

# Skillsfirst Assess

## Sanctions Policy

May 2021

v2

## Introduction

Skillsfirst Assess is an End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). This policy is aimed at our employers, training providers and apprentices, who are delivering or are registered with Skillsfirst Assess for an End-point assessment (EPA). This policy is also for use by our staff to ensure they apply sanctions where necessary, in a consistent manner.

This policy sets out the procedural steps we will follow when applying a sanction.

## Purpose

We endeavor to only impose a sanction on an employer or training provider as a matter of last resort, where we have no alternative to ensure we protect the integrity of our assessment(s). Sanctions can be imposed if we have cause to believe there has been actual malpractice or continual maladministration.

## Review arrangements

We will review this policy annually as part of our annual self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary, in response to:

- employer or training provider feedback
- apprentice feedback
- changes in our practices
- instructions from Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
- instructions from the External Quality Assurance Organisation (EQAO)
- changes in legislation
- trends identified from previous cases of malpractice or maladministration
- updates from IfATE

In addition, this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration and sanctions remain current and effective.

If you would like to feed back your views on this policy, please contact us using the details provided at the end of this policy.

## Approach to Sanctions

Skillsfirst has a range of sanctions that can be imposed on an employer / provider. This is dependent on the seriousness of the situation, the level and track record of the employer / provider's non-compliance, the risk to the interests of apprentices and the integrity of our assessments.

Applied sanctions do not have to be imposed in level order and may increase by more than one level at any time.

Skillsfirst aims to work with employers / providers to prevent situations occurring that would warrant a sanction being imposed.

The sanctions available to be imposed are:

Level	Sanction
1	ask for a member of staff to be withdrawn / stop working with an apprentice or Skillsfirst Assess
2	cancellation of an assessment or a result for an assessment
3	invalidate the apprentice certificate by contacting the ESFA
4	removal of the EPA service

### How sanctions will be imposed

The Responsible Officer would formally write to both the employer and / or the provider confirming any sanction(s) imposed.

Unless there was evidence that the non-compliance posed a significant threat to the interests of apprentice's or the integrity of our assessments, Skillsfirst expects that it would not impose a level 4 sanction without:

- the employer / provider being given an opportunity to address the area of non-compliance and;
- first of all, imposing one of the previous sets of sanctions.

Should payment of outstanding fees after various contacts with our Finance Team, we may apply a level 4 sanction with immediate effect.

We may be required to inform the ESFA and / or the External Quality Assurance Organisation of any sanctions imposed.

If an employer / provider or apprentice is unhappy with any sanction decision, an appeal can be submitted in line with our appeals policy, which is located in ePASS and our website.

### Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of this policy or wish to give feedback, please contact our Skillsfirst Assess Team on 0121 270 5100 Option 3 or email them at [enquiries@skillsfirstassess.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@skillsfirstassess.co.uk)

All policies referred to can be located at [www.skillsfirst.co.uk](http://www.skillsfirst.co.uk)