

Adverse Effect Policy

V2.0

Introduction

This is version two of the Adverse Effect Policy and replaces all previous versions. This document is subject to regular revision and maintained electronically by its owner. Electronic copies are version controlled. Printed copies are not subject to this control.

Change history to V2.0

Date	Section	Change	Reviewed by	Signed off By
January 2023	All	Multiple changes due to annual review	N Preston	R Lowbridge

Scope

SFEDI Awards will take steps to minimise the occurrence or likelihood of an 'Adverse Effect' and notification will be submitted to the relevant Regulator for the qualification or activity that has or could be impacted.

Due to the nature of an adverse effect and the originating perceived or actual impact it has on a SFEDI Awards qualification user, this policy will be considered in conjunction with additional relevant policies, for example Malpractice and Maladministration, as required and appropriate.

This policy relates to the notifying of Regulator(s) and other relevant agencies/person(s) and the continued communication with those parties and does not aim to set out the requirements for investigating or overseeing decision making to address the perceived and/or actual adverse effect.

This policy should also be considered within the context of the SFEDI Awards Conflict of Interest Policy as all person(s) involved in the reporting of an adverse effect must demonstrate that they are not influenced by a perceived or actual conflict that may disqualify them from administering activities as listed within this policy.

Adverse Effect

An 'Adverse Effect' is defined as: an act, omission, event, incident or circumstance that has an 'Adverse Effect' giving rise to prejudice to learners or potential learners, or adversely effects the development, delivery or award of qualifications that may include but not limited to;

- Where there is a substantial error in SFEDI Awards issued assessment materials
- Where there has been a loss or theft of, or breach of confidentiality in, any assessment materials that have been deemed as confidential as part of the pre-defined assessment process
- Where SFEDI Awards cannot supply assessment materials for a scheduled assessment
- Where there has been a failure in the delivery of an assessment which threatens the ability to differentiate accurately and consistently between the levels of attainment demonstrated by learners

- Where there is an inability to publish results or award a qualification by a pre-defined date
- Where an incorrect award of a qualification has been issued
- Where it is believed that there has been an incident of maladministration and/or malpractice which could either invalidate the award of a qualification or could impact on another Awarding Body or impact the integrity and safety of the wider qualification system(s)
- Where costs have been incurred that could lead to an increase in pricing significantly above the rate of inflation
- Where a conflict of interest identified before or after the event could be perceived or has caused an adverse effect
- Where the SFEDI Awards is named as a party in criminal or civil proceedings or is subjected to a regulatory investigation or sanction by any professional, regulatory, or governmental body
- Where a senior officer of SFEDI Awards is a party to criminal proceedings, is subject to any action for disqualification as a company Director, or is subject to disciplinary proceedings by any professional, regulatory, or governmental body.
- Change in control or merger between SFEDI Awards and another body

Adverse Effect Reporting

SFEDI Awards does not limit the source of a notification of a potential or actual adverse effect and recognises that they could originate from:

- Learner(s)
- Centre(s)
- SFEDI Awards staff members or associates
- Stakeholder(s)
- Others linked to the design, development, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, management and/or promotion of SFEDI Awards qualification(s)

Any report of a perceived or actual adverse effect should be reported to SFEDI Awards within 48 hours.

If a perceived or actual adverse effect event has not been reported within this time frame it will not negate the responsibilities of SFEDI Awards to investigate and/or notify relevant parties, but it could impact on the timeframes listed below as a greater period of time between event and reporting could impact on the actions required or the quality of evidence gathering as part of any investigation.

Where reports are made to SFEDI Awards, it should contain the following information:

- Nature of the incident and potential cause
- Potential impact on learners, actual or perceived
- How the incident was discovered
- Who is aware of the incident (learners, centre, third parties)

Dependent on the source of the report, it may not be possible to gather all information listed but, as a minimum, information should be gained with regards the nature of the incident, the potential impact it has or may have on learners and how the incident was discovered.

Further information will be gathered as part of any investigation that follows the initial reporting.

When a report is made, the SFEDI Awards Operations Manager will complete a report of the facts as known to the SFEDI Awards Head of Quality Assurance who will decide based on the following criteria:

- Has the circumstance already taken place or has it the potential to occur in the future?
- Has the circumstance already caused or is it likely to cause an adverse effect in the future to learners, other stakeholders and/or the safety and integrity of the qualification(s) and/or wider qualification system(s)?
- What is the level of actual or potential impact, ie. the number of learners and/or other stakeholders, and what is the likelihood of further spread if not addressed?
- Is the circumstance within a subject area or concerning an organisation that is already within the public spotlight or is within a 'high value' area that is likely to cause widespread media interest?
- What is the level of actual or potential media interest and what is the likelihood of further spread if not addressed?
- What is the potential for the circumstance to gather momentum on social networks?

The decision will be made within 24 hours of the submission of the report and notification to the Regulator(s) made within 24 hours of the decision made.

Where the decision is made to submit an adverse effect notification, this will be done using the published methods by the relevant Regulator(s) or other agencies, for example law enforcement, including all information in the format required as stated in the most recent guide as set out by the Regulator(s) and/or other agencies.

SFEDI Awards will also distribute details to other parties as appropriate, for example Awarding Bodies. These notifications will be accompanied by a GDPR declaration requiring the receiving organisation to treat the information contained in confidence.

Updates will be distributed to the Regulator(s) or other agencies in line with published requirements or sooner where there is a relevant update to be submitted by SFEDI Awards, including progress and/or outcome of any investigations.

Adverse Effect Review

To prevent or reduce the likelihood of an incident occurring the SFEDI Awards Senior Management Team will meet a minimum of once a quarter or if an event should arise requiring immediate consideration.

The objective of regular meetings is to prevent any incidents from occurring or, where it cannot be prevented, reduce the risk of that incident occurring as far as it is possible.

Where an event occurs, SFEDI Awards will operate this policy in conjunction with relevant policies that aid any forms of investigation and immediate actions to remove or minimise impacts on learners and/or other person(s) and/or agencies.

Contact Us

If you have any queries about the content of this policy, please contact our customer service department.

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