be affected by the withdrawal
- comply with any written instructions by CIOLQ with regard to the withdrawal of its qualifications
- endeavour to support candidates to find alternative exam venues to complete the qualification

Policy updating and reviewing

All policies relating to CIOLQ will be updated on an 18-month cycle or sooner as required.

Policy version and owner

Policy review date	May 2026
Policy owner	Responsible Officer

Regulatory references

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition
Condition D7: Management of the withdrawal of qualifications
Qualifications Wales
Condition D7: Management of the withdrawal of qualifications